

HIDDEN SIGNS, HAUNTING SHADOWS

HIDDEN SIGNS, HAUNTING SHADOWS:
LITERARY CURRENCIES OF BLACKNESS IN UPPER CANADIAN TEXTS

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Abstract

It might be time for critics of early Canadian literature to avoid avoiding blackness in early Canada in their work. This dissertation takes up the recurrent pattern of displacement that emerges in critical studies that recall or rediscover early Canada. It attends in particular to the displacements and subordinations of Canadian blackness, particularly those conspicuously avoided by critics or rendered conspicuously absent by authors in the literatures of Upper Canada during the height of the Underground Railroad era, between 1830 and 1860. Not only is blackness in Upper Canada concealed, omitted, derided, and caricatured, but these representational formulas shape the hegemonic common-sense of what Antonio Gramsci terms “the national popular.” I argue that canonical texts contain accounts of early Canadian blackness from the national popular and subsequent criticisms of them produce an attitude and a history that excises blackness when literary and cultural critics examine the complexities of early Canada. Informed by Stuart Hall’s concept of the “floating signifier,” I draw the tropes of blackness out from behind the backdrop of early Canadian texts and into the foreground of Canadian literary and cultural criticism as well as critical race studies; in turn, this theoretical model helps me to explain what cultural work “undefined and indefinable” blackness did in early Canada and in contemporary imaginings of it (Clarke *Odysseys*, 16). Working out this paradox in John Richardson’s *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*, Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush*, and Catharine Parr Traill’s *The Canadian Settlers Guide*, my three chapters examine how these Upper Canadian authors display as much as hide the crucial roles of blackness in the formation of Canada and Canadian national identity.

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Avoiding Difficult Presence: Introduction

One wonders if any other national consciousness has had so large an amount of the unknown, the unrealized, the humanly undigested, so built into it.

Northrop Fyre, “*Conclusion to a Literary History of Canada*”

Nineteenth-century writers were mindful of the presence of black people. More important, they addressed, in more or less passionate ways, their views on that difficult presence.

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*

What does it mean to study the topic of blackness in the literary works of early Canadian white authors? What are the implications of framing these literary works—historical romances, regional character sketches, and settler manuals—as historical archives? What are the implications of reading certain narrative moments in these literary works as reflective of the historical socio-cultural formation of early Canada? How and where in early Canadian foundational texts does blackness surface allegorically, metaphorically and metonymically without explicit reference to the black figure? What are the conditions of these appearances? Who witnesses these conditions? And, last but not least, when these figures do surface, how are readers conditioned to engage these appearances?

This dissertation explores possible answers to these questions by looking at the difficult presence of blackness in four “foundational texts” in the field of Canadian literature: John Richardson's *Wacousta* (1832) and *The Canadian Brothers* (1840), Catharine Parr Traill's *The Canadian Settler's Guide* (1854), and Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852). I suggest the presence of blackness in these texts is “difficult” because it is opaque and, consequently, hard to access; this is because the cultural and historical styles and conventions Richardson, Traill and Moodie use to frame

and represent blackness have become unfamiliar to us, making the cultural politics surrounding the difficult presence pass by unnoticed and, thus, remain unexamined.

In *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning*, where Deborah Britzman explains the complicated history of education and psychoanalysis, she offers us the concept of “difficult knowledge,” a psychoanalytic term that she invokes in the inevitably charged context of education to refer to what we desire to know but do not know and what we do know but resist. Here she stresses the importance of acknowledging learning as a psychic event necessarily charged with resistance to knowledge (particularly fraught when the pedagogical encounter is with subjects of trauma that provoke a “crisis of the self” or a critique of the self’s coherence or view of the world: genocide, slavery, ethnic hatred and other experiences of utter despair and helplessness). In the field of early Canadian literature, the presence of blackness constitutes difficult knowledge for many critics. As Britzman points out, difficult knowledge is resisted because such “learning is a relearning of one’s history of learning – new editions of old conflicts – and that it is precisely this unconscious force that renders the work of learning so difficult in intimacy and in public” (5). As the following chapters work through the knowledges of the difficult presence of blackness in Upper Canadian texts by analyzing scenes of blackness that critics disregard, forget, and/or ignore, I maintain, “difficult” presences or knowledges of blackness provoke defenses/denials and are resisted in a variety of ways. Also, the difficult presence of blackness is psychically hard to access, fomenting a “crisis of witnessing,” in which the witness is incapable of an adequate response. Britzman notes (following the work of

Shoshana Felman and others) that this response can incite a “passion for ignorance” (75), signaling the affective pressures at work in the resistance to learning, particularly when learning involves a learning of loss.

To make out Northrop Fyre’s wonderment by associating the unknown with the studied ignorance about blackness, I detect, embedded in the difficult presence of blackness are the particular racial feelings that each of these authors (whether willfully or not) produces about blackness and uses to represent black presence in the region. This dissertation, *Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows: Literary Currencies of Blackness in Upper Canadian Texts*, argues that the signifiers of blackness in early Canadian literature operate at affective, discursive, political and economic levels, and in doing so, render the concept of whiteness thinkable; at the same time, these signifiers articulate an ongoing and silent structure of suppression that became deeply entrenched in the emerging nation. To this end, this project maintains that these foundational texts in early Canadian literature are not merely texts, but also function as pedagogical “textbooks”¹: in other words, my study, on the one hand, brings canonical works into view as repositories within which the violent and desirous act of displacing or repressing blackness and black subjects, particularly in these texts, is interiorized, hidden, or rendered unspeakable. On the other hand, because some of the authors of these textbooks highlight a version of blackness that either could have been suppressed (in Richardson’s works) or that was in

¹ I know that these novels should be referred to as “class texts” - as books we use in the class - but I use “textbooks” as my way to illustrate that these novels act as a source of cultural information and give an indication of Canadian literature’s development. What this means is that these “textbooks” capture and frame the subsequent paradigms in and of the discipline. In this light, my project is not necessarily interested in the reliability of the cultural information that these texts provide. I am more interested in how this category of “textbook” illustrates the role of “illustration” as learning and teaching aids in both the field of Canadian literature, the Canadian imagination, critical race theory and the black Atlantic world.

fact hushed up (in Moodie's work), one might argue it is important to observe the agency between the acts of bringing blackness into narration and the acts of containing black presences in the overall emerging narrative of Upper Canadian settlement and nation-formation.

This construction of black presence is the aporia Dionne Brand calls an "absent presence" in *Bread Out of Stone: Recollections on Sex, Recognition, Race, Dreaming and Politics*. "This absent presence," Brand writes, "is at the core of Canadian identity, a whole set of people relegated to a present past" (139). She goes on to write that "an emptying out of the past, then, both physical and mental, seems to be crucial to the concept" of - and a search for - an authentic Canadian literary identity (139). Given the stake that the writers I name above and their works have in this search, as textbooks, they not only become sites of pedagogical and spatial containment that inform cultural and political and aesthetic desires at the level of the body and the national space, but they also become part of an economy of desire circulated through what Frederic Jameson identifies as the political unconscious. To acknowledge the generative effects that the category of blackness has within these core texts drives their force of history into Canadian literature and into the black Atlantic, allowing me to situate these texts as part of the transatlantic archive.

But how do we *read* the difficult presence of blackness in early Canadian literature? This dissertation suggests that one way is to read the historical contexts and cultural situations alongside the literary devices (such as genre conventions, rhetorical figures, metaphors, settings, character names, sounds, tangled plots) that each text

mobilizes.² Working on this project, I have come to realize the reading habits (of critics, academics, publics) in studies of early Canadian literature echo the representations of the difficult presence of blackness in these texts. I note a collective attitude of avoidance towards engaging black figures and the various difficult questions around blackness in the early- to mid-nineteenth century. Nowhere is this attitude more evident than if we take as an example the general Canadian prejudice in much of the nineteenth century that regarded black emigration to Upper Canada as bringing into the province the “race problem” of the United States. In this instance black presence is regarded as a difficulty in itself. Here is the “logic” to this point: if black people are going to emigrate, how else does the colony and its textbooks move around them except to avoid them? And yet, by definition difficult people persist, remain willful and obstinate. My point is that the difficult presence of blackness in early Canadian literature actually *generates* the avoidance. So, rather than avoid this presence, because the figure of the difficult points out an unwelcome desire, this dissertation argues that engaging the literary nature of these textbooks through the method of close textual reading is crucial, particularly because coded in the language and forms of these textbooks is an actively disavowed presence. In other words, avoidance is a coded language that indexes substitute expressions in the archive.

Toni Morrison’s *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* has offered crucial insights to my thinking about the ways criticism in early Canadian

² The historical contexts I invoke are not necessarily neutral or factual spaces either. History is narrative, perspectival, inevitably selective and actively produced; historians are no less subject to trauma, to resistance, to denial or refusal than other writers. This is not to suggest that it is also fictive, but to say that history is never so complete, and to acknowledge historical contexts themselves have to be contextualized.

literature avoids the difficult presence of blackness. In writing on American national literature, Morrison foregrounds the significance of African-American characters and tropes to (white) American literature. She writes,

Just as the formation of the nation necessitated coded language and purposeful restriction to deal with the racial disingenuousness and moral frailty at its heart, so too did the literature, whose founding characteristics extend into the twentieth century, reproduce the necessity for codes and restriction. Through significant and underscored omissions, startling contradictions, heavily nuanced conflicts, through the way writers peopled their world with the signs and bodies of this presence—one can see that a real or fabricated Africanist presence was crucial to their sense of Americanness. (Morrison 6)

I find Canadian national literature similarly depends on the coded “Africanist presence” that Morrison argues is specific to American national literature, though, in this context, the emphasis is less on the American insistence on “innocence” than the Canadian insistence of “civility.” In *Orientalism*, Edward Said argues that “various Western techniques of representation” “rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects” (22). In this context, I argue that blackness is also an essential catalyst in the formation of Canadian national culture, particularly on its presumptive civility, and its reliance on the difficult presence of blackness in rendering whiteness visible in early Canada.

However, the difficult presence of blackness is not the *only* constitutive presence that is repressed at the heart of the textbooks that I read. Leslie Monkman’s *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian Literature*, Terry Goldie’s comparative study in *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Literatures*, Daniel Coleman’s *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* and Sunera Thobani’s *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making*

of Race and Nation in Canada all address ways in which racialized subjects provide the means to the causes of nationalism and to the formulation of the “intact” subjectivity of the colonial class, highlighting the very real class tensions within the colony, the difficulties elite whites had/have in consolidating racial solidarity amidst inter-white exploitation.³ As an example, Coleman argues that a particular form of civility was circulated in early Canadian literary texts by means of four allegorical white masculine figures, which collectively personified the Canadian nation. Expanding upon Coleman’s insight that each figure was defined by his paternalistic civility towards marginalized, non-white others, this dissertation suggests that avoiding the difficult presence of blackness is a key strategy of an ideology of white civility. Commenting on this strategy in his *Foreword* to Afua Cooper’s *The Hanging of Angelique*, George Elliott Clarke writes

The avoidance of Canada’s sorry history of slavery and racism is natural. It is how Canadians prefer to understand themselves: we are a nation of good, Nordic, ‘pure,’ mainly White folks, as opposed to the lawless, hot-tempered, impure mongrel Americans, with their messy history of slavery, civil war, segregation, assassinations, lynching, riots, and constant social turmoil. Key to this propaganda—and that is what it is—is the Manichaeian portrayal of two nations: Canada, the land of “Peace, Order, and Good Government,” of evolution within the traditional constraints of monarchy and authority, where racism was not and is not tolerated, versus the United States of America, the land of guns, cockroaches, and garbage, of criminal sedition confronted by aggressive policing (and jailing), where racism was and is the arbiter of class (im)mobility. (xii)

Clarke’s argument stresses the national lines on which the nation narrates its non-racist history, how it distances itself from blackness, particularly where blackness itself equates

³ Outside of race, Peter Dickenson’s *Here Is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada* (1999) explores the absence of sexual and transgressive subtexts in Canadian literature, thus underlining the interplay between nation and sexuality.

with disorder, with nature, with savagery, with criminality and all those other dubious ciphers for race – here as the dominant Canadian logic projects these disturbances south. Consequently, the difficult presence of blackness helps us understand how disavowal, rendering invisible, repression, obscuring, and omission operate as modes of avoidance.

Avoidance, in effect, is a form of orientation by negation. It acts as a guide that instructs critics in the field of early Canadian literature as to “where,” “how,” and “what” topics to follow and not to follow, and this understanding situates avoidance as a performative act. Sara Ahmed argues, in *Queer Phenomenology*, orientation comes about as a result of “know[ing] where we are,” plainly, of being able to discover our way as we use specific recognizable objects so that “when we face them we know which way we are facing” (1). How these objects get organized arranges the field of Canadian literature in particular ways, thus creating particular possibilities for the field. From my vantage point, blackness is avoided in early Canadian literature because the field is oriented by “lining itself up with the direction of the space it inhabits” (Ahmed 13) – in this case, the space of white civility – thus establishing directionality and movement vis-à-vis whiteness. Of course, the direction of this avoidance is not neutral. It is political. The simple act of turning in one direction “shapes not only how we inhabit space, but how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitance, as well as ‘who’ or ‘what’ we direct our energy and attention *toward*” (Ahmed 3, emphasis added). Therefore, to turn towards the difficult presence of blackness implicates readers and this implicated turn can force us to confront the state of slavery in these textbooks. Simply put, the difficult presence of blackness is a

conscious production, and drawing attention to it, as I do here, reorients the politics of reading early Canada.

I would like to mention, following Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark*, that my aim in this dissertation is not to designate foundational texts as "racist" texts but, rather, to read how racial significance operates within them (xiii). As such, the project takes up Stuart Hall's concept of the "floating signifier" in order to draw the tropes of blackness and black masculinity (because these are the main formulations of blackness that are dealt with at length in these texts) out from behind the backdrop of these early Canadian texts and into the foreground of Canadian literary criticism, black Atlantic discourse and Canadian critical race studies. Mindful of how frequently critics overlook the racialized historicity of blackness in these and other early Canadian texts, I pay attention to what these literary and cultural texts are permitted to say and prohibited from saying about blackness. This is especially paradoxical because, to borrow a phrase from George Elliot Clarke, in this early period in Canada, national borders around blackness are "undefined and indefinable" (*Odysseys* 16). This indefinability results from significations coming from "elsewhere." For example, in Richardson's figure of Sambo, we hear continental echoes of the institution of blackface minstrelsy, and, as the chapters in this dissertation demonstrate, these continental echoes forge transatlantic connections, through their depictions of various triangulated relations: the Canada-Britain-France triangle in Richardson's *Wacousta* and Moodie's *Roughing It*, the Canada-South Africa-Australia triangle in Traill's *Guide*, and the Canada-Britain-United States triangle, of all of the texts. In other words, I explore, in the following chapters, a double movement that does

not reveal itself as such: the ways in which these foundational textbooks display - even as they hide - the crucial role of transnational blackness in the formation of the nation. I argue that as cultural productions contributing literary and cultural capital to the formation of Upper Canada, they constitute, construct and implicate Canada in the black Atlantic. For example, while Morrison observes how American literary history clings quite strangely to this insistence on innocence and newness, those qualities Ralph Waldo Emerson elaborates in his 'American Scholar,' I observe that in Canadian literary history an obsessive concern with faithfulness, cheerfulness and politeness comes to define Canadian civility through this power-assisted form of disavowed blackness.

Few texts in early Canadian literature have received more attention than the works of these three authors. Critics have examined many aspects of these authors' lives, their works, and their works' ongoing influence on subsequent Canadian authors and the field of Canadian literature as a whole.⁴ Surveying how black presence has fared in the institutional positioning of the "textbooks" I study in the dissertation, I have come to realize that criticism of these works has avoided commentary on the black presences in these texts, and by so doing has absented blackness in the institution of CanLit. For example, out of the few critical work on Traill's *Guide* (not to mention the bulk of criticism on her widely read *Backwoods*) none mention blackness or her repression of it in

⁴ To cite a few examples: in Robertson Davies' *At my Heart's Core*, a play published in 1950 but set in 1837, both Moodie and Trail appear as characters. Margaret Atwood and Carol Shields voice Moodie's influence on them and their work. Atwood's *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* recreates the sketches in *Roughing It*; moreover, her novel, *Alias Grace* draws heavily on Moodie's account of the case of Grace Marks in *Life in the Clearings*. Carol Shields's *Small Ceremonies* is a novel about a character writing Moodie's biography. Then there's Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*, where Morag, the protagonist living in Lakefield, Ontario, close to the place Traill and Moodie settled, imagines conversations with "Saint Catharine," priding herself as having the survival abilities of Catharine Parr Traill. These are only the more famous of literary works drawing directly from these authors; I have not mentioned here the large body of critical literature that comments on them.

her settler narratives. Moreover, the criticisms on Moodie and Richardson's texts are numerous, and yet only a handful of them mention the presences of blackness. These passing references are merely that, and none of the critics take the time to offer an in depth engagement with the topic. This is curious, especially since the "Charivari" sketch from Moodie's *Roughing It* has been widely anthologized (*The Ontario Experience* and *Best Canadian Short Stories* by John Stevens). In fact the "Charivari" sketch has become a reference point for critics working on rituals of romance in the "new" world (see Peter Ward's *Courtship, Love, and Marriage in Nineteenth –Century English Canada*). And still, aside from George Elliot Clarke's brief engagement with the charivari's implication for blackness in Canada, critics of early Canadian literature reading *Roughing It* avoid this sketch or merely remark that the carnivalesque violence of the charivari is a form of lynching in Canada. More curious with Richardson's *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers* is the ways in which the many scenes which have Sambo at the centre have been seldomly commented on in the critical literature on Richardson for all these years. My point in highlighting how the critical work on these foundational textbooks elide the difficult presence of blackness in early Canada is to underline CanLit critics determination to enforce white civility.

Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows focuses on, as my subtitle suggests, these canonical Upper Canadian texts because they are produced before the 1867 Confederation, between 1830 and 1860, underlining the period in Upper Canada that historians mark as the height of the Underground Railroad era, and with over thirty

thousand Negro population⁵ settling in key sites like Amherstburg, Chatham, Dresden, London, Welland, Windsor, Oro and Queen's Bush, involved in the racial formation of Canada and Canadian national identity, it is important to examine their functions in the national literature. Second, in assembling these texts as my "dissertation archive," I note that all of the authors and their texts share one common concern: they take it as their task to re-present the geographical history of Upper Canada. As a result, I take that place as an archive and read this archive as place. Inadvertently, taking this stance in this project reasserts the over-privileging of Upper Canada/Ontario blackness over blackness in other parts of Canada in Canadian studies. One may argue that Upper Canada and contemporary Ontario have received a lot of attention because of the way they have been positioned as the financial- and political-cultural center of Canada. And yet, my work enables us to see that this allegedly "overrepresented area" of critical engagement does not appear to have much to say about blackness in the region. Moreover, Toronto, and its surrounding areas, has been narrated as the epicenter of multicultural discourse, and has been pivotal in the exploration of "new" diasporic black presences in Canada, however, none of the texts I read is set in Toronto (York). So, although these texts are set in what is

⁵ This figure is derived from the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada in 1852 (Winks 491). Robin Winks points out that the population estimates made during the nineteenth century were inaccurate. He offers many rationales: they range from the fact that census terminology were imprecise to the fact that abolitionists did not discriminate between Canada and Upper Canada, thus inflating the numbers of fugitive slaves. In his "Appendix: How Many Negroes in Canada?" he points out that "no one knows how many Negroes there were in Canada West, or in the British North American Provinces as a whole" (492). He admits to following the work of Fred Landon, scholar of African Canadian history, who "estimated that between 1830 and 1860 from fifteen to twenty thousand Negroes, free and slave, entered the Canadas, bringing the total Negro population for the whole of the British North American provinces to nearly sixty thousands by 1860" (qtd. in Winks 490), and "reasonably concludes [that] the total Negro population across the British North American Provinces (including the West Coast) in 1860 was approximately 62, 000, with nearly two-thirds of these in Canada West and perhaps two-thirds of the total having come—whether as fugitives or as free men—from the United States between 1840 and 1860" (493-494).

now Ontario, they present a very different Ontario than the one associated with Toronto and the West Indian diaspora, which challenges the popular assumption that significant black populations (and cultural contributions) only came with the post-1960s West Indian immigration to Toronto.

My focus in this particular region is partly inspired by my interest in place-based inquiry: I believe local history matters. As a PhD candidate studying at McMaster University, root-routing a living in Hamilton, where, as a community organizer, I have confronted the marginalizing effects on place as a result of the spatial politics of the city, I have been forced to consider questions around race and place/space in this region. My focus on Upper Canada is an extension of my attempt to understand the avoided (yet open) histories of race that still hold effects on place. I understand focusing on Upper Canada could perpetuate its dominance as the (multi)cultural capital in Canadian discourses (whether in fields such as Canadian literatures, history or black cultural studies in Canada); I accept the risk of being accused of doing “a reductive reading of *blackness* which cannot accommodate – or hear – the *different* blackness” in other regions in Canada, like Nova Scotia, Montreal, British Columbia, and the Prairies (Clarke, *Odysseys* 8). If, however, I willingly accept this accusation, it is because my project understands these differences *but* is committed to hearing the differences in early representations of blackness in Upper Canada. As a location that holds a central place in the formation of national identity (marked, for instance, by the location of the Canadian National Archive in Ottawa, which was selected as the national capital because it was on the seam of the Upper and Lower Canadas, though squarely in Upper Canada), a historical engagement

with Upper Canada's organizing role in framing blackness in Canadian literary culture is highly significant. Furthermore, I am following the historical attention to blackness that scholars like George Elliot Clarke and Afua Cooper have each, respectively, conducted in Nova Scotia and Montreal.⁶ Particularly, since there has not been a sustained scholarly focus on blackness in early Canadian literature, *Hidden Sign, Haunting Shadows* begins to address this long-neglected gap by redirecting critical attention to this overlooked area.⁷

I turn to these historical texts that have framed and continue to frame national consciousness as a way to make out in them non-exhausted creative fields of imaginary possibilities. Framing these texts as archives, as informing the archives of the nation and

⁶ I am thinking of Afua Cooper's *The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal* (2006) and George Elliot Clarke's anthology, *Odysseys Home: Mapping African-Canadian Literature* (2002). The topic of the absence of blackness in Canadian cultural history and memory is an already familiar topic of debate. Literary authors and cultural critics from several disciplines, including history, cultural studies, women's studies, sociology, geography, and African diaspora literature in Canada have shown increased interest in mapping the presence of black people in Canada. As early as 1856, Benjamin Drew documented the oral history of fugitive slaves who settled in Upper Canada in *The Refugee: Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada*. In 1971, Robin W. Winks continued this documentation project in *The Blacks in Canada: A History*. Peggy Bristow, Dionne Brand, Linda Carty, Afua P. Cooper, Sylvia Hamilton, and Adrienne Shad gendered this documentation project in their 1994 anthology, *We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up': Essays in African Canadian Women's History*. Rinaldo Walcott's 1997 *Black Like Who? Writing Black Canada* offered a diasporic framework with which to understand contemporary, urban discourses of black diaspora in Canada. The title of Clarke's 2002 anthology, *Odysseys Home*, raises the question of home. If, for a black Canadian, the odyssey of home, as Clarke sees it, is bound up with the mythology of an elsewhere, of migration, and if, as the Bristow *et al.* anthology suggests, we are to think belonging through the metaphors of "pulling" and "rooting," then we must think them beyond oppositions and, rather, bring together the institutional structures that work to root and uproot black Canadian subjects and their histories. On the one hand, unpacking these metaphors within a network of social relations of power aligns rooting and pulling as part of the transnational movements of bodies, ideas, narratives, and objects. On the other, these movements not only create transcultural dialogues, they in turn highlight blackness in Canada as part of an overlapping global community. Dionne Brand's 1997 novel *In Another Place, Not Here* and Lawrence Hill's 2007 novel, *The Book of Negroes: A Novel* bear testimony to this overlap.

⁷ While Clarke, as a literary scholar, focuses on blackness from Nova Scotia and Cooper, a historian, on Montreal, what sets my work apart from theirs is not simply that I engage early Upper Canadian blackness from a literary and cultural studies disciplinary perspective but also do so through the literary productions of three foundational white-European authors.

of the black Atlantic, has been central to *Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows*. It has been one way of actualizing the many possibilities and impossibilities that are set by the institution of CanLit that chooses these textbooks as authorized part of its curriculum. The authority of the institution of CanLit accentuates the material and political consequences of intellectual avoidance of blackness, underlining what Brand may be referring to when she talks of “an emptying out of the past” – of what happens when later readers (and writers) suppress and ignore blackness in early Canada. In other words, the concept of an archive enacts avoidance: it collects, categorizes, and stores through acts of exclusion and misplacement. Also, it stores by dictating what deserves a place in it, and what should be excluded from it; by determining what is to be properly filed and what is purposefully or inadvertently to be misplaced, the archive reveals itself as a *dispositif*, an apparatus of power that functions by “distributing the visible and the invisible, generating or eliminating an object which cannot exist without it” (Deleuze 339).

As you notice, I shift from speaking of the texts as “textbooks” to speaking of them as “archives,” and I understand the two metaphors have very different senses of agency. Conventionally, textbooks are didactic and active; archives are open and passive. However, I use these two streams of metaphors to suggest how textbooks and archives both instruct and contain, guide/orient and hide, render explicit and leave dormant. On the one hand, these texts are always already productive of ideological meaning, they are *active*, not just ‘things to be read’ but actors that do work on culture. Such a stance forces us, as readers, to acknowledge the social and political power of texts and also face our own passion for ignorance as an active process. On the other hand, this stance valorizes

the process of reading and, importantly, re-reading. Here the text is an archive and ‘descending into’ the archive is the political act. The ‘actor’ here is the researcher, writer, or critic: we are always reading and re-reading. The politics here are not so much the act of producing the text but the act of reading and re-reading. The text implicates us all in a constant *work* or labour of creating our selves and our world as it is mediated and enabled by text. The text is engaged in a movement, a play of signification, deconstructing the gap between writing and reading. As Roland Barthes notes in “From Work to Text,” the text joins the writer and reader “into a single signifying practice” (170).⁸ For Barthes the reader is “called upon to be in some sort the co-author of the score, completing it” (171) at the same time that the text “asks of the reader a practical collaboration,” one in which he/she is called upon to “produce the text, open it out, *set it going*” (171). With these thoughts in mind, these foundational textbooks, through their re-documentation of history (marked by the (f)act of Richardson, Traill, and Moodie’s mediation in these foundational texts which are propelled by and towards the archival), signal an incomplete archive of

⁸ In this essay Barthes argues that while work is concrete, the text is less a “structure” than an open-ended process of “structuration,” what he describes as a “methodological field” (167), and it is critics who do this structuring. Discussing this shift philosophically, from engaging a literary work as work and engaging it as text, Barthes notes: while a literary work has two levels of meaning, literary and concealed, the levels of meaning in a literary text is plural. It does not merely contain several meanings but is irreducible to any meanings. It is not a “coexistence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing” (168) that “answers not to an interpretation,” Barthes points out, “but to an explosion, a dissemination. The plural of the texts depends . . . not on the ambiguity of its contexts but on what might be called the stereographic plurality of its weaves of signifiers (etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric)” (168). As a field, the text resists easily classifications; it pushes the limits of readability and rationality; it is a “process of demonstration” that “speaks according to certain rules” (167). Which is to say, “*the Text is experienced only in an activity of productions.*” It is not confined to the space occupied by a single work; rather, as Barthes describes, “its constitutive movement is that of cutting across (in particular, it can cut across the work, several works)” (167). According to Barthes, the text is “woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages, . . . antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony. The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the ‘sources,’ the ‘influences’ of a work is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without inverted commas” (169).

national history. Michel Foucault's understanding of the archive in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is instructive. He writes, "[b]y this term I do not mean the sum of all the texts that a culture has kept upon its person as documents attesting to its own past, or as evidence of a continuing identity; nor do I mean the institutions, which, in a given society, make it possible to record and preserve those discourses that one wishes to remember and keep in circulation" (128-9). So, the archive "does not have the weight of tradition; and it does not constitute the library of all libraries" (130). As he pointedly asserts, "[t]he analysis of the archive, then, involves a privileged region: at once close to us, and different from our present existence, it is the border of time which surrounds our presence, which overhangs it, and which indicates its otherness; it is that which, outside ourselves, delimits us" (130). Suggesting that the archive is a zone of privilege – privileged by historical and temporal distance – Foucault reminds us of the temporality of the archive's past and present. This duality of time suggests the archive is not the representation of the past but of the present representing the past. Also, these zones, regions, or dimensions form and transform our very experiences of time, presence, memory, and the past future of blackness in early Canadian literature, which frames the archive as a border. These past narrations foreshadow a future present relationship to blackness in Canada, which is defined by avoidance. And, as border, following Foucault's argument, the archive becomes the vertiginous skin of the nation, the site where all sorts of political rewritings take place (140), including those by critics of early Canadian literature re-writing the archive to avoid the difficult presence of blackness. Because these texts form part of "the general system of formation and transformation of statements" in

the field of Canadian literature (Foucault, *Archaeology* 130), and because “statements,” according to Foucault, are transformed by this “general system” into “events and things” (128), such an understanding of early Canadian literature, as dynamic systems of transmission and of transformation, allows me to turn to statements such as Traill’s advice to women to bring “fine white cotton stockings” into the colony, or those in Richardson’s identification of his character “Sambo” as the “faithful Negro Sambo,” or Moodie’s sketch of Tom Smith and “his shrieks for mercy” as pivotal historical figures and events in the black Atlantic world: cotton is a commodity with unavoidable racial histories in the black Atlantic and transatlantic worlds, as are names like “Sambo” and “Tom.” So, while I agree with Clarke’s critique of Paul Gilroy for his “blunt” avoidance of Canada in his theorization of the black Atlantic (Clarke, *Odysseys* 8), I want to note the generative feature of the black Atlantic as a heuristic device. I suggest that the limitations in Gilroy’s initial theorization do not render it irrelevant to imagining blackness in Canada. In fact, as part of the Atlantic archive, these texts squarely participate in the “structures of feelings, producing, communicating, and remembering” that make up the heuristic frame Gilroy calls “the black Atlantic world” (3).

According to the *History of the Book in Canada Project*, “The efforts of four writers to break into international markets signaled the emergence of professional authorship in British North America in the 1830s[:] Thomas Chandler Haliburton, Major John Richardson, Catharine Parr Traill, and Susanna Moodie” (347). Aside from Haliburton, the remaining three were based in Upper Canada, and their internationalization suggests we widen the purview we use in framing their works; after

all, these texts were written to address an international audience. Aside from the fact that these texts circulated in and across the Atlantic world, it is also worth noting that Richardson, Traill and Moodie turn their experiences into archives: Richardson fought in the War of 1812 and we know, from his introduction to the 1851 edition of *Wacousta*, he was repeatedly told stories about the 1763 war by his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Erskine; Traill's and, particularly, Moodie's settler accounts might best be described, to borrow a phrase from Rinaldo Walcott, as "melancholic cataloguing" of their experiences in the colony (22). Because in their archiving practices these authors textually re-enact many personal and collective experiences, and because they harness experiences into historical documents, the collection of texts I refer to as my archive offers an affective mode of historicity. Barbara Godard's work on "relational logic" (which I discuss below) prepares us to think on a scale of affective charges across the Americas, driving us to turn to geographical location as a method, even a geographical heuristic model, a "field of interpretation" (320) that highlights the interconnected and violent foundational histories and informs the "representations of contact and exchange that circulate in the Americas" (318). In this elastic configuration of the Americas, difference and relationality announce "a new hemispheric imaginary," "in part a tightening of continental ties" (318, 321), reminding us of how people, ideas, organizations, and commodities move *across* borders quickly, if not always easily. Within this interpretive field of the Americas, these movements "propos[e] differential logics and [the] politics of exogamic relations" (318) which, Godard notes, are "key to the discursive formation of the Americas" (322).⁹

⁹ Godard's hemispheric approach has a longstanding history. See José Julián Martí Pérez's "Our America"

The weight of these foundational textbooks in Canadian letters, to highlight its economic register, grants their currency. Also, they are connected to an Atlantic economy, involved in setting the Atlantic imaginary. This is to say their texts participated in the project of setting literary standards, evidenced by the fact that Richardson, Traill and Moodie's works were on the international literary market. Aside from the material commodity of their texts, the work of these authors also traded other, figurative forms of currency. Cheerfulness, faithfulness, and politeness signify as instruments of currency. In my chapter on Richardson's texts, the grammar of faithfulness marks the store of value attached to the labour of Sambo, the "faithful Negro servant." In Traill's *Settler's Guide*, she measures settlers' wealth and worth based on their cheerfulness, translating cheerfulness into settler currency. And, in Moodie's chapter, where I read "The Charivari" sketch, politeness has many currencies: as a method of payment (of the bridegrooms who regard the charivari as a joke and pay the party to leave the couple in peace) and, mainly, as an item of debt, especially portrayed in the borrowing economy of the village, where many arriving polite settlers, ignorant of the manipulations in borrowing practices, become indebted to their neighbours. This diverse range of Atlantic "goods," exported into the Empire from the colony and consumed by transatlantic

(1891); Hortense Spillers' edited collection, *Comparative American Identities: Race, Sex, and Nationality in the Modern Text* (1991), and particularly Spillers' introductory essay, "Who Cuts the Border? Some Readings on 'America'": this volume deals with the US in relation to the Caribbean and Central America but makes no mention of Canada. Godard's voice in this hemispheric conversation is important because Canada and Brazil, the two largest geographical territories in the Americas, remain peripheral in the literatures of hemispheric studies. So, when in "Relational Logic" she reads visual and textual representations by Brazilian and Canadian artists and writers, Godard is not only engaging in an inter-Americas study, she is also responding to these under-examined localities and relations in the literature. Recently, see the work of Claudia Sadowski-Smith, *Globalization on the Line: Culture, Capital, and Citizenship at U.S. Borders* (2002) and *Border Fictions* (2008), which do take Canada into account.

readers, are not merely metaphoric but metonymic currencies: they increased the value of Upper Canada, attracting, in Traill and Moodie's case, future settlers to the colony. The literary currencies of blackness in these Upper Canadian texts suggest not only the material and consumer cultures of the Atlantic world, which thematize economic value through racial codes, but also conflate this currency with that of exchange relationships. Cumulatively, these texts underline how the region profits from the labour of black "servants" that forms part of the currency of the texts.

Addressing blackness in Canada as part of a transatlantic negotiation is not to abandon its nationalistic focus. My project proposes that this nationalistic focus is not "antithetical to the rhizomorphic, fractal structure of the transcultural, international formation" that Paul Gilroy calls "the black Atlantic" (4). Because the black Atlantic Gilroy envisions questions the "overintegrated sense of cultural and ethnic particularity" in black cultural studies today and its accompanying "language of ethnic absolutism" (31), it widens the compass of black literary and cultural studies. The argument Gilroy is getting at in this phrase refers to Britain's post-war ethnic absolutism—the willful disavowal of blackness, heterogeneity, mixture, and messiness at precisely the moment when South moves North, East moves West. "What is now obvious," Gilroy writes, "is that when it comes to race, culture is conceived along ethnically absolute lines, not as something intrinsically fluid, changing, unstable, and dynamic, but as a fixed property of social groups rather than a relational field in which they encounter one another and live out social, historical relationships" ("One Nation under a Groove" 266). As a result, questioning the language of ethnic absolutism in early Canada is questioning the

Canadian commitment to purity, Peace, Order and Good Government (which mean whiteness) that allows critics to avoid the difficult presence of blackness in Canada. The black Atlantic shifts scholars' attention not only from a national perspective to "an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective" (10) but also suggests that we reconceptualize both the "routes" and the "roots" of black culture. Similarly, Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* suggests that such a critical perspective offers an effective framework to "overcome the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, neither the one nor the other, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes...the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics" (25). Adopting this transatlantic approach is "not" to render the nation "negligible" (Penne 79). I share Donna Penne's insistence that "it might be necessary to invest a little longer in the ongoing power of the nation as a referent" (Penne 78), insisting that an escape from the hierarchy of nation is not so simple, for the nation inscribes us as part of its formation and as part of our subject formation, too. At the same time, my project is not about "nationalizing Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*," a project George Elliot Clarke undertakes when he writes:

Gilroy's project is fraught with contradiction. His very formulation, 'the black Atlantic,' resurrects a Pan-Africanism that almost dare not speak its name. As well, his decentering of African-American culture is intended to shift attention to the Caribbean-British contributions to Pan-African culture...and pose [the] question: Must all blackness be American? But Gilroy's attempt to naysay this interrogative, while simultaneously vetoing cultural nationalism, scores his project with irrepressible self-negations. (82)

Rinaldo Walcott not only resurrects a Pan-Africanism in *Black Like Who?: Writing Black*

Canada, in his attempt to “provide some grammars for thinking blackness in Canada” (13), he dares also to speak its name. The name Walcott gives to his Pan-Africanism is “diaspora sensibility” (20). The “contradiction” and “irrepressible self-negation” that Clarke sees in Gilroy’s project and the tendencies that Walcott refers to as the fluidity of diasporic sensibilities are the structural contradiction that makes my work on the difficult presence of blackness in Upper Canadian texts an anti-national project at the same time that it is located at the centre of a national network of institutions. The very concept of a black Atlantic destabilizes traditional notions of nation and nation-ness in so far as it projects something bounded, self-contained, impenetrable, pure, homogeneous entity. The dialectic impetus between the nation and the black Atlantic allows for each to bring critical perspectives to one another in the interests of a project of justice and liberation. Forcing the nation to open onto the black Atlantic problematizes the hegemony of borders and of responsibility, while opening the black Atlantic up to the nation forces us to imagine how the nation can be (or fail to be) a vehicle for material and cultural change.

As a result, to recognize this embedded proximity within Upper Canada as a politics of foldedness, we must bring a regional politics of blackness into intimate tension with both a network of social relations and a transnational politics of blackness. This coupling allows me to think of their collusions and coexistence, contingencies and confluence, reconfiguring our politics and our intelligibility of borderlands, space, place and location. That is to say, the tension allows me to rethink the place of blackness in early Canada and on the transatlantic scene. Hence, instead of a national paradigm of Upper Canadian blackness that assumes a “national” difference between Canada and the

US, whereby Upper Canada remains superior because of its 1793 anti-slavery policies—a paradigm of blackness that Richard Almonte, reading blackness in *Wacousta, Roughing It in the Bush* and other early Canadian texts, asserts “is treasonous” and “defensive,” arguing that this “Blackness signals not so much what whites might be, as what they do not want to be” (24),¹⁰ a difference that “doesn’t make a difference of any kind” (Hall 23). Almonte’s assertion that Canada is morally superior to the US is not only overly simplistic, in the sense that it assumes a perceived “national” difference between Canada and the US, whereby Upper Canada remains morally superior because of its 1793 anti-slavery policies, which did not free enslaved people into the colony, though it supposedly ensured no more were brought into the colony afterward, but it also erases the relational tensions between the cultural meanings of blackness and whiteness in Canada. Furthermore, it fails to read materially as well as figuratively and thus fails to come to terms with black embodiment and its necessary interrelations with a whole set of institutions, from the fields of blackface minstrelsy and melodrama to those of international trade and commerce.

Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows is a project to relate blackness in Upper Canadian literary texts to the cultural productions of blackness in the transatlantic world. Barbara Godard’s “Relational Logics: Of Linguistic and Other Transactions in the Americas” offers an important methodological framework for critically analyzing the relationality of blackness, for examining the black Atlantic and the transatlantic reach of

¹⁰ Almonte use of “treason” alludes to, “[t]he garrison at Fort Detroit” in *Wacousta*, “where the action of the novel is centred, continues to be read as a microcosm of English, and later, Canadian, society. The hierarchical nature of this society is underscored by the fact that the novel deals with the daily running of a military fort” (18). Here lies Northrop Frye’s well-known “garrison mentality,” which underscores the defensive quality that Almonte attributes to his reading of blackness in these early Canadian texts.

Upper Canada. There are specific analytic and theoretical distinctions between the relational and comparatist undertakings, particularly given the ways these elaborate understandings of distinctiveness of racial histories manifest in specific regions or conversely highlight trajectories of influence.¹¹ Over the years, Godard insisted that critics of Canadian literature and cultural studies should always work comparatively, that we position local cultural production in relation to a geopolitical space by not only suggesting that we move the work of comparative Canadian studies from literatures to a broader sense of cultural production, but also from the intra-national (Canadian) comparison to hemispheric comparisons. What this methodology unsettles is Canadians' and Canadian literary scholars' habits of "intra-national" comparison in Canadian literary criticism, even in Canadian historiography. As my concluding chapter demonstrates, hemispheric comparative study shows how the inter-provincial and regional comparisons can serve self-congratulatory histories, can construct alibis or "worse case comparisons," just as the cultural habit of comparing Canada to the United States, in terms of race politics, constructs an aura of relative Canadian innocence. Therefore, instead of contrasting Upper Canada (as the region was known before it became Canada West between 1840 and 1867 and, with Confederation, now part of the province of Ontario) and Lower Canada (formerly Canada East and now Quebec), I focus on the filament that links them; instead of comparing Canada to the United States (e.g. contrasting abolitionist Ontario to a slave-owning racist US or the southern US), I look at Upper Canada as a node in a wider imperial field of the Americas and situate the Americas in the

¹¹ See David Goldberg, "Racial comparisons, relational racisms: some thoughts on method" which offers a critique of comparativism.

transatlantic project of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In laying out my argument, I recall some of the mediations that shape the scope of cross-border contacts and exchanges in what might be called the North American and the Caribbean quadrants of the Americas, with South America and Central America as the remaining geographical quadrants of the Americas, not to mention their transatlantic economic and political relations.¹² These relations go “beyond those of commodity exchange,” inevitably serving as opportunities for “new forms of hemispheric governance” and foregrounding ways in which “exchanges are also taking place in cultural fields where the work of symbolic mediation gives shape to verbal and visual representations of these new economic and social relations” (Godard 319).

A major focus of this dissertation is on the ways in which the logic of relationality “foreground[s] troubled relations to community, the uncertainty of social cohesiveness, in terms of ethical or psychical disturbances,” and, as a result, offers “different logics of cultural contact through which to give symbolic force to the ‘territorial stretch’ of a hemispheric imaginary” (Godard 325, 357). While the logic of comparison carries a denotation of contrast and plays up difference, the logic of relationality “propose[s] different forms of identification for subjects and favour[s] different axes of relations”

¹² The following examples highlight some of the transatlantic connections. Consider that the Fugitive Slave Laws in 1850s USA loosened the contested borderland logic between Canada and the United States, with fugitive slaves crossing borders, expanding the exchanges across the Canada-US frontiers. Older border issues, such as those raised by the Revolutionary War in 1783, where the new nation and the British colony of Canada claimed some of the same lands, haunt these crossings. Also, consider the Embargo Act of 1807: President Thomas Jefferson hoped that it would prevent the raiding of US merchant ships by the British and French armies at sea. Many historians argue this Act set the course for the War of 1812, which elicited on the ocean the glorious cries of sailors’ rights and free trade. Contemporarily, transnational quasi-judicial mechanisms like the Summit of the Americas and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) offer examples of mediations that shape the scope of cross-border contacts and transnational economic and political agreements in the region.

(Godard 326). As I engage the difficult presence of blackness, the relational logic makes it possible to conceptualize a “clash over how to represent the social imaginary” (325). *Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows* “abandons such binary relations between centre and periphery” to argue that the relational logic in “the Americas” demands a “search for different grounds for comparison.” These comparisons must, on the one hand, be “in favour of transversal or horizontal relations among the peripheral literatures of the Americas and,” on the other, be in favour of “analysis of the processes of mediation at work in such *trans*-action” (317, emphasis in original). In many ways, “relationality,” to impose my Upper Canadian context upon José Esteban Muñoz’s argument about black radical traditions and queer futurity, “is not pretty, but the option of simply opting out of it [. . .] is imaginable only if one can frame [blackness in Upper Canada] as a singular abstraction that can be subtracted and isolated from a larger social matrix” (363). I argue that critics in Canadian literature and black Atlantic studies have segregated blackness in early Canada out of its relatedness, foreshortening its significance in the transatlantic connections that occurred during that period. The injunction made by Godard is that we look more closely at the ways in which “a new transnational order proposes greater integration among the nations of the Americas” (318). By this Godard advocates, in effect, a study of culture and cultural products – including but not limited to literature, art, media, language, etc – that engages in contextual and relational analytical constructions. This study, following Godard’s view, enables a destratified analysis unhindered by nation, national comparison, and so on.

Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows has three chapters, each one intervening in

current critical debates about the important role that the difficult presence of blackness played in the formation of Upper Canada and in the field of Canadian literature. Each one of these chapters examines how Richardson, Parr Traill and Moodie display as much as hide the crucial roles of black (fugitive and slave) settlers in the formation of Canada and Canadian national identity. Because the corollary of disavowal is anxiety and silence, I read these cultural effects following Sara Ahmed's theory of emotions as economy (45), thus adding emotional capital to these works' literary capital. The work of tracking an archive through its disavowal, then, necessitates that I attend to the ways in which material things, far from inert, not only possess (affective) histories worth knowing, but also participate in disciplinary and social formations. To this effect, my project maintains that the very representational formulas that denied black historicity yield 'black history,' and, as well, that black "[c]ultural knowledge is stored in a variety of institutional forms" (Freedgood 23), in words and things.

I take as my starting point the two historical novels of Major John Richardson, *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*. Here, I take seriously David Beasley's comment in *The Canadian Don Quixote: The Life and Works of Major John Richardson* "Certainly, [Richardson] pursued the meaning of life by faithfully recording it from all sides; and it is this dimension which serves as the foundation stone of Canadian literature to which Canadian writers may look back for guidance" (284). Chapter One highlights how avoiding the difficult presence of blackness foreshortens the cultural work of blackness in Richardson's text, hence distorting the services of blackness as part of the foundation stone of Canadian literature. Engaging with the "facts" of blackness in both novels, I

show that Richardson's texts are alert, attentive, and responsive to a history of places and people *around and of* the black Atlantic. I unpack the characterization of Sambo as "a faithful servant" as a way to point out that faithfulness is *a feeling structure* that deliberately obscures and confuses the roles of servants and slaves. Also, because Sambo is a figure from minstrelsy, which Mel Watson says worked to "codify the public image of blacks as the prototypical Fool or Sambo" (35), I suggest Richardson's Sambo, once the prototypical Fool, is now *the* narrative prop that haunts the Canadian literary and cultural imagination, foreshadowing the ongoing relationship between black men and the nation-state. Hence, since Richardson enjoys the literary capital of being the first Canadian-born novelist and his novel *Wacousta* the first Canadian novel, the themes and tropes of blackness and black masculinity are integral to the formation and foundation of Canadian literature.

In Chapter Two I argue, as Morrison does in *Playing in the Dark*, that even when early Canadian texts are not concerned with the difficult presence of blackness, its "shadow hovers in implication, in sign, in line of demarcation" (45). Working with Catharine Parr Traill's *The Canadian Settler's Guide*, I ask how the histories of a people come to be narrated as a history of absence. As this chapter focuses on the absence of blackness in a settler text that marks itself as representative of settler living in Canada, it also unpacks the ways that material objects, like the cotton woven into stockings, signify. I focus on the texture of cotton in order to explore how this transcultural object, with its colonial and industrial histories, undermines early Canadian textual attempts to suppress black presence in the narrative of settlement. Using Traill's *Guide* and making the "dress

the one engrossing business” of my focus (Traill 10), I argue that suppressed blackness can be found in the margins of the text: to borrow Leora Auslander’s phrase, blackness is “beyond words,” because texts “sometimes obscure the meanings borne by material culture” (Auslander 5). This chapter traces the movement of cotton from slave plantations in the American South (as raw material) to the mills of urban England (as fabrics) and finally to the backwoods of Canada (as fine white cotton stockings), suggesting that this material’s transcultural/transnational history maps a history of labour and race relations within which real physical bodies, as much as natural resources, served as the “raw materials” for an industrializing world.

In Chapter Three, I frame Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush* as a ‘British’ diasporic text. I examine the charivari held for Tom Smith and the (white) Irish woman who marries him in “The Charivari” sketch as an enforcement of white civility. Here, based on a clear undercurrent of minstrelsy (members of the charivari party wear blackface, play musical instruments, ask bridegrooms to pay them), we can trace the price of the theatre of politeness. Moodie’s text makes it apparent that Canadian codes of politeness serve as a decoy for repressed white desires; desires which, at their worst, manifest as sadism, homogenizing and terrorizing (through physical torture) racialized and other marginalized groups into conforming to the civil and sexual-racial terms of colonial and imperial identity, legitimating anti-black racism while reinforcing and reproducing the homogeneity (and normativity) of whiteness.

The concluding chapter expands from the literary texts examined in this dissertation to meditate on an event that occurred during one of my archival visits in

Hamilton, Ontario: an archivist mistakenly brought me an unasked-for folder of KKK incidents, reports, images. Staring perplexedly at this distracting and unprepared for document in the summer of 2008, and not knowing what to do with/in the moment, with the images and my feelings, I made photocopies of the archive of newspaper images and reports. Now, years later, having realized the historical thread tying that moment to Upper Canada's past, I give an account of this intimate moment by bringing together affect and archival material as a way to understand the contemporary to today and the historical feelings of anti-blackness in this region. To do this, I have been inspired by the new scholarship on affect to explore these feelings as products of unfinished *work*, unfinished work whose affective registers reverberate from the historical parameters traced in this dissertation to my present moment in the archive.¹³ As Raymond Williams explains, "structures of feeling" are chiefly "concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt" (132). As such, these structures are "social experiences in solution, as distinct from other social semantic formations which have been precipitated and are more evidently and more immediately available" (134). Based on my reactions in the Hamilton archive, in this concluding chapter, I invoke Williams' structure of feeling to explain the connections and coalitions between working-class groups, generated by shared values and practices that are "in process" yet, at the same time, historically

¹³ Scholars like Sara Ahmed, Ann Cvetkovich, Lauren Berlant, Raymond Williams, Elizabeth Povinelli, José Esteban Muñoz, Heather Love and many others working in the field of affect studies, have convincingly drawn connections between individual feelings and social structures such as racism, diaspora, homophobia, highlighting the "affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feelings against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity" (Williams 132).

situated, as a way to map the living and interrelated continuity of anti-black feelings in the region.

Togther, these chapters demonstrate the difficult presences of blackness in Upper Canadian literature and contemporary “upper Canada” as constitutive of conjoined and differentiated histories of movements, people, and networks. Put otherwise, blackness in Upper Canada is a manifestation of the transatlantic in the national and not one that merely bears its traces. As a result of this constitutive paradigm of blackness in Upper Canada, to read Upper Canadian texts materially and semiotically is to address (rather than avoid) blackness in early Canada and its necessary interrelation with a whole set of institutions, including the field of blackface minstrelsy and sentimentalism, as well as international trade and commerce. Upper Canadian blackness “does not jump from local realities to a global or trans-global veracity with the metaphysical power of reason” (Schäfer 21); instead, it requires, as Wolf Schäfer asserts about globality, “physical growth on the skin of the geobody. Think of networks. A communications network, for example, can be local, national, international or global depending on its actual geographical reach” (21). Nowhere is this communication network more obvious than in Traill’s *The Canadian Settlers Guide* and Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush*, where both texts are directed at future and prospective settlers. The adaptive component in a paradigm such as relational blackness is useful for thinking a history of black avoidance because its mouldability – to extend and link the historical local, regional and global data – obliges us to simultaneously tie the difficult presence of blackness in early Canada to a geographical cartography and to a wide landscape of popular cultures.

The Cultural Work of Blackness in Major John Richardson's *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*

The “facts” of blackness haunt a text that is commonly regarded as the first Canadian novel, John Richardson's *Wacousta or, The Prophecy; A Tale of the Canadas* (1832) and its sequel, *The Canadian Brothers or, the Prophecy Fulfilled: A Tale of the Canadas* (1840).¹⁴ When I say these texts are haunted by blackness, I think of the allusion to Shakespeare's *Othello* found at the end of *Wacousta*, when Wacousta compares himself to Othello, echoes Othello's last speech to Desdemona, and says to Clara de Haldimar, my “only fault was that of loving, ‘not too wisely, but too well’” (W 487).¹⁵ Also, I think of Richardson offering the reader his idea of the Southern sound and cadence of black speech, which I interpret through Eric Lott's assertion that “[e]very time you hear an expansive white man drop into his version of black English, you are in the presence of blackface's unconscious return” (5). Furthermore, in *The Canadian Brothers* blackness haunts the frontier exchanges during the War of 1812 between Upper Canada

¹⁴ Peter Dickinson describes *Wacousta* as a “‘foundational’ text” in the field of Canadian literature, and Douglas Ivison makes the argument that the text “served as an historical anchor” for critics “who wished to establish the existence of a specific tradition within Canadian literature” (40). Also, Michael Hurley has noted, in *The Borders of Nightmare: The Fiction of John Richardson*, that Richardson is “The Father of Canadian Literature” and “Canada's First Novelist” (3, 9). In the *Literary History of Canada*, Carl F. Klinck dismissed *The Canadian Brothers* as “uninspired.” Focusing on *The Canadian Brothers*' literary treatment of the War of 1812, he writes, “[t]he best treatment of this material is in Major Richardson's *War of 1812* (Brockville, 1842), enhanced by A.C. Casselman's editing in 1902. This autobiographical and documented history of the campaigns around Detroit is much better reading than Richardson's uninspired effort in fiction, *The Canadian Brothers* (1840) or his early metrical romance, *Tecumseh; or, The Warrior of the West*” (137). And yet, according to Catherine Sheldrick Ross, “*Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers* form both a saga of Canada's past” “and a prophecy of Canada's future” (12).

¹⁵He is referring to entrusting the care of his fiancée, Clara Beverly, to his friend, Richard de Haldimar, who deceives Wacousta and ends up marrying Clara when Wacousta is called for military duty. See Michael Hurley's “John Richardson's Byronic Hero in the Land of Cain” for a reading of how Richardson's work adheres to and departs from Renaissance tragedy.

and the slave culture of Kentucky, a frontier state with an elaborate slave code which sets blacks, whether free peoples or enslaved, in an inferior position. This connection is not at all incidental, seeing as this slave society also happens to be the home-place of the willful Matilda Montgomery, a slave-owning American, who is lover to one of the Canadian brothers, Gerald Grantham, who desires to be her “slave for ever” (251). But most importantly, for this chapter, I am drawn to the representation of Sambo, the faithful, obedient, ageing black “servant” who appears in both texts, and how his presence offers a picture of slave life, society and culture as Richardson interpreted it and, perhaps, as it materialized in Upper Canada. My purpose in this chapter is to demonstrate how the “facts” of blackness that haunt these texts localize the specter of black Atlantic slavery in the Great Lakes region, which we will see here is not only a matter of chains and whip.¹⁶ As Frantz Fanon explains in *Black Skin White Masks*, the “facts” of blackness include fantasies, mythologies, and pathologies, which he describes as “phobogenic,” by which he means that the fear, hatred, and paranoid anxiety towards blacks induce a subjective insecurity for many black people and this production highlights how black racial identification is aesthetically and historically encoded. Hence, in this chapter, I want to think about the allusions and references to blackness (particularly blackface minstrelsy, black masculinity, and black servitude and superstition) in Richardson’s fictional history of Upper Canada together with the national history of Upper Canada and, at the same

¹⁶ In *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*, Ron Eyeran suggests that the cultural trauma of slavery is “collective memory, a form of remembrance that grounded the identity-formation of a people” (1). Though Eyeran is talking about the formation of African Americans as a people, I want to expand his notion to suggest that this collective memory also forms white British North Americans as “a people.”

time, correlate both versions of Upper Canada's history with the political and moral economies of black Atlantic discourse.

As historical narratives committed to the origins of the nation, to romanticizing the image of the Canadian past as distinct from an American and a British past, the settings for *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*, the Pontiac Rebellion in 1763 and the War of 1812, respectively, can be read as Richardson's attempt to memorialize these historical moments. And, I argue, these memorials mark both texts as dramas of location – dramas in which the concrete situations of both wars offer ideal materials for melodrama.¹⁷ In addition to the dramatic reference to Shakespeare's *Othello*, when we consider how forts are explored, fire-ships stormed, hostages captured, tattered flags hoisted up in triumph and mournful bugles blown to sound retreats, we understand that by drama I am not simply speaking in metaphors but in a literal sense as well, that the techniques of drama and theatre are present in both texts. Hence, it is surprising that there has been little systematic effort to trace the historical, cultural, performative, and ideological continuities that link the melodrama performed in both of these canonical Canadian texts (which many critics have explored) with a prominent nineteenth century form of North American drama, blackface minstrelsy. This lack is particularly surprising because, as I have pointed out, Richardson's two historical novels position blackness as forming part of the verbal fictions, the tales that shape the Canadas, and, moreover, the *only* "character" to appear in both *Wacousta* and its sequel is Sambo, which positions blackness as a line of continuity between both texts. Furthermore, this name has wider

¹⁷ See, for example, the development of these melodramatic potentials in the play by James Reaney, *Wacousta! A Melodrama in Three Acts with a Description of its Development in Workshop*.

resonance, directly linking this character to the minstrel South stereotype of Sambo as not smart enough to cover his dishonesty. In a way, this “American icon,” as Joseph Boskin describes Sambo (3), is “trustworthy” because of the reliability of his inability to deceive the audience. Using Wallace Lippman’s work on public image as “perfect stereotype” to describe Sambo, and recalling Lippman’s argument that the stereotype “precedes reason,” and “as a form of perception, imposes a certain character on the data of our senses” (Lippman qtd. in Boskin 4), Boskin writes,

So fixed was the image, in fact that dislodging it from its preeminent place in American popular culture seemed, especially to Afro-Americans, over the long haul, virtually impossible. Sambo would undergo changes over the centuries, the image reflecting time and place, eventually to crack and disintegrate. But through it all he was always what he started out as: a comic performer *par excellence*. (4)

As a theatrical performance concerned with depicting blackness, black culture, slavery, and the commodifying bonds of affection, blackface minstrelsy became a popular form of entertainment in the US in the 1830s.¹⁸ Its popularity spread and minstrel shows became a staple of nineteenth-century entertainment, attracting a cross-class audience.

Stephen Johnson notes that minstrelsy was the “entertainment of choice in North America

¹⁸ Theorists of blackface minstrelsy consent to the fact that early blackface performances in the United States were largely a cross-racial, male and working-class affair. They also consent to the fact that the medium relied on racial stereotypes, though there remain debates concerning “when in the United States” this form of entertainment began as well as the ends to which these racial stereotypes were put. Some argue that blackface began when T.D. Rice first jumped “Jim Crow” in New York City in 1832, and it flourished during the years of Andrew Jackson’s presidency. Others, like Robert Winans, suggest that minstrel devices were “evident in American popular culture of the 1780s and 1790s” (qtd. in Cockrell xi), implying a much earlier development. Dale Cockrell marks 1829 as the beginning because “the mythmakers of the Jacksonian era (generally, newspaper editors) believed that ‘Coal Black Rose’ was the beginning, a song of around 1829, first heard at the time of the inauguration of the president who gave name to the epoch” (xi). For more, also see Dale Cockrell, *Demons of Disorder: Early Blackface Minstrels and their World*; Virginia Vaughan, *Othello: A Contextual History*; W.T. Lhamon Jr., *Jump Jim Crow: Lost Plays, Lyrics, and Street Prose of the First Atlantic Popular Culture* and *Raising Cain: Blackface Performance from Jim Crow to Hip-hop*; Annemarie Bean et. al. (eds.) *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth Century Black-face Minstrelsy*.

from the 1840s through the 1870s” (58), including Canada West (present day Ontario). One might even wonder, as I do, whether contemporary readers heard Sambo’s exchanges with Sir Everard from *Wacousta* and the Canadian brothers of the title as a written version of the familiar “Ethiopian dialogues” between Mr. Interlocutor and the minstrel show’s end men, Bones and Tambo. Although blackface minstrelsy remains, in Richardson’s Upper Canada, a cross-class site where whiteness negotiates its racial investments, Richardson uncharacteristically does not dramatize Sambo as the clownish, moronic end man normalized in blackface minstrelsy; rather, his rendition of Sambo, localized in Upper Canada, becomes a way to differentiate Canada and the US in terms of its racial politics. Richardson recasts Sambo in the role of the middleman, who operates as blackface minstrelsy’s over-dignified interlocutor, the one who controls the pacing of the show.¹⁹ As a result of this distinction, blackface minstrelsy offers a site where we can link Richardson’s texts to a discursive type that circulated broadly in the black Atlantic at the same time that it marks a specificity that tried to position itself as uniquely Canadian. It is worth noting, though, that physically Richardson’s Sambo remains committed to the tradition of blackface minstrelsy: he speaks in a “black” stage dialect, remains the minstrel darkey, and stays poor, signified by the fact that he never elevates himself above the rank of servant in both novels. Attitudinally, however, Richardson’s Sambo loses the humorous feature attributed to minstrelized Sambo, a feature that Boskin points out is “a device of oppression” (14). Instead, he is made to take on the responsibilities of the

¹⁹ In terms of reading Sambo as an interlocutor, one might even argue that when Richardson Americanized *The Canadian Brothers* into *Matilda Montgomerie* by removing materials that would have been offensive to the American market, he himself takes up the role of an interlocutor – especially if we consider that the interlocutor controlled the pace of the show, allowed routines to continue or cut them off, and based this decision on the mood and response of the audience.

interlocutor.²⁰ One might even argue that Richardson turns Sambo into the Jester since “the Jester was accorded the beauty of wisdom, Sambo accorded the follies of foolishness” (Boskin 9). Given these many levels of significance, it is remarkable that no critic has seriously engaged these texts in terms of the ways in which the social content of blackface minstrelsy operates in the project of national definition, let alone in terms of the cultural and racial work that make up the white mythos and imagining of blackness, particularly of black masculinity.

Critics have, however, discussed both texts as works preoccupied with the struggle between wilderness and civilization, arguing that this struggle is a source of Canadian national identity. Others, like Daniel Coleman, writing on both texts and other early Canadian texts, argue that the ideals of whiteness, masculinity, and Britishness in these early texts combined into logics of white civility. Sunnie Rothenburger, focusing on *Matilda Montgomery*, the willful American, demonstrates the subversive potentials in her gender and national identities. However, what becomes clear in Rothenburger’s work is that when such performances attempt to subvert whiteness they re-cite the privileges of whiteness. Still others, such as Peter Dickenson, maintain that *Wacousta* resists an authoritative reading of “heteronormative nationalism” (5). Recently, the Plains Cree scholar and poet Emma LaRocque has turned her attention to race, arguing that Richardson’s depictions of First Nations characters are spectacles of dehumanization and she goes on to frame his texts as “hate literature” (59). This reading would necessitate a

²⁰ This recasting is in line with Richardson’s project of writing historical realist texts and writing national myths. The practice of him interpreting the past, recasting national historical records, themselves “fragmentary and incomplete,” of him (re)arranging historical representations, fictionalizing/textualizing history, as a way to give the illusion of reality through its narration, describes “the fictions of factual presentation” that Hayden White writes about.

devaluation of these texts in the Canadian canon, thus indicating that we should not really be focusing on them. However, I am reticent to turn away from these texts because such a move would risk overlooking and therefore oversimplifying the archives of blackness in early Canada. After all, Richardson's text is a site and source of knowledge about blackness in this period. Hence, for my project, it is important to look to these texts to imagine ways to make them reveal their contradictions, polyvocal and multivalent as they are. For example, although Sambo's appearance suggests, as Coleman's reading of the recurring role of Black and Indigenous figures in these texts points out, that he is "not primarily [a] character in and for [himself]; rather, [he] instantiate[s] the ethical differences between the upright and the downfallen White brothers" (71), what becomes lost in reading Sambo as a perpetual conduit for the Canadian brothers (shown by how Richardson, Coleman, and Rothenburger mobilize Sambo to make their respective arguments about the nation) is that we overlook his role as an instantiator, *the significant other* whose servility and rituals maintain white civility. And he, oddly enough, (can and does), delay the instantiation of the ethical difference. This is to insist that in situating Sambo as a civilizing agent for the brothers we recall his role as a middleman in Richardson's minstrel show (thus central to the comprehension of the show). He is accorded the bounty of wisdom; hence, in many ways, he controls the pacing of the show. To state his role as an instantiator of the ethical difference otherwise, with a slightly different emphasis, Sambo is not primarily a character in and for himself because his ritualized "compliance" (CB 155), his rituals of allegiance, allude to the Southern ethics of honour that upheld slavery and this, as I will argue later on in this chapter, suggests

that he lives in what John Locke describes as a “perfect condition of slavery.” By which I mean, as a slave who is related to Upper Canada through another person, he is subject “to the absolute and arbitrary power” of this person who can “take away his life when he pleases” (172).²¹ At the same time, I want to read LaRocque’s argument about Richardson’s work as hate literature as a refusal to accept representational inclusion as a basis for logics of recognition; if anything, such inclusion recirculates white mythologies about racialized peoples. In this light, I read her assertion of hate literature as a politics of refusal, meaning that she refuses the recirculation of white mythos, and it is from this reading that I too want to draw attention to the various kinds of racialization of blackness in Richardson’s work – i.e. through blackface, servitude, slavery, superstition. But, how is attention to the varying racialization of blackness different from the logics of recognition? What is being recognized in the latter and how is “attention” different from “recognition”? In *Black Skin White Masks* Fanon points out that “*it is the racist who creates his[her] inferior*” (93, emphasis in original). Let us turn to his description of the pathology of colonial identification to understand the difference I am drawing between recognition and attention. He writes,

I begin to suffer from not being white to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me that I am a parasite on the world, that I must bring myself as quickly as possible into step with the white world, “that I am a brute beast, that my people and I are like a walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilizes sweet sugar cane and silky cotton, that I have no use in the world.” Then I will quite

²¹ Remember too that, having been captured, the slave, according to Locke, relinquishes all property, liberty and goods. As such, slaves constitute the one group that has no part in civil society. Locke writes, “[t]hese men having, as I say, forfeited their lives and, with it, their liberties, and lost their estates, and being in a state of slavery, not capable of any property, cannot in that state be considered as any part of civil society, the chief end whereof is the preservation of property” (158).

simply try to make myself white: that is I will compel the white man to acknowledge that I am human. (98)

Here lie the driving logics of recognition: waiting. Waiting to be acknowledged as human and not animal. Waiting for access into whiteness. In other words, waiting for the impossible. Therefore, to my mind, the act of “drawing attention” is a work of social justice, work that concerns itself with cognitive and epistemic justice (Coleman; Santos).

In the interest of imposing some order on how blackness in Richardson’s novels intertwines with the making of the nation, this chapter discusses how Richardson employs the minstrel tradition, conflates the relations between servitude and enslavement, puts forward a contemplation of the trope of the faithful Negro servant and ends with a discussion of (African) superstition to suggest these uses of blackness mutually function in performing the cultural work of blackness. I begin this work by focusing on Richardson’s appeals to blackface minstrelsy. In some of these instances he asserts the purported nativist impulse of blackness and, in others, its potential to instigate a radical decentering of identity, demonstrating to readers, advertently or otherwise, the tenuousness of the essentialist notions upon which blackness was founded. Nowhere is this argument more salient than in the scene that occurs two days before Matilda’s marriage to Colonel Forrester, an occurrence that “blasted all prospect of [their] union for ever” (*CB* 348). According to Matilda’s recollection of this scene, Forrester walked in on Matilda “hanging on the neck of another” (*CB* 348), whereupon he “accused me of a vile intercourse with a slave, and almost maddened me with ignoble reproaches.” Continuing,

It was in vain that I swore to him most solemnly, the man he had seen was my father [Jeremiah Desborough]; a being whom motives of prudence compelled me to receive in private, even although my heart abhorred and loathed the

relationship between us. He treated my explanation with deriding contempt, bidding me either produce that father within twenty-four hours, or find some easier fool to persuade—that one, wearing the hue and features of the black could, by human possibility, be the parent of a white woman. Again I explained the seeming incongruity, by urging that the hasty and imperfect view he had taken was of a mask, imitating the features of a negro, which my father had brought with him as a disguise, and which he had hastily resumed on hearing the noise of the key in the door. I even admitted, as an excuse for seeing him thus clandestinely, the lowly origin of my father, and the base occupation he followed of a treacherous spy who, residing in the Canadas, came, for the mere consideration of gold, to sell political information to the enemies of the country that gave him asylum and protection. (CB 350)

This race-inscribed deception is a literary re-creation and re-elaboration of the historical event known as “the Kentucky Tragedy,” the event related to the murder of Colonel Solomon P. Sharp, one of Kentucky’s leading politicians, by Jereboam Beauchamp, a young lawyer, in Frankfort, Kentucky in November 1825.²² The tragedy seems to have originated in allegations that Sharp had seduced Ann Cooke. He had, it was said, used his status and his wiles to persuade her to have sex with him, resulting in the birth of a stillborn child who Sharp rumoured was not the offspring of a white but a black man. This news unleashed Cooke’s wrath. She procured the aid of the chivalric and fearless Beauchamp and soon after Sharp was murdered.

The Tragedy formed part of a larger sensationalist literary movement in the nineteenth century. I say sensational in the sense that (1) it became a cultural touchstone and a literary inspiration for novelists, poets and playwrights ranging from Edgar Allan Poe, Charlotte Barnes, William Gilmore Simms, and Thomas Holley Chivers, to Mary E.

²² See Dennis Duffy “John Richardson’s Kentucky Tragedies,” and Carl Klinck “Introduction to Richardson” in the 1976 edition of *The Canadian Brothers* for how Richardson adapted even as he revised and redeployed this narrative. For work on the Tragedy itself, see Loren J. Kallsen *The Kentucky Tragedy: A Problem in Romantic Attitude* and Winston Coleman, *The Beauchamp-Sharp Tragedy: An Episode of Kentucky History During the Middle 1820s*.

MacMichael²³; (2) Richardson grafts the Kentucky Tragedy onto his Canadian project; (3) the animating principle of the scene is “a mask, imitating the features of a Negro”; and (4) the aestheticism of the mask re-stages blackness as an imposter, making it an interpretive quandary. So at the heart of this scene, of each imitation and allusion, is an overlap of different forms of copying. Put together, they claim and re-manufacture a series of ideological formulations (from sexuality to race to criminality) within Upper Canada.

To note that Richardson’s Desborough-Matilda-Forrester triangle mirrors the historical Beauchamp-Ann-Sharp triangle is to note the symbolic relationship between black and white North American “race” and class cultures expressed in the nineteenth-century performances of blackface minstrelsy.²⁴ My point is that, if we situate Richardson’s retelling of this romantic story of seduction, revenge and honour defended in the larger symbolic and cultural enterprises of the nineteenth century, and consider the sequence of the Desborough-Matilda-Forrester triangle with respect to blackface minstrelsy, we will come to see that this sensational depiction of a white patriarchal homosocial triangle, a white man masking his face to hide from another white man, adopts the techniques of minstrel shows to appropriate the practice of “signification,” which, in traditional black sayings, is understood as “the Nigger’s occupation.” From Henry Louis Gates Jr. to Stuart Hall, from bell hooks to Hortense Spillers, we understand the practice of signifying as an occupation because, as Hall puts it, “slaves often

²³ See Willard Rouse Jillson (in Loren Kallsen’s edited collection) and Jack Surrency (*No Fairer Land*) for studies on how these writers retailed the tragedy.

²⁴ I invoke class cultures because part of my argument is about the social class of the characters, and about the exclusion of blackness from civil class hierarchy, as my reference to Locke indicates above.

deliberately parodied their masters' behaviour," which included "exaggerated imitation, laughing at white folks behind their backs and 'sending them up'" (244). If this practice is being 'reversed' or appropriated in this scene, who is being "sent up" by this inverted signification? Because Richardson's overall point is about how Gerald is taken in by Matilda's story, I suggest, the (unstable, tempted by an American) white Canadian brother is, somehow, the dupe of this deceptive story of signification. Seen in this context, the sequence in the Desborough-Matilda-Forrester triangle is a daring performance in the sense that Richardson redeploys the Kentucky Tragedy narrative and uses a black mask, a racial prosthetic, to evince a racial and material identity and to stage a minstrel show where a white man impersonates a white man impersonating a black man—a kind of white-white impersonation.²⁵

Indeed, as Debbie Lee reminds us in *Slavery and Romantic Imagination*, imitation and metaphors of aping were central to the early nineteenth-century discourses on slavery. Given this racial signification, for Desborough's face to imitate Negroid features is a way to subject him to enslavement, subjection. That is to say, unless one wants to dismiss as mere "disguise" the effects of this mask on perception, unless one wants to ignore that minstrelsy was a highly popular enterprise that powerfully expressed common and popular politics, then, the mask is not merely a manufactured or mechanical prop. It becomes embodied; blackness becomes a mask that Richardson collapses into Desborough's treacherous face. In fact the idea that the mask imitates the *features* of a

²⁵ I owe this reading to Susan Gubar who refers to the kind of minstrelsy that African-American actors perform in as "blacks impersonating whites impersonating blacks—a kind of black black impersonation" (112).

Negro, the idea that the mask is anatomically “real,” that it epidermalizes Desborough’s face and neck to the point that Forrester is unable (perhaps unwilling) to register a difference, highlights, on the one hand, that the racial masquerade celebrates the performance of the performer. Which is to say it frames Forrester’s gaze to see a fiction of a performance already staged as fact, underscoring that the psychovisual experience of looking cannot see what the mask hides: white face. And yet, note the larger framing of this scene: it is told by Matilda to Gerald in an effort to get him to murder Forrester (i.e. to carry out American-style vigilante “justice” or, put differently, to test the limits of Canadianness vis-à-vis Southern vigilante “justice”). We do not get Desborough’s performance directly; instead, we get it through Matilda’s re-narration, re-performance of the scene *as a strategy* for convincing Gerald to take up her cause. She relies on Gerald’s willingness 1) to see Forrester’s automatic shock that Matilda may have had a black lover, 2) to accept the minstrelsy explanation that she did no such shocking thing, and 3) to believe Forrester should have been “enlightened” like Gerald and willing to give Matilda a second chance. On the other hand, when we relate this false creation of blackness, and the imagined black body to the way in which Desborough is described, as “wearing the hue and features of the black,” we come to understand that the presumption of knowing “*the black*” requires no further knowledge beyond skin colour. As a result, the visible features of this racial prosthetic rest on the race science of the nineteenth century, of what Lucius Outlaw identifies as a socio-natural approach to race. According to this approach, each racialized group is marked by some *roughly* distinctive biological features and is also socially constructed, in two ways: first, each racialized group is further marked

by various non-biological, cultural features, and second, the biological features associated with each racialized group have that association only insofar as our beliefs, norms, and practices “conscript” those biological properties into racial service (Outlaw 21).

Part of the misinformation in this scene serves to illustrate how racial intelligibility about human groups rests on interplay between visual markers on the body with fixed perceptual practices. In other words, Forrester’s decision to end his engagement to Matilda is not only based on the visuals of him seeing her hanging on the neck of another, but also (or even rather) hangs on the fact that that neck is perceived to belong to a black man, a slave, fixed in an intractable series of negative stereotypes. As a result, her hanging on to it marks her behaviour as sexually inappropriate. From this perspective, Forrester suspects her of “infidelity” and this suspicion, by extension, jeopardizes the continual reproduction of the social body of whiteness.

Mary Poovey’s study of the formulation of gender ideology in the mid-Victorian period provides a useful way of thinking the ideological work of race and gender as they function in this scene. Citing Althusser, Poovey casts ideology as “a set of beliefs—the ‘imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence’”—and this understanding allows her to link ideology to experience (3). For Poovey, “ideologies are given concrete form in the practices and social institutions that govern people’s social relations” and thus “constitute both the experience *of* social relations and the nature of subjectivity” (3). Matilda is aware of this constitution: “I could not but be conscious that the very act of having yielded myself up to him [Forrester], had armed my lover with the power to accuse me of infidelity” (351). Hence, when Forrester walks in on this scene, he

assesses what he sees by accessing a system of interdependent images: the image of black male sexuality as the rapist-ape or monkey lover (with the monkey signifying sin, carnal lust and evil, because of its trickiness), which interplays with the image of Matilda as sexualized, susceptible, and fallen. In addition to the racial confrontations of the scene, the mask also forces to the surface a denied anxiety that can be expressed in the form of coded (but nevertheless understood) references to black masculinity. Here, when Matilda and her blackfaced father embrace, black masculinity is equated with danger and erotic/sexual transgression, particularly with incest. Dennis Duffy has suggested that the “whiff of incest to the miscegenation of the original” is a way for Richardson to render his version of the tragedy “even *darker* than in the original” (16, emphasis added). This whiff of incest, as a natural/cultural prohibition, is more than a recast of the original material.²⁶ In part, it represents a desire for sameness, for racial purity and, at the same time, because this desire is pathologized, it induces a loss or destabilization of identity.²⁷ Thus, conceptualized as incest, this moment tunes us in to the complicated and conflictive history of racial panic in nineteenth-century North America and, one can argue, as I do, that *The Canadian Brothers* depicts the consequences of rejecting the terms of culture.

To read the incestuous familial relation in terms of Desborough’s political corruption in the novel, of him murdering Colonel Grantham, of him representing treasonous Upper Canadian white Loyalists who assisted the Americans during the War

²⁶ Levi-Strauss characterizes the “incest prohibition” as “natural” because it is universal. It creates a “scandal” and ensures exogamy and, hence, is a guarantor of culture. Derrida deconstructs Levi-Strauss’s opposition because it is both “natural” (because universal) and “cultural” (because a prohibition). At the same time, Derrida argues, the incest taboo lies on the cusp between nature and culture and is in fact the placeholder of “culture.” See Levi-Strauss’ “Myth and Incest” and Derrida’s “Structure, Sign and Play.”

²⁷ For a very suggestive reading of the incest theme in relation to the political and philosophical problem of recognition, see Judith Butler, *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship between Life and Death*, esp. 12-13.

of 1812, and of him as a settler who claimed two allegiances, is to learn that Richardson conjoins betrayal, incest, miscegenation, and slavery to create a performative and rhetorical space in which political, racial, and sexual norms reinforce one another. Richardson relies on these themes operating “automatically” because, as I have mentioned above, the Kentucky Tragedy was already circulating through North American literary and popular culture, and because of it the series of linkages in this scene operates whether or not Matilda’s story is true. The assertion itself is enough to create the racial, sexual, and national panic. In other words, he borrows from *and* plays with well-worn themes common to Victorian sexual and political rhetoric – the incestuous nonwhite or working-class anti-citizen whose trouble is in need of regulation. To a large extent, then, the sexual vocabulary of incest serves to exemplify that to be thematized black, or to be caught in intimate ties with blackness is a form of humiliation in and of itself. Those who are humiliated are also morally marked: they threaten to dissolve the boundaries of racial and sexual difference, not to mention Victorian gender expectations.

In this scene lie the limits of realism. Matilda informs readers that she becomes “a victim of the most diabolical suspicion that ever haunted the breast of man” (351). This diabolical suspicion might explain why Richardson does not stage a triangular interplay: i.e. have a white man, Forrester, defend a white woman, Matilda, whose white female body is threatened by a blackened male’s body, Desborough. Rather than defend Matilda, Forrester “confides to one of his most intimate associates that” he broke off his engagement with Matilda because he had “discovered [her] in the arms of a slave—of one of those vile beings communion with whom” Matilda herself tells us, her “soul[,] in any

sense[,] abhorred” (352). It is Forrester’s gossip, the effects of this idle talk that Matilda seeks to avenge.

How shall I describe the terrible feeling that came over my insulted heart at that moment. But no, no—description were impossible. This associate—this friend of his—dared, on the very strength of this infamous imputation, to pollute my ear with his disrespectful passion, and when, in a transport of contempt and anger, I spurned him from me, he taunted me with that which I believed confined to the breast, as it had been engendered only in the suspicion, of my betrayer. Oh! If it be dreadful to be falsely accused by those whom we have loved in intimacy, how much more so it [is] to know that they have not had even the common humanity to conceal our supposed weakness from the world. (352)

This quotation underscores the dangers of interracial sexual slander for white women and the effects of gossip, of circulating a private contract, in a public manner. While, on the one hand, it gets us to understand gossip, in James Scott’s aptly titled study of domination, as part of a “hidden transcript,” and demonstrates that honourable men like Colonel Forrester are “not immune to hypocrisy” (Rothenburger 10), on the other hand, it underscores another hidden transcript, a desire for interracial sex. While I agree with Rothenburger that Forrester’s associate “uses the information to his advantage to try to [illicit] sexual favours of his own from Matilda” (10), I want to propose that, in the context of slavery, the image of Matilda spurning Forrester’s associate and the idea that he “engendered only in the suspicion” link sexual coercions to a racial hierarchy. As a result, I will go so far as to say that his interest is in the suspicion itself, because that allows him to corporealize blackness onto Matilda’s body, resulting in his daring measures to assume claims to it.

Richardson’s use of blackface continues into the scenes of Matilda’s revenge against Forrester. At Frankfort, Kentucky, where Gerald Grantham is sent after he is

captured in the battle of Fort Sandusky, he reunites with Matilda who asks him to murder the man who had accused her of the “vile intercourse with a slave.” Though this act is repugnant to Gerald, he is unable to deny her request because he is driven by his love for her. As they prepare for the ambush, the narrator writes,

The better to facilitate his close and unperceived approach to the unhappy man, a pair of cloth shoes had been made for her lover by the white hands of Matilda, with a sort of hood or capuchin of the same material, to prevent recognition by any one who might accidentally pass him on the way to the scene of the contemplated murder. (*CB* 368)

When Richardson remarks on the whiteness of Matilda’s hand, he is highlighting, I believe, the blackness of the fabric. As far as I understand, the hemming on “cloth shoes” is black inside, white outside. Also, the colour of the hood of the sixteenth century Capuchin Friars²⁸ is black. If we understand the hood to be replacing Beauchamp’s black handkerchief, then it also acts as a kind of “black-face” disguise. The racial translation that the mask and hood allow Desborough and Gerald is performative, in Butler’s sense, in that the identifications are crucially, temporally, limited, lasting only for the duration of the scene. The mask and hood indulge in white racial impersonation and masquerade, and they conceal how these fantasies are interwoven with and determined by very realistic factors. While the grandiose achievements are illusory, the potential underlying them are often real.

Desborough is not the only character in Richardson’s texts who is described as “wearing the hue and features of the black.” The figure of Desborough’s father, Wacousta

²⁸ Three centuries after St. Francis, a number of Franciscan Friars wanted to live as the founder envisioned; they wanted to observe his original Rule and ideals. Devoting themselves to prayer, penance and preaching, the friars also heroically served the poor, sick and dying. In 1528 Pope Clement VII gave them permission to form a new community of Franciscan friars. They soon became known as the “Capuchins” because many Italian children called them cappuccini for the large hoods on their habits.

himself complicates the racial duality in blackface minstrelsy's salacious juxtaposition of whiteness and blackness. In addition to descriptions of him as a "black warrior" (228, 229, 230), he is, in one of the battle scenes, described as wearing the hue of the black: "His face was painted black as death; and as he stood under the arch of the gateway, with his white turbaned head towering far above those of his companions, this formidable and mysterious enemy might have been likened to the spirit of darkness presiding over his terrible legions" (227). In this scene, he is also described as a "black and turbaned warrior" (230). Moreover, when he "penetrates" the garrison, he is "disguised as a black" (392, emphasis added). Remember that Wacousta is, in fact, Sir Reginald Morton, "a pale face" (232) from Cornwall, who, migrates to Upper Canada to seek revenge against Colonel de Haldimar for betraying him and stealing his bride-to-be, Clara Beverley. In Upper Canada, he joins the French and the Indians, gains a "seat on the right hand of that chief [Pontiac]" (245), and *becomes* the Warrior of the *Fleur de lis*. As a result, rather than only read his acts of becoming "the physical embodiment of the colony's own 'genetic' composition, part British, part French and part Indian" and framing them as symptomatic of the "Canadian Gothic" (Turcotte 107),²⁹ I want to suggest that his different "physical embodiment[s]" are actually racial cross-dressings.³⁰ They point to how Richardson uses the discourses of blackness to mediate and generate Wacousta's

²⁹ Which is to say that Richardson "fuses tradition[al] Gothic motifs with Canadian pioneer anxieties" (Turcotte 107).

³⁰ The theatrical paraphernalia of cloth and disguise mark an intimate linkage between theatricality and subjectivity. So when I frame Wacousta's performances of deception or cross-dressing as "racial" and not mere performances, I do this because Richardson's narrative acknowledges a form of racial conversion, expressed when Oucanasta's brother refers to Wacousta as "my brother." Notwithstanding the intimacy of this kinship, Oucanasta's brother, in the same breath, also undermines Wacousta's indigeniety, claiming he "is not cunning, like a red skin" (246). These double articulations from Oucanasta's brother explain why Wacousta's performances are both forms of deception and cross-dressing. See Manina Jones's "Beyond Pale Face" which focuses on White-Indigenous racial cross-dressing in the novel.

(read: a white man's) orientalist desires for indigeniety and whiteness. Here, in this racial ventriloquism, lies part of the larger racial politics, the cultural-religious³¹ work of race in early Canada.

Interestingly, unlike the scene with Desborough, who, as a white man, plays a white man playing a black man, in Wacousta's conversion, a pale face plays a white man playing a red man playing a black man. Blackface in this context is layered by the tradition of Indigenous peoples' painting their faces for war. Black, for example, is the face paint used by the Adowa, Hurons, Ojibway, Ottawa, and Potawatomi peoples (who were part of Pontiac's alliance) for war. So, when Wacousta disguises himself with black face paint, Richardson is, at least, conflating two visual registers. He conflates Indigenous peoples' war practices with the nineteenth-century, North American popular culture of blackface minstrelsy as his way to fabricate Wacousta's racial identity. His appropriations from these traditions blur references, and, through this, we note the democratic usage of blackface minstrelsy and, at the same time, the symbolic function of "black" in this kind of face paint, which, in turn, complicates the tradition of blackface minstrelsy. One implication is that minstrelsy also informed popular and imaginary perceptions of what it means to be Indigenous in North American popular culture, articulated in how Richardson treats "race" as an essentializing performance (Wacousta's "Indian-ness," as an example, explains his savage actions). In trying to understand the complexity in

³¹ I use the term cultural-religious work of race to link my meditations here to the material and prosthetic device of the "white turban" which invoked images during this period of African Muslims who were enslaved in the Americas. Drawings of these Africans, according to Sylviane Anna Diouf, "depict an amazing display of Islamic headgear: women wearing veils, men sporting skullcaps or turbans" (75). (Many portraits of Tecumseh, however, also depicted him in a white turban. So this headgear had multiple registers at the time.)

Richardson's depiction of blackface minstrelsy, of implicating Indigenous war practice in the degradation of black culture, and/or the degradation of black culture intertwining with Indigenous war practice, we should not lose sight of the fact that white imagination is at the centre of determining the significations of blackness in this dramatic genre.

Irrespective of the complexity, of Richardson's appropriating these different cultural practices in order to remake the genre, I maintain his representations of blackness and the figure of the black warrior reproduces the racist ideology of the period, explaining why blackness resonates with death, heathenism, and "spirit of darkness."

If I am assuming a linear progression of becoming in these acts of impersonation, it is not because I am overlooking the fact that it is Desborough's and Wacousta's whiteness that allows each one of them to "indigenize" to "incorporate the Other" (Goldie 12). Acknowledging this ability, I am saying that as white men they play whiteness³² when, in the processes of "naturalizing," they *decide* to adopt or incorporate the racial Other to serve their interests. The levels of performance in Wacousta's racial conversions conflate colonial epistemologies around African and North American Indigenous peoples, which, although they confirm attitudes of colonial society as well as reify the racial hierarchies that undergird these attitudes, they also allow us to bring into view racial relationalities that are too often obscured or displaced. This is not to say that we flatten out ethnic differences. In *Wacousta*, descriptions of Wacousta as "black Ingian" (326) do not flatten difference. Nor does the battle scene where Wacousta is described as "naked to

³² Playing whiteness, in this instance, marks the fact that they are able to perform as blackface minstrel players because they are white-men. Therefore, they are performing (or playing) their whiteness through their ability to perform other "races," which is a quintessential white practice.

the waist, his body and face besmeared with streaks of black and red paint, and his whole attitude expressing despair and horror” (152). In this earlier battle scene, his disguise shifts from his face to encompass “his body and face.” Although, at this stage in my research, I have not determined whether or not the black and red painting of his body and face alludes to some ceremonial significance in North American Indigenous communities (particularly the Adowa, Hurons, Ojibway, Ottawa, and Potawatomi peoples who were part of the tribes from the Great Lakes region), for now, I read the shift in Wacousta’s description in light of blackface minstrel tradition and suggest that the black and red paint are symbolic marks of his complete adoption as the racial Others – meaning his incorporation of these racial figures and others’ perception of him as having adopted them. With this in mind, the risk of flattening these relationalities is minimum, not only because critics working on Wacousta’s racial conversions do not relate questions of his indigenization with those of his blackness, and, as a result, ignore the cultural work of blackness in both the novel and Wacousta’s performances, but also because Richardson’s novels are truly unruly.

Moving from Richardson’s general use of the tradition of blackface minstrelsy, I turn now to examine, in both works, the figure that embodies the constitutive thrust of the blackface tradition, Richardson’s Sambo. I begin with his appearance in *Wacousta* as a way to focus attention on the racially charged bond between him and his master, Sir Everard Valletort. To begin here is to observe that *Wacousta* offers a moment to meditate on the *functions* of blackness and black masculinity in early Canada. I want to suggest that the relationship between white master and black servant – a relationship that is itself

a recruitment, even a rehearsal, for the civilizing project of nation formation – rests on a racially charged bond of co-optation. After doing so, I will consider the description of Sambo as a faithful Negro servant as a work of *diversion* from the labour of the slave and, as well, consider the narrative work of this diversion as an *obsession* generated by Richardson's desire to situate Upper Canada as a colony free of slavery. I am grappling, then, with two kinds of labour: on the one hand, the socio-cultural work that the representations of blackness and Sambo do in the emerging narratives of Canada, *and*, on the other, the literary work that has gone into designing these narratives, providing reassurance that the Canadian brothers' patriarchal benevolence was recognized and appreciated by Sambo.

In *Wacousta*, we are introduced to Sambo in the closing scene of chapter two, just as a mysterious figure invades Fort Detroit. This introduction offers a brief dramatization of the relationship between Sir Everard and Sambo, and their interaction provides a fair outline of the racialized attachments that my larger project works to understand. When Sambo appears in the scene, he is represented engaging in militaristic service and, as a result, sharing a profound communion and allegiance with a group of British officers (37). Captain Erskine announces Sambo's presence by foregrounding his utility. When "danger, in its most mysterious guise, lurked around [the Fort], and threatened the safety of all" (35), Captain Blessington asks "Erskine," "Have you heard anything." Erskine responds, "Not a sound ourselves, but here is Sir Everard's black servant, Sambo, who has just riveted our attention, by declaring that *he* distinctly heard a groan towards the

skirt of the common” (36).³³ As we see here upon Sambo’s first appearance in the text, he is positioned as a servant, a provider, someone to depend on. Evidently skilled in military reconnaissance, he is an indispensable and valuable member of the unit, not only useful to Sir Everard, but also belonging to, to borrow an idea from Albert Memmi, a “network of dependencies [that] encompasses and supports his existence” (11). Let us note, however, the details of Erskine’s report: in referring to Sambo, he states, it was “*he*” who “distinctly heard a groan” and it was “*he*” who “declar[ed]” to the officers that an intruder had indeed gained the grounds of the Fort. Sambo is an observer and, therefore, a bearer of necessary knowledge. To give weight to this assertion is to note the visual emphasis Richardson places on the pronoun “*he*”: it is italicized. My aim in highlighting the italicized “*he*” is to register the expressive character of the physical text and, thereby, observe Sambo’s title as a non-generic “*he*,” which implies distinctiveness that is noted by Captain Erskine and the officers in his battalion through Richardson’s typographic marking.

Let us now turn to the racial choreography that plays out between Sir Everard and Sambo. As Sir Everard prepares to take action against the intruder, he says,

“Be it dog or devil, here is for a trial of his vulnerability. – Sambo, quick, my rifle.” The young negro handed to his master one of those long heavy rifles, which the Indians usually make choice of for killing the buffalo, elk, and other animals whose wildness renders them difficult of approach. He, then, unbidden, and as if tutored to the task, placed himself in a stiff upright position in front of his master, with every nerve and muscle braced to the most inflexible steadiness. The young

³³ Guiding Captain de Haldimar through the forest later in the novel, Oucanasta asks the Captain to take off his boots and wear moccasins because “the ear of the red skin is quicker than the lightning, and he will know that a pale face is near, if he heard but his tread upon a blade of glass” (239). If, in reading young Sambo’s ability to hear, we take this ethnographic account into consideration, it might be that Richardson is expressing a desire to “indigenize” Sambo.

officer next threw the rifle on the right shoulder of the boy to take his aim on the object that had first attracted his attention.

“Make haste, massa, -- him go directly, --Sambo see him get up”

[...] “Quick, quick, massa, -- him quite up,” again whispered the boy.”

[...] “Missed him, as I am a sinner,” exclaimed Sir Everard, springing to his feet, and knocking the butt of his rifle on the ground with a movement of impatience. “Sambo, you young scoundrel, it was all your fault, -- you moved your shoulder as I pulled the trigger.” (W 37-8)

In this lone scene where Sambo appears on stage in *Wacousta* he is first elevated as an able member of the group of officers and then insulted and reduced to the position of a scoundrel. Not only does he become the medium for violent contact, but also, when this contact is unsuccessful, he is a porter, in that all faults rest upon him. He becomes a prop, yet an un/manageable prop. Still, Sambo is more than a scapegoat-carrier of alternative potentialities that are repressed in the colonial encounter. First, the posture of Sambo “plac[ing] himself in a stiff upright position in front of his master, as if tutored,” impresses its own meaning, inviting us to inquire into the permitted roles Sambo is required to perform in the novel in order to attain a cohesive narrative of subjugation. Before pointing out that Sambo, in his actions, “place[ing] himself *as if* tutored,” anticipates Frantz Fanon’s idea of colonial psychopathology, I want to attend to the historical context of the scene, focusing on the transatlantic circuit of exchange and power within which Sambo finds himself.

Sambo enters the tale in September 1763, an important year for the formation and future of North America. Around this period, French dominance lessened and the British gained control over two French-occupied colonies: the sugar-growing colony of Tobago and fur-trading colony of Quebec. This date holds further significance: marking seven months after the treaty of Paris (February 10, 1763) was signed, a treaty that made a great

stride to end the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). It also marks the beginning of the Pontiac Rebellion. This rebellion was a direct response to the British government's breeching concessions that recognized Indigenous peoples' rights to land west of what was known as the Proclamation Line running along the Allegheny mountains, which included land in the Great Lakes region. This geocultural context, replete with its linkages, exchanges, and contestations, presents the history of the Great Lakes as part of an integrated history of North America, the West Indies, and Europe. Understanding Great Lakes history in this way calls attention not just to naval and military power on the Great Lakes, or the demographic and geographic transformations of the region, but also to the wars that were fought on the Great Lakes stirred by the ideological currents that washed about the Atlantic basin, of which racial slavery was one. So, for example, when Richardson opens *Wacousta* by describing the territorial complications of Upper Canada and outlining the divisions that structure the narrative, New World/Old World, European/Non-European, white/Natives, civilization/savagery, he is also linking the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean, to the black Atlantic. Richardson writes:

All who have ever taken the trouble to inform themselves of the features of a country so little interesting to the majority of Englishmen in their individual character must be aware, – and for the information of those who are not, we state – that that portion of the northern continent of America which is known as the United States is divided from the Canadas by a continuous chain of lakes and rivers, commencing at the ocean into which they empty themselves, and extending in a north-western direction to the remotest parts of these wild regions, which have never yet been pressed by other footsteps than those of the native hunters of the soil. (2)

Richardson's description of the Canadian borderland emphasizes the capacity of the Great Lakes to signify on a variety of geographic scales; at the same time, it offers a basis for a

reevaluation of regional and national relations in the Americas, which is a different way to echo Michael Hurley's description of *Wacousta* as "a complex matrix of interrelationship and interdependence" (120). The Great Lakes and their connecting rivers become a means of transit, of ferrying news, commodities and people, which includes minstrel players, fugitive slaves and black refugees into the "remotest parts of these regions." Therefore, the idea that "the United States is divided from the Canadas by a continuous chain of lakes and rivers, commencing at the ocean into which they empty themselves," allows us to re-contextualize the narrative fiction and culture of the Great Lakes as part of the narrative fiction and culture of the black Atlantic. To put it otherwise, we can link the tales set on the Great Lakes to those set on the Atlantic Ocean. Such a link complicates the logic that equates the Atlantic with the enslavement of black people and the Great Lakes with their liberation and gets us to think through the chains of crossings and recrossings that animate the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean. This is all to say, the colonial context of the year 1763 situates the scene as a site of imperial anxiety; a site where the movement of humans and commodities imparted and impacted colonial perceptions of black people into Upper Canada.

The relationship between Sir Everard and Sambo embodies the cultural materialism of a transatlantic circuit of exchange and power, the in/congruent rhythms of imperial expansion and nation building, making it a relationship that negotiates the frontiers of nation making and empire building. With this in mind, I insert this scene into the black Atlantic imaginary in order to read blackness in Upper Canada as part of the *crossings*, the imperial practice of exchange and interchange that occurred between the

American, British, French and Indigenous peoples of North America. This practice also allows me to read black masculinity in the black Atlantic as a conjoined form of masculinity, one co-constitutive of the African, American, British, Canadian, French, and Caribbean branches of black diasporas. My work on Sambo is an attempt to demonstrate that black masculinities and subjectivities in the early Canadian contexts are “unthinkable” without these *other* borders: for example, the (natural) border of the Great Lakes (nature), the political border with the U.S., and the Atlantic border with Europe and Africa. As my reading of Sambo will suggest, these borders are relevant because the social and political priority attached to them spell out certain assumptions about black subjects, specifically, in Richardson’s texts, about black men, across so many kinds of difference—American, British, Canadian, French, and Indigenous.

Earlier I described Sambo as more than a manageable prop. This assertion is not an affective attempt to give a particular impression of Richardson’s Sambo, to claim his manageability as a false impression. In the social construct of the minstrel Sambo, the Negro/black servant is subjugated to the white master through a process of racial othering or racist interpellation that, Fanon says, “fix[es the black man] forever in combat with his own image” (196). Thus, in his “stiff upright position,” Sambo is neither an “I” nor a “not-I.” He is, following Fanon’s formulation, “an object in the midst of other objects” (109); that is, he is similar to the “long heavy rifle” placed on his shoulder, and also similar to the intruder that Sir Everard “hunts.” Remember that with Sambo positioned in front of his master, Sir Everard “take[s] his aim on the *object* that had first attracted his

attention” (37, emphasis mine). Here, racialized subjects, both imagined and real,³⁴ are positioned as subjectified objects. Stiff and immobilized by the excitation of the event, as well as by the heavy rifle on his shoulder, what else can Sambo do but be rigid when he’s reduced to the position of an object among other objects?

While on the one hand, I want to focus on Sambo’s servitude and explore the pleasures within his submission, as well as examine his many white masters’ addiction to black servitude, on the other hand, I do not want to ignore Sambo’s role in the imperial and colonizing enterprise of Canadian nation building. By observing Sambo to be a manageable prop, I am committed to exploring how white mastery and black servitude, dependency and subjection, domination and submission, all affect his subjectivity. For example, on the surface, Sambo’s use of the Southern slave word “massa” and the excitement within his statements, “Make haste, massa” and “Quick quick massa,” foreground him as the infantile “young negro” tooting his master’s horn. These performative utterances reveal the aggressive pleasures of military masculinity, while also conveying oral histories that permit access to aspects of early Canadian racialized history. For instance, through Sambo’s language, we see an example of the cultural convergences in the Americas, particularly regarding African culture and language in British North America. Sambo’s use of “massa” is not necessarily a mispronunciation of the English word “master” but a linguistic infusion of Mandinka linguistic tradition with English. The Mandika people, an ethnic group from the coast of West Africa, use the word “mansa” as a title for king, chief, leader, a way to mark a master’s authority. Joseph Holloway writes,

³⁴ At this point in the novel, the intruder is not known as Reginald Morton, (who “goes Native,” so to speak, and becomes Wacousta), nor is he known as a white man masquerading to be “Indian.”

“[o]n the American plantation, the ‘n’ in mansa became silent” (58). In addition to this ethnographic account, we get a clue to Sambo’s educational background. We glean the consequences of illiteracy³⁵ before we learn he cannot read in the subsequent novel, *The Canadian Brothers*. This argument about his education and the duration of his return – from his brief appearance in *Wacousta* to his prominent presence in *The Canadian Brother* aside, for now the point I am trying to make is that when Sambo speaks, we witness the power of the spoken word. The power, we learn, is at once in the word and *in* the speaking of the word.

When I first read this scene, what came as no surprise was my dislike of how Richardson positions Sambo as an object; now, having taken more time to think about the way in which objectification and subjection are not equivalent and, from this distinction, having come to understand that the objectified person and the subjugated person each bears different hidden psychic costs, what comes as a surprise is my acknowledgement that this objectified position does not completely restrain Sambo’s personhood; if anything, in the context of this scene, he can flex his masculinity. Listen, for example, to Sambo’s directions as the gun rests on his right shoulder:

“Make haste, massa, -- him go directly, --Sambo see him get up”
[...] “Quick, quick, massa, -- him quite up.”

The oral poetics in these directions are important not only because they mark our first and only direct encounter with Sambo in *Wacousta* but because, in this very brief encounter,

³⁵ In a conversation between the captured US Major Montgomerie and military officials in British North America (General Brock, Commodore Barclay and Colonel D’Egville) over Tecumseh and his people’s displacement, where Major Montgomerie justifies American expansionism, he offers this racist justification for the subjection of black people: “The uneducated negro is, from infancy and long custom, doomed to slavery, wherefore should the copper coloured Indian be more free? But my argument points not to their subjection” (70).

he speaks; in addition to this very important first impression, the words of this “black servant” offer us textual details to use to ground and explore black servitude, its fixity, its dynamism, and Richardson’s management of it in his texts.³⁶ Sambo’s compulsion to repeat his commands, “Make haste, massa,” “Quick quick massa,” allows him to linguistically parrot and momentarily replicate the structural systems that oppress him. Even though he occupies a place of ostensible powerlessness, under the weight of the gun and with Sir Everard guarding over him, what we notice is how Richardson manipulates the dialogue between Sambo and Sir Everard to make Sambo’s utterances function as more than mere appeals. In actuality, the seemingly innocuous repetition in Sambo’s speech acts are imperatives. Ending the commands “make haste” and “Quick, quick” with “massa” seemingly reverses power relations between master and servant. If the master, in military discourse, implies the commanding officer, then, in this scene, Sambo is more than servant; he is conducting himself more like a subordinate officer involved in an attempt to capture an enemy; it is more like Sambo is giving a command that trades preparation time and accuracy for speed. In this exchange where the power relations are reversed and we see a “young negro” trump the over-determining factor of race in black-white relations, a reversal where the servant commands his master, it is important to realize that Sambo’s behaviour is imaginable and possible *only* because it consolidates the imperializing project that colonizes the First Nation peoples outside the British fort.

³⁶ If first impressions are important, then, when we meet Sambo again in *The Canadian Brothers*, the work of accepting a docile, faithful, subservient Sambo hinges upon readers forgetting the scoundrel, young Sambo in *Wacousta*. An adjustment is required: this adjustment is “easy” since Sambo’s narrative time in *Wacousta* is brief.

In this imperial relationship between Sambo and Sir Everard where, according to Fanon, “not only must the black man be black, he must be black in relation to the white man” (110), it is key to keep in mind that the movement of Sambo placing himself in this stiff position is less a question of choice and more a performance of duty, particularly since, beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, black male servants and slaves were a coveted status symbol in Britain. Dressed in uniform, they were a common accoutrement of ladies and gentlemen of rank; also, they accompanied sea captains and colonial officials into the colonies. From the basis of this racial investment, let us turn again to the quotation, “He, then, unbidden, and as if tutored to the task, placed himself in a stiff upright position in front of his master.” In this imagined colonial drama, the presence of the past is underwritten as a way for Richardson to write a clean history of the past. Sambo’s compliance, here incongruent with his stiff and upright position, marks Richardson’s fantasy of black servitude as humiliation, a humiliation that gains weight because Sambo’s obedience appears “unbidden” and, in fact, offered “*as if* tutored to the task.” Interestingly, the *as if* phrase stands out here, and, to my mind, is key to a diagnosis of Sambo’s masculine identity. There is, of course, a sexual overtone when Sambo places himself in a “stiff and upright position” in front of Sir Everard. On the one hand, this is an example of the homoerotic relations that Dickinson argues “disrupt and destabilize the [Canadian] national paradigm” (13).³⁷ If we read this disruptive intimacy,

³⁷ For more on the homosexual and erotic readings of Richardson’s *Wacousta* see: Terry Goldie, “The Guise of Friendship” in *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature*; Dennis Duffy, *A World under Sentence: John Richardson and the Interior*; John Moss, *Sex and Violence in the Canadian Novel: The Ancestral Present*; Peter Dickinson, *Here is Queer: Nationalism, Sexualities, and the Literatures in Canada*; L. Chris Fox, “Geometries of Nation-Building: Triangulating Female Homosociality in Richardson’s *Wacousta*,” in *Studies in Canadian Literature* 27.2.

this interracial homoerotic tableau in the context of sadomasochistic slavery, which, Peter Dancer, Peggy Kleinplatz and Charles Moser argue “is referred to in indirect and inferential ways only” (84), and also think of the exchange of suffering and reciprocal overpowering that occurs in this sexual context, then we can read this scene of submission as an articulation of the dynamics of socialization and education under slavery. Thinking of Sir Everard and Sambo as “top” and “bottom” roles in sadomasochistic culture, the inculcation of Sambo’s submission “as if tutored” serves to justify white mastery and black slavery, in which the terms of service are determined by and in the interests of Sir Everard, hence challenging the ideal of reciprocity that Georg Hegel’s “the master/slave dialectic” foregrounds. Through the colonial and racialized engagement that transpires between Sambo and Sir Everard, “I hope,” to quote Fanon, “I have shown here that here the master differs basically from the master described by Hegel. For Hegel there is reciprocity; here the master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants is not recognition but work” (220). On the other hand, when Sambo is described as an immovable pillar, as “stiff” and in an “upright position,” this young Negro “is fixed,” to use Fanon’s words again, “at the genital level” (173). And we can wonder, as Fanon did when contemplating Auguste Rodin’s *The Thinker*, whether a black man can “decently ‘have a hard on’ everywhere” (134)? To notice that underwriting this fixity is the myth of black sexual pathology, of the sexual stereotypes about black men’s penis size and of its associated threats, is to become aware, as Fanon did, of the fact that “[w]herever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro” (140, italics in original). Adapting Fanon’s logic to Sambo not only suggests that he perpetually contributes to and remains a

conduit for others in the making of the nation, but also that black cultural identification in the black Atlantic is temporalized at the same time that the historical moment of that identity is spatialized. In other words, blackness becomes empty, homogenous time, and is everywhere always the same. This forecloses distinct or individual blackness, only generalized and always-already blackness.

In a way, then, the *as-if tutored* phrase – and the implication of a hypothetical pedagogy (either as accepted or submitted to by Sambo, or believed to be appropriate to black servants by us as readers begs the question, for whom is the tutoring hypothetical?) – is more than a subordinate conjunction; it is a memory aid, an ethical container that reminds us that, for Sambo, the scene of enclosure and contact is also a violent scene of subjugation. The ethics of the *as if tutored* functions to help us avoid collapsing the practice and prescription of subjection, hence interrupting a reading of Sambo's work in subjugation as an easy act. At the same time, the ethics of the phrase forces a reader to ground a textual reading in the material and psychic conditions of black subjects in the eighteenth century in the Canadas (*where* and *when* this scene is set) and in the early nineteenth century (*when* Richardson wrote this novel). This distinction highlights the anachronistic practice of cultural memory that *Wacousta* enacts. Furthermore, this reading helps explain why Sambo is described as a servant and not a slave. For one thing, “the Canadas” in the tale of *Wacousta* did not exist until the passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791, when the province of Quebec was divided into two British colonies, Upper Canada and Lower Canada. For another thing, 1763 predates the abolitionist movements

in the British Empire, which means black servants still were slaves.³⁸ It would take three more decades before the passing of Simcoe's 1793 watered down bill, preventing the importation of slaves into Upper Canada, would establish Canada as an anti-slavery territory. Paralleling, even anticipating, the Emancipation Act of Upper Canada were a series of declarations: the 1793 *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*, itself inspired by Rousseau as well as by the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, and other numerous bills of rights of the colonies, which includes the U.S. Constitution of 1787. It is worth stating that though many of these declarations were in defense of the ideals of the Revolution, of the idea that men and women are equal as moral and political agents who possess the same natural rights, none of these declarations effectively challenged the exclusion of black people from citizenship.³⁹ So, when Richardson refers to Sambo as a "black servant," he is mythmaking: he is simultaneously layering two or more temporal periods to attempt to retroactively fix a history of Canada as free from black Atlantic slavery. To some extent, the anachronistic writing I identify in *Wacousta* is not an accident or a mistake, not careless or illogical, and to read it as such is a way to recharge a particular historical and national moment. That is to say, when Richardson aestheticizes this moment and attaches blackness to the word *servant*, his representations of Sambo "revitalize" the 1793 bill and, to quote Kaja Silverman on retroactivity as an

³⁸ The first meeting of the campaign against slavery was in May 1787, when 12 men of the London Committee met to challenge traditional assumptions about the slave trade.

³⁹ Although I understand that *The Declaration of the Rights of Man* expressly banned slavery in its preamble, with Article 3 stating, "All men are equal by nature and before the law," and Article 18, which prohibits slavery, stating: "Every man can contract his services and his time, but he cannot sell himself nor be sold: his person is not an alienable property," I also understand that these efforts did not advance the rights of all blacks in particular nations of the colonial world.

aesthetic mode of recovery, “re-read[s]’ [Upper Canadian history] in ways that maximize their radical and transformative potential” (150). As a result of this series of anachronistic moves, to keep the many contexts of Sambo’s identification in mind is also to read the *as if* of Sambo’s characterization as a forecast and a prophecy of black men’s relation to the nation-state rather than as a cheap showcase of the specters that now haunt the Canadian social order. After all, as the third chapter on Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing it in the Bush* will also point out, it is not *as if* the polite tongues of Canadians speak stubbornly; it is not *as if* the geographic landscape would correct the overbearing compulsion to police and tutor black men. In other words, the *as if* philosophy offers a paradigm of reading in which matters confronting Sambo, matters such as slavery, white perceptions of black masculinity, need not be regarded or dismissed as “hypothetical.” In fact, to read the *as if* with an awareness of the nineteenth century’s carefully delineated practice of imagining the national community, of the kinds of bodies that were deemed as viable contributors in the composition of the national community, suggests that nation building *is* a hypothetical project.⁴⁰ “As if . . .”

In using Sir Everard’s and Sambo’s interaction as a transfer point to link the place and concept of Upper Canada to the black Atlantic, I would be remiss if I did not examine the physical space within which we observe the socialization between Sir Everard and his property, Sambo: namely, the ordered and observing grounds of Fort Detroit. To attend to the history of “the Detroit,” the name that the French gave to the body of water that connects the upper Great Lakes to the lower ones, is to call attention to borders and

⁴⁰ I come to this understanding through Benedict Anderson’s ideas of the “imagined community” and Homi Bhabha’s idea of “nation as narration.”

relationality. Afua Cooper identifies this border that connects the two lakes as a “‘fluid frontier’ in reference to its watery nature” (131). She goes on to read “the Detroit” as a “natural border” (129). This reading sets up a productive tension in the context of the controlling space of the fort, a space similar to a military camp, a space that Michel Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, describes as “short-lived, artificial city, built and reshaped almost at will [and] the seat of a power that must be all the stronger, but also all the more discreet, all the more effective and on the alert in that it is exercised over armed men” (171). This much is clear to me: Sambo’s subjectivity is being articulated on the intimate frontiers of empire (Stoler 830) and, thus, cannot but contain, as all frontiers do, permeable and uncertain boundaries with conflicting and contesting circuits of knowledge. Hence, I take this literary-historical scene as offering a unique moment to meditate on the veiled cultural work of blackness in canonical Canadian texts. As well, this scene offers a moment to chart the emergence of a black masculine persona in the early development of Canadian literature. As a result, I want to advance the idea that the textual stability of Sambo as a black servant, by which I mean, that he returns in the sequel as the guardian of the Grantham family, is a result of a cumulative conflation of his existence as a servant, a soldier, a settler, a slave, and, as is made abundantly clear in *The Canadian Brothers*, a horseman and a sailor. Given this domain of conflated intimacy, and by this I mean, given the idea that intimacy unfixes the scale of identity that usually emphasizes degrees of differentiation and separation, and that Sambo’s many labouring selves are conflated into the categorical field of “black servant,” I am compelled to unpack the black-servant compact and ask, what are we to *suppose* about

Richardson's Negro servant, Sambo? What is contained in Richardson's fabrication of this character, one christened, weighed down, with a minstrel name? I am interested in observing the binding rationalities of paternalism, of servitude (that is to say, the productive social machines that ensure Sambo is a subject of slavery and, at the same time, a subject of indentureship) that Richardson mobilizes to assign a function to this socially stigmatized, scapegoat figure. Simply put, I am interested in the figure whose name and "back" become the bridge that unite art and national ideology in *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*.

If we situate Sambo within the temporal contexts of both novels, from 1763 to 1813,⁴¹ and attend to the descriptions of him as the property of British officers, observe the categories of services he is put to provide (servant, soldier, sailor, slave, settler), we will come to understand that the descriptor of Sambo as a "black servant" or "Negro servant," and particularly in *The Canadian Brothers*, as "the faithful" and, at times, "obedient Negro servant" function as a trope that *affects* the labour structure. This point is driven home when the psycho-affective attachments that Sambo develops over time to his masters, attachments that work to maintain the economic and political structure of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, work as a way to cover up a history of racial slavery, of black labour and race relations – not to mention the anxiety that these relations animate in Upper Canada. This is all to say, when Richardson dramatizes Sambo's five decades of servitude as a marker of Sambo's "faithfulness," this dramatization documents a history

⁴¹ Sambo's first (and only) appearance on scene in *Wacousta* is "late in September, 1763" as a young Negro presumably of an age anywhere from 12 to 16 years. And he is cut off from the concluding scenes of *The Canadian Brothers* and the War of 1812 in the "spring of 1813." Note that simply because the aged servant, 62 or 66 years old, is cut off from these scenes he has no off-scene function.

of his labour, conceives a coherent black masculine identity that functions in the interest of the colony. It also sets the institution of servanthood apart from slavery and, at the same time, conflates the different contracts that underline the *moral and political economy* of the different institutions represented by the word *servant* and *slave*. As a result, if we are to uncover, identify, and connect the factors that conspire on many different levels to create and maintain this trope, if we are to untangle the line that links economic exploitation and racial subjection, grapple with Richardson's leveling of servanthood and slavery, and of Sambo as a literary embodiment of Victorian liberal imagination of black humanity and masculinity, I suggest, we situate Sambo, the faithful and obedient black servant, the companion of Sir Everard and the Grantham family, the boy who grew to old age in servitude, within the deep structures of colonial slavery and Canadian racial formation.

There is no better place to begin than by calling attention to the fact that the trope of the faithful Negro servant perpetuates the ways in which the history of racial slavery in Canada has been repressed. For example, in a scene in *The Canadian Brothers*, at the village of Sandwich, where the narrator offers a picture of officers relaxing, eating their meals, and drinking rum and water, the scene offers more than a startling image of black servitude and its effects in the enterprise of settlement. It also links servitude to slavery. Describing the scene of the party, the narrator remarks that the dim light of the night gave "an air of wilderness to the whole scene." Continuing,

the picture [was not] at all lessened in ferocity of effect, by the figure of Sambo in the back ground, who, dividing his time between the performances of such offices as his young master demanded, in the coarse of the frugal meal of the party, and a most assiduous application of his own white and shining teeth to a huge piece of

venison ham, might, without effort, have called up the image of some lawless, yet obedient slave, attending on and sharing in the orgies of a company of buccaneers. (152)

Here lies a process of black racialization of Sambo's body. His description is racially coded with wilderness, expressed through the dismemberment of his body into parts: especially his white teeth,⁴² his shining teeth sinking in the venison ham. This expression, the breaking down of Sambo's bodily gestures into discrete actions, is an act of production that conjures a connection between his body and the object in his hands (which embeds a meaning of wildness in the action of him sinking his teeth in the meat) as a way to naturalize a discourse of black savagery. This argument of naturalization is supported by the fact that the image of Sambo in the wild background invokes lawlessness – a marauding black soldier, unkempt, and, similar to the young Sambo who attended Sir Everard and the other officers, in communion with orgies of buccaneers, with the reference to “buccaneers” echoing the Caribbean discourses of buccaneering and marronage, further serving to situate this figure within a black Atlantic framework. Furthermore, the image associates Sambo with a range of anti-black images: the barbarous, heathen African who has to be put to work to save him from damnation. And particularly worth noting in this scene is the fact that the image of Sambo effortlessly calls “up the image of some lawless, yet obedient slave.” The confluence of lawlessness, discipline, and obedience, when attached to Sambo, allow us to liken Richardson's

⁴² This is not the sole occasion in *The Canadian Brothers* when the narrative description fixates on Sambo's teeth. In an aside, the narrator interrupts Sambo's speech about Desborough being a “debbel,” and him wishing he

nebber see a hebben ib he not a calp of a younger Desborough. I know him lying tief by he hair—he all yaller like a sogers breast plate—curse him rascal (and his white and even teeth, were exhibited in the grin that accompanied the remark,) he nebber no more say he sial round Massa Geral gun boat, and Massa Geral and Sambo sleep. (140)

Sambo to the figure of the obedient slave, who, to borrow a phrase from Michael Mark Smith, has mastered and is mastered by the clock. In this sense, Sambo is signified by his ability to economize his wants, not waste time, dividing his “free” time between caring for his young master and himself. Moreover, the inseparability of motives, the force of the “might,” of the lawless free man and the obedient slave, operate to wish away the knowledge of the formative effects of slave labour on the character of the slave, and both (the labour and character) as forming part of the fabric of early Canadian life. As a repository of this confluence, the trope of the faithful Negro servant narrates, I argue, a history of slave labour in early Canada.

We know from historians that the Church in “the Canadas” did not oppose the labour of slaves: Jesuits, Dominicans, and Franciscans all owned slaves. From the lone scene with Sambo in *Wacousta* and those with him and other black characters in *The Canadian Brothers*, we learn government officials, the gentry, and military officers owned slaves who were called servants. Historians like Robin Winks, Barrington Walker, Afua Cooper, James Walker, George Elliot Clarke, and others tell us that, in 1688, when there were about 9,000 people living in New France, and there was a labour shortage, government officials asked Louis XIV for permission to import slaves. On May 1, 1689, the King responded, giving limited approval. He writes: “His Majesty finds it good that the inhabitants of Canada import negroes to take care of their agriculture” (qtd. in Hill 3); however, and this is representative of the seventeenth-century racial logic, His Majesty warned that the cold climate might be a hazard for the slaves, “coming from a very different climate, [they] will perish in Canada” (ibid). Yet, new work for African-born

slaves developed after 1701 when Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, from a minor aristocratic family, established a fur-trading outpost on the Detroit River. The fur traders brought in enslaved Africans to perform most of the manual labour. In 1709 Louis XIV gave permission for the New France colonists to own the slaves that they had already been allowed to import. When the British came to power in North America, British General Jeffrey Amherst assured the last of New France's governors that "Negroes and panis of both sexes shall remain in the quality of slaves in the possession of the French or Canadians to whom they belong; they shall be at liberty to keep them in the colony or sell them; and they may also continue to bring them up in Roman Religion" (qtd. in McMullen 503). Although this brief history focuses on New France, what we might call Lower Canada, it is important to remember, as I argue above, that "the Canadas," the division of Quebec into two British colonies, Upper Canada and Lower Canada, did not exist until the passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791. And, in any case, Amherst's assurance was included in the Article of Capitulation when the British took control of Upper Canada. Therefore, I am arguing that the faithful Negro servant becomes a popular trope that stands in for this history. More than that, when I refer to the faithful Negro servant as a popular trope in early Canada, I am following the three characteristics that Raymond Williams attributes to the keyword "popular culture." In other words, first, the trope works to "court the favor of the people by undue practices" (199). Second, as part of the popular culture of early Canada, I am suggesting the work of the faithful Negro

servant is read as an “inferior kind of work” (199). And third, the trope “deliberately sets out to win favor” (199). This is to say, faithfulness breeds privileges.⁴³

As a popular trope in early Canadian literature,⁴⁴ the faithful Negro servant alludes to the plantation fantasies of the faithful slave who, in abolitionist works such as Mrs. Mary Pilkington’s “The Faithful Slave; or, the Little Negro Boy,” or Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, forms emotional ties to white family members and remains faithful to a Christian God, to friends, and owners. This faithful male black servant also appears in Canadian pop culture novels such as Wilfred Campbell’s *A Beautiful Rebel: A Romance of Upper Canada in Eighteen Hundred and Twelve* (1909) and Anges Maule Machar’s *For King and Country: A Story of 1812* (1874). What is overlooked in these ties is that in the context of the family structure, the faithful Negro servant and faithful slave are subject to discipline as if tutored (easily guided, observed, supervised). As a result, the emotional ties that bind the faithful Negro servant to white family members work to assure controlled and disciplined black bodies.⁴⁵ In *The Canadian Brothers*, where the longevity of Sambo’s services – “his years of long and faithful services” to his masters – is articulated as the cultural *exempla* of a faithful Negro servant, note how the lexicon, grammar and tone used to describe Sambo’s emotional attachments to Gerald Grantham (“the old negro,” the narrator highlights, is “devoted” “to Gerald’s will” [155]) pointedly

⁴³ Nowhere is this favour clearer than the fact that Sambo has his own private room. When Henry Grantham opens and recloses the door to Sambo’s room with care, he offers the following as justification for why Sambo has his own room: “owing to his years and long and faithful services, had been set apart for the accommodation of the old man when on shore” (271).

⁴⁴ For the book project, I will pursue how this trope function differs when attached to black female servants. And I will turn to texts like Anna Brownell Jameson’s *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* and Philippe-Joseph Aubert de Gaspé’s *Les Anciens Canadiens*, that portray faithful Negro women servants who complicate Richardson’s depiction, to do this work.

⁴⁵ See Mrs. Mary Pilkington’s story and Campbell and Machar’s novels for how emotions of gratitude bind the Negro boy to his benevolent masters.

demonstrate that emotional attachments work as instruments creating labouring black subjects. In other words, when faithfulness is attached to black subjects, it conjures up, entails or documents racialized labour. For example, after the imprisoned Desborough escapes from the hold on the schooner bound for Fort Erie, an escape aided by Matilda because she was on the same schooner as her biological father, Matilda seduces Gerald to distract him from noticing Desborough's escape. In this seduction, she admits she loves Gerald but that she can only "marry" him if he avenges her wrongs and assassinates Forrester. Here lies another testing and limit of Canadianness vis-à-vis loyalty: Gerald is torn between his loyalty to love Matilda unconditionally and his loyalty to his father, not to mention his honour as a soldier. Gerald is unable to commit this "murder." For him "THAT passion shall never be gratified at the expense of my honor" (281). So this is Gerald's state of mind when he and Sambo find themselves and their canoe battling the "howling" and "terrible tempest" (265). I agree with Michael Hurley when, in *The Borders of the Nightmare*, he points out that the "vortex" and "storm" images in this scene allude to Gerald's troubled state of mind but also I suggest that the dramatic and relentless absence of consolation in this scene evokes the abomination—"ab-homen," that which is "away from human" (*OED*)—of the middle passage, where Africans were thrown into the sea, especially with "the water" described as "violently agitated and covered with foam, resembl[ing] rather a pigmy sea than an inland river" (266). This image again connects the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. Add to this evocation the fact that it was Gerald's "impatient gesture" that sent "the head of the fragile vessel" "plung[ing] into the very centre of the current," "into the boiling vortex," "the very heart

of the raging eddy”]; that it was Gerald’s foolhardy gestures that made Sambo labour to save his master under the watchful eye of the crew (267-68); and the brutalities black Africans suffered at the hands of their white masters are laid bare.⁴⁶ Importantly, through Sambo’s effort to save his master, we observe the degree of the faithful Negro servant’s labour:

After the lapse of a minute, [. . .] the unfortunate adventurers, one of whom appeared to be supporting his companion with one arm, whilst with the other he [Sambo] dashed away the waters that bore them impetuously along. The hats of both had fallen off, and as he who exerted himself so strenuously, rose once or twice in the vigour of his efforts above the element with which he contended, he seemed to present the grisly, woolly hair, and the sable countenance of an aged negro.

On reaching it, he [Henry] found both Gerald and his faithful attendant just touching the shore. Aroused by the cry for help which Sambo had pealed forth, several of the workmen had quitted the shelter of the block houses in which they were lodged, and hastened to the rescue of him whom they immediately afterwards saw struggling furiously to free himself and [his] companion from the violent current. Stepping to the extremity on some loose timber which lay secured to the shore, yet floating in the river—they threw out poles, one of which Sambo seized like an enraged mastiff in his teeth, and still supporting the body, and repelling the water with his disengaged arm, in this manner succeeded in gaining the land. (268-69)

The civility of the Canadian brothers would lead us to expect Gerald to express gratitude to Sambo, especially since he admits “I did seek oblivion of my wretchedness in that whirlpool” and, in so doing, “I had not taken the danger of my faithful servant into account.” In fact, he goes on to admit that “[h]ad Sambo not saved me, I must have perished” (277). And yet, upon gaining the land, Gerald immediately “turned” “to his

⁴⁶ Space permitting, I would have liked to explore the ways in which Richardson’s *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers* rework the image of the Middle Passage on the Lakes of North America, and from this reading consider the political configurations in early Canada that might be possible in rereading *The Canadian Brothers* in relation to abolitionist writing.

servant, and in a tone of querulousness, said—“Sambo, give me more wine” (269). Of Gerald’s behaviour the narrator writes,

Inexpressibly shocked, and not knowing what to make of this conduct, Henry [Grantham, Gerald’s brother] bent his glance upon the negro. The old man shook his head mournfully, and even with the dripping spray that continued to fall from his woolen locks upon his cheeks, tears might be seen to mingle. (269)

Moreover, the narrator offers us access to Henry’s meditation on Gerald’s behaviour:

It was impossible to recall the manner in which he [Gerald] had demanded “wine,” from their faithful old servant and friend, and not feel satisfied, that the tone proclaimed him one who had been in the frequent habit of repeating that demand, as the prepared, yet painful manner of the black, indicated a sense of having been too frequently called upon to administer to it. (271)

Notwithstanding the possibilities for inquiring into the sentimentality of the faithful slave narrative that abounds in these quotations, it is “as if” Sambo has been tutored to supply Gerald’s alcoholism. I want to highlight the phrase, “the frequent habit of repeating that demand,” and note that along with emotional ties comes emotional abuse. Furthermore, I want to highlight how Sambo’s labour is individualized as obligatory service to his young master, thus represented as noble selflessness, as a way to avoid conceptualizing the bonds of affection in terms of its contribution to the military force of Upper Canada. This rhetoric of faithfulness reinforces the master-servant dynamics; the ideal of a reciprocal relationship revolved around notions of responsibility and compassion on the part of the master and loyalty on that of the servant. Of course, part of the meaning of this scene is that Gerald’s virtues are seen by Henry to be lacking because Gerald overlooks Sambo’s ready and faithful supply of labour at the risk of his own life. As a result, Henry’s sensitivity to Sambo’s quiet disappointment in Gerald’s dissipation shows how the narrative does not overlook Sambo’s service, even as Gerald does. And yet, because this

scene is set in the colonial context of racial bondage, we cannot neglect what Fanon calls the “situational neurosis”: a compulsion, in this scene, for Sambo “to run away from his individuality, to annihilate [his] presence” (60), exemplified in Sambo’s ready supply of labour that connects the fate of Gerald to Sambo. So, when Henry grounds his disbelief in Gerald’s treatment of Sambo in the fact that Sambo, their personal servant, has been “their faithful old servant and friend,” his disbelief works to deflect attention away from Sambo’s role as a public servant.⁴⁷ My point here is that Sambo’s tasks are carried out in the public sphere, meaning we acknowledge the public uses of personal servants. Even more so, “Sambo has become,” to use Boskin’s words, “a multipublic figure,” “appealing across the social landscape” (12). This means that Sambo is also a military seaman, and such a reading would cast Henry’s disbelief as part of the ongoing work of the faithful Negro servant trope to obscure the occupational risks in the services that the faithful Negro servant provides.⁴⁸

If, as critics writing on servants in the eighteenth and nineteenth century note, the visibility of domestic servants is marked by their clothing, then, a turn to the narrator’s description of Sambo and Gerald’s outfits further makes it clear that Henry’s disbelief

⁴⁷ And, one can even argue, Gerald (and perhaps Richardson) deludes himself and/or the reader into thinking that it is friendship that comes into play between Sambo and the Canadian brothers.

⁴⁸ I am aware that part of the code of honour among brother officers is that they would risk their lives to save a fellow officer from being drowned in a raging stream. And, I understand that if that fellow officer (Gerald) turned out to be drunk, the same level of indignation will be directed at him (by Henry) for bringing the life of a fellow officer or also a soldier of lower rank (Sambo) into danger. With this in mind, I make this argument not simply because the faithful servant obscures Sambo’s function as a military seaman, but to note that Sambo is not referred to as a sailor or a soldier. And, as an employee (or a servant) of Upper Canada, he is denied the privileges entitled by this job.

works to distance Sambo, the faithful Negro servant, from Sambo, the loyal Negro soldier and sailor.⁴⁹

Both were closely wrapped in short, dark coloured pea coats, and their heads were surmounted with glazed hats – a species of costume that more than any thing else, proved their familiarity with the element whose brawling they appeared to brave with an indifference bordering on madness. (267)

Although I hesitate to identify the “short, dark coloured pea coats” and “glazed hats” as articles of Upper Canadian naval uniforms,⁵⁰ I argue they convey more than simple functional clothing that servants and settlers dwelling in the Great Lakes region wore to conquer the exigencies of daily marine life. The material and theatrical concerns of the word “costume” within the master-servant relation, and the narrator’s preoccupation with the appearance of Sambo and Gerald, remarking that both of them are wearing the same outfit, dangerously confuse the distinctions of hierarchical status. Aside from Sambo’s costume functioning as a mimetic and metaphorical display of the master’s wealth, I also read an ambiguity in the species of costume display. This ambiguity functions as a form of code switching, as Richardson’s way of helping us develop a better picture of Sambo as more than a servant. So, for example, when the crew watch Sambo and Gerald battle the water, and the narrator remarks, “it was evident from their manner of conducting the bark, that the adventurers were not Indians, and yet there was nothing to indicate to what

⁴⁹ I use this phrase because Richardson’s fiction of the 1812 War is a test of loyalties—political loyalty as a sign of British civility versus American treachery. As a soldier the sign of approval would have been one’s loyalty, whereas this chapter recalibrates the theme of loyalty in relation to faithfulness, coded in relation to black servitude and slavery.

⁵⁰ Although the naval uniforms for officers and men in the Royal Navy during the War of 1812 is well documented by Robert Wilkinson-Latham in an Osprey publication under the “Men At Arms Series,” sailors’ coats were navy blue wool sleeved waist coats, it is also the case that there were no clothing regulation that required that specific attire, as Wilkinson-Latham points out, and yet “[t]he seamen were expected to be uniformly dressed” (7), exemplified through Sambo and Grantham’s attire.

class of the white family they belonged” (266-67), the racial elements in this description redirect the focus of the sartorial marks of their “costume,” emphasizing the role-playing aspect of Sambo and Gerald’s relations, which, in turn, complicate the fixed status of Sambo as a Negro servant. In this way, the faithful Negro servant trope masks the black servant’s desires in the master-servant relation. This complication recalls Richardson’s composition of Sambo’s mournful comportment (“the old man shaking his head mournfully,” not to mention the possible commingling of water and tears on his cheeks) and, momentarily, frustrates the circulated precept of the faithful Negro servant, of Sambo running away from his individuality, hence testifying to the precarious conditions of black servants in early Canada. This is to say that when the passage directs Sambo’s “desire” towards Gerald’s reformation, I suspect that this is a coerced desire that replaces his more likely desire to be free of servitude.

Writing on *Robinson Crusoe*, Roxanna Wheeler remarks, “the significance of clothing to identifying European difference from savages should not be underestimated” (841). As a marker of racial and social difference between master and servant, clothing not only exercised a formative influence on the appearance and physique of the body, exemplified by how the “the species of costume” becomes part of Sambo’s body, a sort of second skin for him, graduating him into a class of whiteness, into proximity with whiteness by disguising his body (a version of whiteness).⁵¹ Significantly, the transformation demonstrates that a relationship between labour and clothing can destabilize the over-determined stability of appearance/race and rank in black-white

⁵¹ It is worth asking how this performance might be related to the complex performances that emerge in the Black minstrel tradition.

servant-master relations. This “disguise,” role change through clothing, momentarily elevates Sambo from a servant to an “adventurer,” locating him within the pioneer narrative of early Canada, and provides an interpretive standpoint from which to understand the significance in the crew’s mistake in identifying Sambo as belonging to a white family. Their inability to distinguish “what class of the white family they belonged” to not only highlights a way in which a “species of costume” works against the ideological limitation that disassociates Sambo from other classes of labour, but also this moment in the text challenges stable imaginings of Sambo as a servant. It foregrounds his body-labour, that which makes him a faithful Negro servant, and its function in the civilizing and imperializing project of imagining and building the nation. Hence, imagining Sambo in the service of the British army during the War of 1812 reformulates the faithful Negro servant trope and acknowledges the deliberate link between his work as a sailor, servant and soldier.⁵² In other words, the faithful Negro servant trope calls attention away from the different labouring roles of black servants in the black Atlantic. Doing so serves to avoid positioning Sambo, for example, as a subject mutually engaged in creating the Atlantic political-economic space of the North American quadrant of the Americas.

However, this trope is anticipated by another trope which George Boulukos, reading eighteenth-century British fiction, identifies as “the grateful slave.” Boulukos observes in these sentimental texts a convergence of race and liberty, arguing that well into the eighteenth century, “English investment in ‘liberty’ was normally extended to

⁵² As a future line of inquiry, I will like to explore ways in which these simultaneous labour positions put pressure on rights and responsibilities such as citizenship for black people in Canada.

Africans in concept if not in practice” (101). His work traces a transatlantic history that demonstrates the trope of the grateful slave, so central to abolitionist literatures, itself enabled the transition from the late seventeenth-century Christian monogenist belief in a shared humanity to the late eighteenth-century logic of racial difference. Boulukos argues that, like Maria Edgeworth, many eighteenth-century writers preferred the ameliorative treatment of slaves rather than the abolition of slavery. These writers, he maintains, used the rhetoric of gratitude to negotiate the ethical problem that colonial practices of slavery posed for urban British audiences. Boulukos notes that the “the central literary image of plantation slavery – one which came to have a profound impact on views of real slavery and, indeed, on imagining the possibility of racial difference – was of grateful slaves.” With this in mind, he suggests that the trope of the grateful slave rests on “emotional relationship” (2).

Notwithstanding the fact that Boulukos’s “grateful slave trope” offers a line of direction for how I orient my analysis, I maintain that the use of faithfulness and obedience as “objects of attachment” for Sambo engenders a different emotional relationship, particularly because, first, Richardson relies on his readers bringing with them their loyalty and faithfulness to blackface minstrelsy and, second, the categories of faithfulness and obedience are not emotions in themselves; rather, as forms of devotion, they operate as feeling structures that engage in a public moral deliberation. And to understand how ascribing a descriptor like faithfulness to a Negro servant works to persuade readers to overlook the moral and political work that goes into racializing a servant as black and into attaching blackness to servanthood, we must first examine the

category of black servanthood's own internal logic and contradictions. We need to rethink how the trope of the "faithful Negro servant" introduces new forms of subjection and inequality to black identity, in this case black masculine identity. I accept that my argument on the faithful Negro servant is not all that different from Boulukos's argument on the grateful slave. In fact, I argue that the trope of the faithful Negro servant is a displaced trope. A major significance in this displacement is how the invocation of servanthood evades the question of slavery and, as a result, displaces it from the trope of the grateful slave, the slave who would rather serve his good master until death than accept manumission. As a result of this displacement, the trope of the faithful Negro servant necessarily invites us as critics to grapple with issues of affective attachments in depictions of the faithful Negro servant, especially because this depiction already displaces the work of a slave as one of a servant.

Note that "to serve" is derived from Latin *Servire*, meaning, "to be a slave." Note again: etymologically, the word servant comes from the Latin noun *Servus*, which also means *slave*. However, according to the moral and civil philosophy of the early Enlightenment thinkers, the category of the servant is assigned a different *status*, which distinguishes it from the slave. Notwithstanding, a thinker such as Thomas Hobbes, particularly in *Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*, points toward some ties between servanthood and slavery by underlining their shared membership in servitude.⁵³ In *Leviathan* Hobbes writes that "there [are] two sorts of servants." The first sort, *douloi*,

⁵³ Admittedly, in Hobbes's philosophy, the distinction he draws is derived from Greek discussion of servitude and not from the Atlantic slave trade; yet, there is enough allusion in his work, particularly in his writings on the Americas, to suggest that he was aware of the black Atlantic form of slavery in the colonies of his day.

imply “slaves taken in war.” Of this order of servitude, he points out that the “bodies” of these slaves “are not in their own power (their lives depending on the wills of their masters, in such manner as to forfeit them upon the least disobedience)” (449). In fact their bodies can be “bought and sold as beasts,” hence associating servants/slaves with animality and, at the same time, commodifying slaves and their services as objects for sale. Locke echoes Hobbes’ distinction in *Two Treatises of Government* when he writes, “there is another sort of servant which by a peculiar name we call slaves, who being captives taken in a just war are, by the right of Nature, subjected to the absolute dominion and arbitrary power of their masters” (158). The second sort of servant, *thetes*, is a “domestic servant,” one “whose service the masters have no further right, than is contained in the covenants made betwixt them” (Hobbes 449). It seems clear that Hobbes’s and Locke’s theory of servants and slaves abide by the Aristotelian notion of the rights of conquest: “the law is a sort of agreement under which the things conquered in war are said to belong to their conquerors” (Aristotle I, v).

Rather than argue that *slave* and *servant* are synonymous, I want to turn to Hobbes’ later writing on the subject of servant (slave) and also suggest that Richardson requires us to notice that the word *servant* has much latitude: it serves to cover a variety of conditions. In Chapter 20 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes writes,

Dominion acquired by Conquest, or Victory in War, is that which some writers call DESPOTICALL, from *Despotes*, which signifieth a *Lord* or *Master*; and is the Dominion of the Master over his Servant. And this Dominion is then acquired to the Victor, when the Vanquished, to avoyd the present stroke of death, covenanteth either in expresse words, or by other sufficient signes of the Will, that so long as his life, and the liberty of his body is allowed him, the Victor shall have the use thereof, at his pleasure. And after such Covenant made, the Vanquished is a SERVANT, and not before: for the word *Servant* (whether it be

derived from *Servire*, to Serve, or from *Servare*, to Save, which I leave to Grammarians to dispute) is not meant a Captive, which is kept in prison, or bonds, till the owner of him that took him, or bought him of one that did, shall consider what to do with him: (for such men, (commonly called Slaves,) have no obligation at all; but may break their bonds, or the prison; and kill, or carry away captive their master, justly:) but one that, being taken, hath corporall liberty allowed him; and upon promise not to run away, nor to do violence to his master, is trusted by him.

It is not therefore the Victory, that giveth the right of Dominion over the Vanquished, but his own Covenant. Nor is he obliged because he is Conquered; that is to say, beaten, and taken, or put to fight; but because he commeth in, and Submitteth to the Victory; Nor is the Victor obliged by an enemies rendring himselfe, (with-out promise to life,) to spare him for this his yielding to discretion; which obliges not the Victor longer, than in his own discretion hee shall think fit.

And that which men do, when they demand (as it is now called) *Quarter* (which the Greek called *Zogria*, *taking time*,) is to evade the present fury of the Victory, by Submission, and to compound for their life, with Ransome, or Service: and therefore he that hath Quarter, hath not his life given, but deferred till farther deliberation; For it is not an yielding on condition of life, but to discretion. And then onely is his life in security, and his service due, when the Victor hath trusted him with his corporall liberty. For Slaves that work in Prisons, or Fetters, do it not of duty, but to avoyd the Cruelty of their task-masters. (139)

I cite at length because, in Hobbes's argument, the bound or covenanted servant occupies the place we might often associate with the slave and the maneuvers in this occupation complicate the dramatization of black servitude that Richardson stages in *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*. For instance, for Richardson's Sambo, the covenant of white civility that sets up the body politic of the nation means that there can be no such thing as civil liberty, since in his capacity as a black servant he is for all purposes a slave. This subjectivity necessarily leads him to forfeit his rights in order to benefit from the privileges of his years of servitude. That is to say, the faithful Negro servant stands to the sovereign as a slave to his master. Note that this project of submission occurs in the war-zone, Hobbes's state of nature, bringing the concept of the servant and the soldier into

close proximity. I will return to this discussion of the militarization of service that the state claims later. Of particular interest now is how the value of covenant acts as a signifier of white civility.

In the above quotation, Hobbes stresses the distinction between the status of each term: the “servant” is oriented toward despotical dominion, and the slave is “kept in prison or bonds,” because, for Hobbes, it is the servant who *initiates* the covenant. That is to say, though both are taken in war, the servant has “liberty,” “his life [is] given” and, we learn, it is “after such Covenant [is] made [that] the Vanquished is a SERVANT, and not before.” The temporal markers (after, and not before) that inform Hobbes’s evaluation of servitude imply a progression from slavery into servanthood and can be read into the temporal allusions encoded in the devotion of faithfulness, especially since we are to understand that the vanquished is not “obliged because he is Conquered; that is to say, beaten, and taken, or put to fight; but because he commeth in, and Submitteth to the Victor.” In this passage, we come to understand the performance of covenant and of faithfulness in terms of obligation; after all, Hobbes notes in *Elements*, “where liberty ceaseth, there beginneth Obligation” (1 vx 9). We must note that unlike slaves who Hobbes claims “have no obligation at all,” servants, he claims, are bound by obligation to a sovereign. And because obligation is key to the performance of the covenant, we might rephrase Hobbes in *Elements* and suggest that Sambo’s obligation to Sir Everard began where his liberty ceased. This formulation explains why, unlike the faithful Negro servant in Upper Canada, the fugitive slave, who has not made the Covenant, has not “rendered himself [sic],” or “yielded to discretion,” remains perpetually fearful that his or

her liberty will be taken, and why some measure of this liberty is only “given” to the faithful Negro servant when he or she promises obedience in exchange for corporal liberty (i.e. from external impediments such as prison, chains, etc.) and his or her life. Crucially for Hobbes, the servant possesses liberty, explaining why he reserves the term slavery for extreme cases of servitude that involve a denial of corporal liberty. From this point of view, Hobbes presumes, “if we take liberty, in the proper sense, for corporal liberty; that is to say freedom from chains and prisons” (138), all men living under any system of laws manifestly have liberty. In such an instance, the slave’s liberty is transferred to and/or used by his master because of the slave’s “capture”; this captivity obliges the slave to a lifetime of service. Thus the servant’s obligation to his master enters him into a compact that chains him up. Slavery, within this logic, is a form of servitude founded on conquest, compact or covenant, and upheld by terror and cruelty.

Now, with this mind, let us return to *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers* and consider some of the politics at work when Richardson and subsequent critics insist on separating the concept of slavery from servanthood. Coleman, in his brief reading of Sambo in *White Civility*, particularly in his chapter on “The Loyalist Brother,” writes, “Richardson’s Grantham brothers are faithfully attended by Sambo, whose name shows that he is more of a type, a place-holder, than a character and whose devotion to their parents makes him the emotional, if not literal, slave of the sons” (70). What makes up a black character in the social, political, and symbolic context of nineteenth-century North American slavery, when the question of the humanity of Africans is under debate? Also, note how Coleman likens Sambo’s idolatrous devotion to slavery but hesitates in

identifying him as a slave. His hesitation is important because the literal practice of slavery cannot be based on blind devotion and “superstitious” attachment. Also, Coleman’s hesitation allows us to consider the affective power in Sambo’s particular devotion, which Richardson has so emphatically advocated as obedience and faithfulness. These devotional feelings produce his slavish subjection. Hence, when Coleman situates his observations about Sambo within a tradition of Upper Canadian literary representations of “non-white” characters, and points out that white masters and mistresses “deal humanely, if condescendingly, with their uniformly faithful Black servants and, by so doing, are meant to demonstrate British Canadian enlightenment in contrast to American hypocrisy, exemplified in the institution of slavery” (70), what also underlines this version of British Canadian enlightenment, I argue, is the efficacies of blackness for the colony, even, also, for Coleman’s argument around the figure of the Loyalist brother. I want to suggest that these humane dealings of blackness are not only necessary to and valuable for the colonial project in Canada, but also they are *definitively* in its service.

Echoing Coleman, Rothenburger uses the Emancipation Act of Upper Canada, the act that stipulated that any slave under six years of age in Canada in 1793 could be kept until the slave was twenty-five years of age, that all slaves over that age had to be given their freedom within six years, as grounds to argue that “although Gerald has an old Black ‘servant’ named Sambo, who has been in long service to the family, he is probably not technically a slave, unless he is kept illegally by the Granthams.” Later in the same note she seems to qualify her conclusion by indicating “there may have been little distinction

between the conditions and treatments of a slave and a Black servant at this point in history” (24f). And I would agree with her. We can recall for instance, that the work of the servant, “to serve,” is a phrase that is derived from Latin *Servire*, meaning, “to be a slave.” Also, let us not forget Thomas Carlyle’s warning in his infamous 1849 essay, “The Nigger Question”: “My friends, I have come to the sad conclusion that SLAVERY, whether established by law, or by law abrogated, exists very extensively in this world, in and out of the West Indies; and, in fact, that you cannot abolish slavery by act of parliament, but can only abolish the *name* of it, which is very little!” (3: 359). Moreover, Walter Prytulak observes that “[i]n Slavic languages (Russian, Ukrainian, Polish) the involuntary servitude (as slavery is defined) is expressed by one word only: *niewolnik*, which embraces the two aspects of slavery: 1). Not being subject to control of one’s will (having no will of one’s own) and 2). Lacking liberty to determine one’s course of action” (6). *Stranger in America: 1793 - 1806* (1807), the work about Charles William Janson who emigrated to America from England to make his fortune but instead lost money, offers an instance when the phrase “black servant” can be read as a code for slavery. Commenting on “[t]he arrogance of domestics in this land of republican liberty and equality,” he notes that “[t]o call persons of this description *servants*, or to speak of their *masters* or *mistress*, is a grievous affront” (emphasis in original). As an example, he gives this account:

Having called one day at the house of a gentleman of my acquaintance, on knocking at the door, it was opened by a servant maid, whom I had never before seen, as she had not been long in his family. The following is the dialogue, word for word, which took place on this occasion: “Is your master at home?” – ‘I have no master.’ – ‘Don’t you live here?’ – ‘I *stay* here.’ — ‘And who are you then?’ – ‘Why, I am Mr. –’s *help*. I’d have you to know, *man*, that I am no *sarvant*; none

but *negers* are *sarvants*.” (88)

The language of labour that Janson notes in this cultural construction of servanthood rests, according to this “help,” upon a contestation of racial hierarchies, one that enabled working white Americans to re-conceptualize themselves as different kinds of workers, to imagine “none but *negers* [*as*] *sarvants*,” the logic being that those who labour for others *become* “mere Negroes, lazy, and careless” (Forner qtd. in Roediger 45).

Sambo, the black servant, does not have the right of self-interest, which Article 16 of *The Declaration of Rights of Man* states as the following: “The right of *property* is that belonging to every citizen to enjoy and dispose of his goods, his revenues, the fruits of his labor and of his industry *as he wills*.” Lacking the right of self-interest and the corresponding will to dispose of his goods and labour, Sambo’s situation begs the question, what are the terms of his labour? And, following on this question is another: how can an awareness of racial and economic factors, and their psychic consequences, help inform our reading of the figure of Richardson’s faithful Negro servant, Sambo? The point I am trying to make with these questions is not simply to suggest that the slave is another sort of servant or vice versa; rather, I want us to notice that the category of the servant has much latitude: it serves to cover a variety of conditions and, in Richardson’s texts, it functions anachronistically, purging slavery of the vitriolic aspersions ordinarily cast on it.

I want to return to Rothenburger’s argument, that “Sambo, who has been in long service to the family, . . . is probably not technically a slave,” and suggest that the faithful Negro servant (as a trope) is structured by this central turn: the idea that when Sambo

behaves out of turn, for example, when he “pull[s]” “Massa Geral” “by the collar,” he can because, according to Gerald, “old age and long services in my family have given him privileges which I have neither the power nor the inclination to check” (120). Gerald does not need the inclination to check Sambo because Sambo’s action, of pulling Gerald’s collar to chastise him, is a check on both of them. This is to say, in order for Sambo to continue to enjoy his privileges he has to remind Gerald to remain on his pedestal of whiteness. In one of the few comments Karl Marx makes about slavery in *Capital*, he writes: “The veiled slavery of the wagers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world” (711). If “veiled slavery” refers to the commodification of the workers’ labour power as opposed to “slavery pure and simple,” then, not only is the pedestal of whiteness a technology for veiling slavery (implying it is given freely), the veiled slavery of servitude is slavery pure and simple. Also, one might wonder, if whiteness is imagined as racially and morally superior, and (white) masculinity is iconized as dominant, then, it might seem as if Gerald is in danger of falling off this pedestal. And yet, he does not. The danger of allowing an old black male servant control over his young white master has a desirable benefit: it serves to elevate Upper Canada’s imagined pedestal of racial tolerance. Moreover, Gerald does not check Sambo’s behaviour because Sambo represents, to use Zora Neale Hurston’s provocative language, “the ‘pet’ Negro” of the South,⁵⁴ where white interests in justice for black people are

⁵⁴ In her essay “The ‘Pet Negro’ System,” Zora Neale Hurston argues that in the North whites’ interest lies in the promotion of social justice for blacks as a race but not as individuals. The South, she points out, lauds black exceptionalism as a way to benefit from the labour of their favourite black person without once engaging the realities of social injustice. Like Richardson’s novel, following Hurston’s logic, presents the pet Negro as “truthful and honest, clean, reliable and faithful,” that is, “as white inside as anyone else” (158).

concerned solely with the promotion of individuals, preserving the inferiority of the black masses. Maintaining this Southern view in a short essay published in *Copway's American Indian*,⁵⁵ under the title “The North American Indian,” Richardson writes,

To the descendents of a very inferior and far less noble race, an untiring sympathy had been shown, and for the simple reason that their claims to consideration have been loudly and increasingly put forth. The proud, heartbroken, yet unmurmuring Indian has seen his people gradually and slowly disappear from the earth—swept away by the sword and by disease, without a ministering hand to help or voice to console him, and now only for the first time is the gloom of his dark prospects about to be dissipated by the warm and noble advocacy of whose strong sympathies a kindred spirit has roused to exertion, and through whose generous instrumentality the pitiless hand of the insatiate destroyer may yet be arrested in its course of extermination. (26-7)

Even though the title of the essay and the discussion of sword and disease in this quotation is aimed at Indigenous peoples, I note how Richardson mobilizes the loud support of North American Abolitionist Movement's work to end the slavery of Black people, those he refers to as “descendants of a very inferior and far less noble race,” as his point of comparison. Ironically, Richardson's statement voices loud opposition to the Abolitionist Movement's devoting its time and emotional energies (“untiring sympathy”) to defending the “claims” “put forth” by “the descendents of a very inferior and far less noble race.” In his opposition I am reminded of Frederick Douglass's speech on May 14, 1857 on “The Dred Scott Decision.” He says, “Take this fact—for it is a fact—the anti-slavery movement has, from first to last, suffered no abatement. It has gone forth in all direction, and is now felt in the remotest extremities of the Republic” (29). Reading

⁵⁵ The *Copway's American Indian* was a short-lived weekly newspaper edited by Ojibway writer George Copway from July to October 1851. Copway, in his project for a permanent Indian territory that would qualify for eventual statehood, published the newspaper as “a modest and unambitious effort to preserve” a race “fast vanishing away” by informing citizens and legislators about the conditions and prospects of the North American Indians (See *Copway's American Indian*, July 10 and 19, 1851).

Douglass's argument into Richardson's statement offers an example of what I mean when I suggest, in an earlier footnote, that the cultural trauma of slavery, as a collective memory, also forms white British North Americans as "a people." My point is that Richardson can disregard enslaved black peoples' "claims to consideration" because, a la Sambo, whose representation as a faithful servant underwrites the transparency of slavery, the slavery question is settled. In fact, when black people mobilize to end the servitude of slavery, their work is marred by accusations of them being "loud." Again, Douglass is instructive:

Loud and exultingly have we been told that the slavery question is settled, and settled forever. You remember it was settled thirty-seven years ago, when Missouri was admitted into the Union with a slaveholding constitution, and slavery prohibited in all territory north of thirty-six degrees of north latitudes. Just fifteen years afterwards, it was settled again by voting down the right of petition, and gagging down free discussion in Congress. Ten years after this it was settled again by the annexation of Texas, and with it the war with Mexico. In 1850 [referring to the Fugitive Slave Law], it was again settled. This was called a final settlement. By it slavery was virtually declared to be the equal of Liberty. [. . .] By it the right and the power to hunt down men, women, and children, in very part of this country, was conceded to our southern brethren, in order to keep them in the Union. Four years after this settlement the whole question was once more settled, and settled by a settlement which unsettled all the former settlements. (30)

Putting forth a claim is not the same as settling a claim. Richardson's comparative resentment of the loudly and increasingly put forth claims prematurely "settles" the unsettling work that Douglass and many abolitionists strived for.

Petitioning for white aid, benevolence, and sympathy for the "condition" and "future" (what was believed to be the disappearance) of Indigenous peoples,⁵⁶ he casts

⁵⁶ Richardson is adopting the myth of the "vanishing Indian," and naively believing that his appeals for sympathy for Indigenous people would bring about the civilization and preservation of Indigenous communities. He is also highlighting the cultural destruction symbolized by continual displacement on Indigenous lands.

black and Indigenous peoples into the dominant metaphor of the Enlightenment, the great chain of being, which established a hierarchy of life forms within the universe, situating black people as “a very inferior and far less noble race.” The moral rationale in Richardson’s appeal demonstrates a concussion between Abolitionist and Anti-removalist political campaigns: rather than solidarity, Richardson’s writing refuels tensions between Native and black politics, reducing the cross-fertilization of racial ideology that underpinned the realities of slavery and removal and extermination policies to a notion of competing sympathies, as if to say there is not enough sympathy from white people for black and Indigenous peoples.⁵⁷ Here again lies the cultural work of blackness and a missed opportunity to think blackness and indigeniety in relation to racialization, not to mention the reciprocal influences each of these peoples have on each other. In Richardson’s essay, for example, blackness becomes a key referent in discussion of the injustice of Indian removal and extermination policies. Hence, if we understand *technical* (as Rothenburger uses the term) as being “skilled in a particular art or subject” (*OED*), and if we abide by the “facts” of blackness in *The Canadian Brothers*, understanding how they work together with the facts of history at this time, then, as a cultural and literary

⁵⁷ Similar to Richardson, there was a sustained anti-abolitionist element in Copway’s plea for an Indian territory, in the *American Indian*. In Copway’s words, “[t]he need for a middle, Unionist position in American politics that would steer clear of the two faggots of slavery and antislavery,” was another “silver grey”/nativist theme. Continuing, Copway offered this “query”: “Will some of our wise brethren tell us how it is that the cause of the Indian is met with such total indifference on the part of the majority of the philanthropists of this nation and the ‘mother country,’ while the zeal with which they enter into that of the Negro, almost shakes the earth with its violence.” In another speech, he added “*Fanatics* have talked of extending universal suffrage even to the colored man, but their being *silent* in reference to that which would elevate the North American Indian proves that they assent to his downfall.” [“Query,” *Copway’s American Indian*, August 2, 1851; Copway, *Life, Letters and Speeches*, 169]. Although both Copway and Richardson reveal the complex alignments of racial politics in the antebellum period in the Americas, and how such complexities were governed by anti-abolitionist sentiments, I cite them as a way to point to how pathological ideologies of race are often displaced onto black people and culture.

trope, the faithful Negro servant inspires us to study the relations between affect, race and servitude. It narrates the interpersonal relations that facilitated good governance, how a Negro servant's devotion to his master is in itself a feeling that facilitates, even structures, this social order. This trope describes a benevolent, colonial exchange within a system of servitude. We are expected to believe the benevolence ends much of the ingratitude of the Negro servant. As a result, the faithful Negro servant, unlike faithless and designing servants, complies with the designs of the master and the duties of their vocation, and, in so doing, cooperates with his master in the colonial project of exterminating Indigenous sovereignty.

My emphasis on labour should not be taken to suggest that faithfulness was somehow divorced from religion, its more widely acknowledged foundation. Perhaps, it is appropriate to suggest that similar to the deep biblical roots of political ideals of liberty, human rights and justice, the ideal of faithfulness, as it is represented in Western literary traditions, has been shaped by biblical images and core biblical texts. The services and stories of the faithful servant that fill up the Bible are full of rites and observances and are measured by unflinching steadfastness. As part of his or her spiritual strength, the faithful servant is a true helper; she carries out her service to others, participates in the building up of this world, and collaborates with her Christian brothers and sisters. This companionship is an inheritance: "I put you to the duty of doing all that you have been told, with no faults or failures" (I Timothy 6:14). How, then, can duty be free of the burden of responsibility? And how are we to understand that Sambo, the bearer of necessary knowledge, bears a burden of responsibility for the nation?

In John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), the figure of Faithful appears as a helpful character. As an allegorical figure, Bunyan's Faithful is a pilgrim who, passing through Vanity Fair, lost his life on account of his faithful testimony. Faithful, in this narrative, is a model of a good Christian, one who is "valiant for the truth upon earth." We learn through his discourse with other pilgrims, like his conversation with Talkative and Christian about what true religion entails. For example, when he recounts how he had resisted Wanton (sexual passion) and Shame (a mocker of religion itself), his discourse strengthens Christian. Moreover, in a conversation between Faithful and Talkative, we learn the source of Faithful's restraint. He says, "A man may cry out against sin, of policy; but he cannot abhor it but by virtue of a godly antipathy. I have heard many cry out against sin in the pulpit, who can abide it well in the heart, house, and conversation" (81). Here lies a lesson in faithfulness: an assurance of more complex motives, a predestined effect of divine grace, rather than that of policy. In fact, the lesson Faithful teaches Talkative is that in true Christian pilgrimage one must live his faith, not simply talk about it, even if that living leads to dying, which associates the martyr with the Christ-figure: faithfulness unto death. So, when Faithful expresses his goal to Talkative, "I am only for setting things right" (81), his desire of/for setting things right highlights the power of Faithful's martyrdom.

As I am demonstrating from a Christian viewpoint, the art in the narrative logic of faithfulness documents a religious ideology, and we cannot overlook that this ideology is attached to Sambo, a fictional Negro servant, who, as I have demonstrated, is a figure in whom Richardson embeds a series of ideologies. Ironically, in both of Richardson's

novels, it is neither the faithful Negro servant nor his steadfastness that is celebrated by critics, though it is he who has a searching faith in the novels.⁵⁸ His faithfulness to his various masters can be seen, borrowing a phrase from Benjamin Drew's *The Refugee*, as the "[o]ppression [that] driveth a wise man mad" (7).⁵⁹ No one hymns Sambo like Christian hymned the martyred Faithful:

When faithless ones, with all their vain delights. Are crying out under their hellish plights.
Sing, Faithful, sing, and let thy name survive.
For though they kill'd thee, thou art yet alive. (167)

Unlike Bunyan's Faithful, for Richardson's Sambo, there is no immediate chariot ride to any celestial city in the novel. He is simply cutoff from the concluding events of the novel when he is no longer needed to drive the plot line of the Canadian brothers, a point I will return to shortly.

If faithfulness is a feeling structure that organizes social life, then, it remains to be asked, how, and in what ways, does it function and/or operate in relation to blackness? I do not turn to the ideological racism or the political psychology and pseudoscientific theories of natural black dependence, immaturity, and lassitude that circulated through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, practices and theories that associated childlike loyalty to blackness as an organizing basis for this trope. Instead, first, I use the discourse

⁵⁸ See Catherine Sheldrick Ross's edited collection *Recovering Canada's First Novelist: Proceedings from the John Richardson Conference* (1984), where many of the contributors (I.S. MacLaren and Michael Hurley, for example) celebrate the structural elements that connects the design of this diptych of novels; also, critics like Dennis Duffy who even explore questions of loyalism in Richardson's work avoid the figure of Sambo, as the loyal Negro soldier and sailor.

⁵⁹ Drew continues, "The oppressed, then, must not be made wise. If they do not know that a laborer can be a free man, the thought of freedom for themselves will not, perhaps, enter their heads. If they can be *raised*, so ignorant as to believe that slavery is the proper and natural condition of their being,—that they cannot take care of themselves, they will probably, be contented with their lot. The more infantile their minds are suffered to remain, the less will they comprehend the absolute wretchedness of their estate" (7).

of Loyalists in the Atlantic world to suggest that the duty of these Loyalists in themselves *might* work as a feeling structure that organized the social life of Richardson's Sambo, and, second, I turn to the description of Sambo as a "superstitious" Negro to suggest that Christianity is not the only source of faithfulness in *The Canadian Brothers*.

If I am tentative in my decision to refer to the Loyalists as a feeling structure of faithfulness, it is for at least three reasons. First, Sambo makes his initial appearance in Upper Canada in 1763, decades before the American Revolution set in motion one of the largest migrations in the Atlantic world, which is a different way of saying before the arrival and settlement of the black and other Loyalists in the Canadas. Second, Sambo's service has, from the very beginning, with Sir Everard Valletort as his master, been loyal. He has remained at the side of Great Britain. Third, he remains bound to many British masters, challenging the declaration that Lord Dunmore, the Governor of Virginia, made in November 1775 concerning Loyalists who supported the British: I "declare all indented servants, negroes free" if they "join his Majesty's troops" and help "restore" the "peace and good order of this Colony" (qtd. in Braisted 6). With this in mind, I accept that to read Sambo's loyalty as part of the black Loyalists discourse might be a speculative act, especially in relation to his appearance in *Wacousta*. However, this temporal concern is mitigated in *The Canadian Brothers*, which is set fifty years later in the war of 1812, when there was a British Black Loyalist militia in Upper Canada. Moreover, because I am reading Sambo's faithfulness and loyalty as a trope, what is of interest in my invocation is not "the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (Said, *Orientalism* 21) but rather what *The Canadian Brothers* represents as its

ideological contribution to nation-building. Therefore, I turn to the discourse of the black Loyalist as a way to explain why, in *The Canadian Brothers*, Sambo is no longer accused of being a “young scoundrel” as he was in *Wacousta* but rather he is now described as a faithful, superstitious, and obedient black servant. Particularly so because when Sambo reappears on the scene in *The Canadian Brothers*, one of the Canadian brothers is “treacherously shot (in the arm only, fortunately,) by the younger scoundrel Desborough.” Sambo nearly kills him but Gerald had to intervene and “save” Desborough “from Sambo’s vengeance” (124). If you recall that Sambo was described in *Wacousta* as a scoundrel, then this inversion of description pits the faithful Negro servant against Desborough, the white Loyalist settler, whose loyalties to Canada are questioned because he worked as a spy in the American War for Independence and he occasionally hides his identity in blackface. My point is simple: loyalty signposts Sambo to the world as a black Loyalist. And because he is described as faithful in the context of the War of 1812, a conflict understood in the tales of the Canadas as a Yankee invasion driven by racism, greed, and disloyalty (attributes believed to be intrinsic to the American character), we are called upon to situate Sambo in relation to the political loyalties of the Loyalists, including black Loyalists. As a trope, the faithful and superstitious Negro servant works as an appellation, in that it becomes another way for Richardson to engage blackness while avoiding full integration of blackness into Upper Canada, as is demonstrated by denying Sambo the description of “aged Canadian” a designation I will comment upon below.

Now, let us turn to three different scenes of black loyalty and faithfulness in *The Canadian Brothers* to engage the idea that these feeling structures, when attached to a black figure, work as “means” to reopen prior histories of cultural trauma and, in turn, as a way to reconstitute or reconfigure new traumas in relation to that black figure. The first scene is the narrative that unfolds when “Gerald Grantham and his faithful companion” Sambo cross over to the American shores of the lake to spy on Arnoldi and Desborough and approach the Detroit Bridge, the same bridge where De Haldimar, Grantham’s grandfather in *Wacousta*, executed the title character and Desborough’s father (155-6). The bridge, as a cultural artifact and historical site, marks a physical geography of memory: it gives us a sense of the past and triggers the living’s complicated relation with the memory of the violently dead. It is through a return to this site that we learn from Gerald that his parents have repressed the event-memory of the 1763 massacre between *Wacousta* and de Haldimar, learning “[w]hensoever allusion was made to the subject,” it caused them “extreme pain” (157). Moreover, we learn that Gerald’s “knowledge of these events, was confined to what he has been able to glean from *the aged Canadians*. *That Sambo*, who was a very old servant of the family, had more than hear-say acquaintance with the circumstances”; and yet, similar to his parents who did not wish to discuss the trauma of the execution, Sambo, “the negro obedient in all things else, ever found some excuse to avoid accompanying him” each time he “had his imagination excited by the oft told tale, [and] felt desirous of visiting the spot” (157, emphasis added). In addition to the fact that at the Detroit Bridge race and trauma are materialized in spatial organization, the bridge also acts as a reference point in shaping various identities, and, at the same time,

allows us to see the discrepancies in those identities: Gerald's parents grow to become "the aged Canadians" while Sambo himself ages, becomes old, but still, remains a "servant." With all of this in mind, I want to turn to the narrator's account of the dialogue that transpired between Sambo and Gerald at this site: "'Oh Massa Geral,' urged the old man in the same whisper—his teeth chattering with fear—'for Hebben' sake e no go ashore. All dis a place berry bad, and dat no a livin' ting what e see yonder. Do Massa Geral take poor *nigger* word, and not [g]o dere affer a ghost'" (157-158, emphasis mine). If "[a] ghost," according to Avery Gordon, "is primarily a symptom of what is missing" (63), then Sambo's request in *The Canadian Brothers* can be read as a moment in which Richardson attempts to interrupt the course of the present to give attention to other events that haunt the historical present and challenge the authorized version of events. What is key to note is that it is Sambo, the figure who unsettles the propriety and property lines that delimit the worlds of slavery and servanthood, who is taxed, in Gordon's words, with tracking "that which makes its mark by being there and not being there at the same time" (6). And yet, this moment that structures Sambo's feelings about life, death and physical space is undermined when Gerald assures Sambo that the figure they are after "is no ghost, but flesh and blood,"⁶⁰ and suggests to him to wait with the canoe while he goes to spy on the movement of the "midnight wanderer" (158). The narrator offers the following as Sambo's response:

⁶⁰ Gerald's statement, of course, evokes Mr. D —'s statement from Susanna Moodie's "A Journey to the Woods" sketch from *Roughing It in the Bush*: "'There are no ghosts in Canada,' said Mr. D—. 'The country is too new for ghosts. No Canadian is afraid (sic) of ghosts. It is only in old countries, like your'n, that are full of sin and wickedness, that people believe in such nonsense.'" He goes on to say, "ghosts, as I understand the word, are the spirits of bad men, that are not allowed by Providence to rest in their graves, but, for a punishment, are made to haunt the spts [sic] where their worst deeds were committed" (219).

‘Berry well, Massa Geral,’ and the old man spoke piquedly, although partly re-assured by the assurance that it was no ghost. ‘If e no take e poor nigger wice e do as e like; but I no top in e canoe while e go and have him troat cut, or carry off by a debbil—I dam if e go—I go too.’ (158)

What is black loyalty, obedience, and faithfulness but a mask of slavery? While this expedition marks Sambo’s services as a soldier and a sailor,⁶¹ it also marks Gerald’s rejection of Sambo’s advice, symbolizing that the web of feelings of inter-dependencies spun by generations and generations of living together are not mutual. By dismissing his own fears over how Gerald will “have him troat cut, or [be] carry off by a debbil” if he follows the midnight adventurer, his declaration, “I dam if e go I go too,” says more than him ignoring his beliefs for Gerald’s benefit. At the very least, Sambo’s use of the word “dam” to modify “I” not only refers to their “debbilish” circumstance but also is suggestive of his servile status as a “damned” subject, condemned to provide the services of a servant, slave, soldier, and sailor. As Sambo and Gerald creep in the mysterious figure’s direction, with Sambo “following close in the rear of his master, and looking occasionally behind him, not with the air of one who fears a mortal enemy, but of one rather who shrinks from collision with a spirit of another world,” the narrator informs us that “the features of the old man worked into an expression of horror, while trembling in every joint” (158). Bracketing Sambo’s feeling of anguish, of “colliding with a spirit of another world,” for now, let us note the tacit yet repeating choreography of his muscular

⁶¹ Before Lieutenant Gerald would accept the task of spying on “the movements of the enemy,” he says to Commodore: “My only difficulty, sir, is the means. Had I my light canoe here, with Sambo for my helmsman, I would seek their secret even on their own shores.” To which the Commodore responded with, “Bravo, my fellow.” “This I expected of you, and have come prepared” (153). We learn that for this expedition both he and Gerald are “armed” with “cutlass and pistols” (154). The point I am highlighting is that Sambo’s services as a sailor and a soldier position him as a “means.”

contractions, in this case the trembling, the physical manifestation of horror expressed in his every joint.

The second scene is Mrs. Isabella Grantham's "death-bed scene" (236). It marks an occasion in *The Canadian Brothers* where, as witnesses of an intimate family affair, we come to see the faithful Negro servant trope "as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power" (Foucault 103). The cultural work of the trope functions in much the same way that Jane Tompkins describes nineteenth-century authors used stereotypes to accomplish the narrative's cultural theme: "Stereotypes are the instantly recognizable representatives of overlapping racial, sexual, national, ethnic, economic, social, political, and religious categories; they convey enormous amounts of cultural information in an extremely condensed form" (xvi). As an abbreviated signifier, the trope is a "useful" "instrument," to borrow from Michel Foucault, "for a number of maneuvers[,] and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategy" (*HS* 103). While this deathbed scene is an example of the good Christian death, with Mrs. Grantham surrounded by loving and supportive family, which the narrator tells us included "even the lowest of the domestics"⁶² – with her "giving advice and conveying orders" (237), bidding farewells to family members and comforting them with the assurance of future reunion in Heaven⁶³ – I want to argue, the deathbed part of the scene is embedded within a world of other exchanges and, the whole scene, which includes the

⁶² Historian Peter Fryer notes, "it was beginning to be the smart thing for titled and propertied families in England to have a black slave or two among the household servants" (9).

⁶³ She says, "Grieve not, I entreat you, for recollect that, although we part, it is not for ever. Oh, no! my father, my mother, my brothers, and you my husband, and beloved children, we shall meet again" (238). In the symbol of resurrection, Christian faith says something about the meaning of time. Now is not the final answer.

physical space of the room, depicts more than a romanticized dramatization of an idealized Christian death. Of the deathbed scene, Richardson's narrator remarks,

Exhausted with the energy she had thrown into these last words, she sank back upon the pillow, from which she had partially raised her head. After a short pause, she glanced her eye on a portrait that hung on the opposite wall. It represented an officer habited in the full uniform of her father's regiment. She next looked at the negro, who, amid his unchecked sorrow, had been an attentive observer of her every action, and pointed expressively first to her kneeling children, and then to the portrait. The black seemed to understand her meaning; for he made a sign of acquiescence. She then extended her hand to him, which he kissed, and bedewed with his tears, and retreated sobbing to his position near the foot of the bed. Two minutes afterwards, Mrs. Grantham had breathed her last, but so insensibly that, although every eye was fixed upon her, no one could tell the precise moment at which she had ceased to exist. (238)

Therefore, if the faithful and loyal Negro servant trope straddles, as I am arguing, power relations, and if, according to nineteenth-century ways of death, this deathbed scene is an event of dying well,⁶⁴ and Mrs. Grantham has performed her departing tasks well, then, Mrs. Grantham's imparting last gestures, the request on "her" Negro servant allows us to recognize how this discrete exchange unmask the requirements, the cultural work that whiteness, in this text, asks of blackness. And to the degree that Sambo fulfils her request, I wonder, how might Henry and Gerard's attachment to Sambo be compensatory?

Notwithstanding Richard Baxter's warning of reading too much into a person's behaviour on the deathbed, "Judge not of the state of men's [sic] souls, by those carriages in their sickness, which proceed from their diseases or bodily distemper" (536), we can discern much *art* from the juxtapositions of class, race, age, and gender portrayed at the time of this intimate moment, which is specific to its historical period. Note, for example,

⁶⁴ We learn that as "[a] strict observer of the ordinances of her religion, [Mrs. Grantham] had had every preparation made for her reception of the sacrament, the administering of which was only deferred until the arrival of her children" (237).

Mrs. Grantham exercises her positional power as a white mistress trapped in a patriarchal marriage economy and contracts Sambo, the faithful Negro servant, to bear the responsibility of caring for and protecting “the Canadian brothers,” her two young boys, Gerald and Henry Grantham, and her husband, Major Grantham. Not only do we realize dying well is not easy on others,⁶⁵ but also if we consider Coleman’s assertion that the “Loyalist brother,” as an allegory, is a defining feature in the process of establishing “white civility,” of Canadianness in literature and beyond, and if we consider how Sambo is asked to be the protector of Gerald and Henry Grantham, two Loyalist brothers, then a Negro servant is assigned to the role of the father figure, the guide and teacher, making him responsible for their difficult entrance into adult society, not to mention their relationship with other men.

Moreover, the image of racial harmony that is depicted in this scene connects the figure of Sambo, the faithful and loyal Negro servant, to another nineteenth-century figure, the faithful nurse – the black serving woman, who was often portrayed in visual and verbal images as holding a white child or serving her mistress to highlight her whiteness.⁶⁶ While the faithful nurse is depicted as possessing a quiet strength, the faithful Negro servant, in this scene, is portrayed as manifesting excess affection, “unchecked sorrow.” However, what is checked, contained, even submerged in this sentimental deathbed scene, but is not lost on the readers of the era, particularly since this

⁶⁵ Of course I am borrowing from Patricia Beattie Jung’s titled work, “Dying Well Isn’t Easy,” a work that warns of the temptation to romanticize the “good death” or underestimate the sometimes debilitating suffering that accompanies it.

⁶⁶ See Thomas Waterman Wood’s painting “The Faithful Nurse” 1893.

scene is also a bedside scene,⁶⁷ is the sexuality or, in the psychology of the nineteenth century, the sexual threat of the black male body. Certainly, the phrase “bedewed with his tears” is evocative. In fact if we sexualize the space of this scene, as David Bell and Gill Valentine have shown us in *Mapping Desires*, and read into the figuration of Mrs. Grantham’s and Sambo’s desire (the physical contact of her kiss, and his assurance to fulfill her farewell requests) a sort of sexual energy, then we can note that lurking within the gesture of Mrs. Grantham extending her hand to Sambo, and in the flow of Sambo’s tears, lies a flirtation of *and* with another kind of death, the experiencing of the symbolic little death of sexual pleasure. Not without reason does Mrs. Grantham ask Sambo to care for her children and husband; after-all, the little death, marked by the “two minutes afterwards,” symbolically heals her brutal separation from her family.

With regard to white mistress/black male servant intimacy, this scene of mourning underlines a conjectural history of an alternate domination in civil society: that of a black male servant by a white mistress, who, as patriarchal mother, as a holder of dominion (in the Hobbesean sense), safeguards black consent. Here is how the racial contract intersects with the social contract, itself a contract feminist theorists like Carole Pateman argue is supplemented by the sexual contract. I am not interested in hierarchizing the racial and sexual contracts, arguing which contract offers more or receives less. My point

⁶⁷ At the scene of their mother’s death, Gerald “was in his twelfth year at the period of this afflicting event—his brother Henry, one year younger; both were summoned from school on the morning of her death—both knew that their fond mother was ill—but so far were they from imagining the scene about to be offered to their young observation” (236). We learn that when they “enter[ed] the sick chamber of their adored parent, they beheld what every circumstance told them was not the mere bed of sickness, but the bed of death” (237).

is to highlight that the social (and sexual) contract's viability *depended* on the maintenance of a racial contract.

As a way to conclude this chapter and its meditation on faithfulness, let us meditate on another racial contract in Richardson's texts, one between superstition and blackness, and underscore how the stereotypical figure of the black superstitious primitive articulates what Gilroy describes as "a pre-rational, spiritual mode of African thought and [the enslaved's] own compound outlook—an uneasy hybrid of the sacred and the secular, the African and the American, formed out of the debilitating experience of slavery and tailed to the requirements of his abolitionism" (60-61). To engage Gilroy's undefined, "pre-rational African thought," I will read Sambo's superstitions as an example of the "compound outlook": that is to say, as part of *and* as different from the psychopathologies of colonialism that Fanon articulates so effectively in his work. I am suggesting that the belief systems of the enslaved and their descendents are not pre-rational, nor are they anachronistic, out of step with white enlightenment. To read spirituality or superstition as "pre-rational," as Gilroy does, is to situate it in a discourse of progress, situate it at an earlier stage, as a primitive attachment before the white enlightenment. In a way, then, the spectacle of servitude and the supernatural characteristics that Richardson attaches to Sambo do not solely allude to the genres of the gothic fiction in early Canada but also to the legacies of slavery and colonization in the Americas.

By using Richardson's popular culture text as a way to describe the cultural work of blackness in developing the national culture of Upper Canada (nation), I understand from Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* that "the nation gathers together the various

indispensable elements necessary for the creation of a culture, those elements which alone can give it credibility, validity, life, and creative power” (245). “Colonialism,” he writes,

has not bothered to put too fine a point on its efforts, has never ceased to maintain that the Negro is a savage; and for the colonist, the Negro was neither an Angolan nor a Nigerian, for he simply spoke of “the Negro.” For colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God [. . .]. The efforts of the native to rehabilitate himself [sic] and to escape from the claws of colonialism are logically inscribed from the same opinion of view as that of colonialism. (211-12)

First, it is not the case that Richardson’s narrative invokes superstition as a way to eliminate it: *Wacousta* is subtitled “The Prophecy” and *The Canadian Brothers* “The Prophecy Fulfilled.” The novels seem to endorse, not eliminate superstitious, or supernatural knowledge and activity. But, second, it is the case that in both of Richardson’s texts Sambo is simply spoken of as a Negro, and at times with the descriptor faithful or, as I will be arguing in this section, his identity is riddled with superstitions or weighed down by the curse of the narrative’s history. Noticing the force with which this weight is psychopathologized, and how this psychopathology articulates proof of Sambo’s “disordered reasons” (289), his psychic disruption, Richardson’s decision to describe Sambo as “superstitious” refigures the tone of the faithful Negro servant trope, in the sense that similar to the descriptor faithful, the grammar of superstition equally invokes a belief system rooted in notions of spirituality, suggesting that though the superstitious Negro and the faithful Negro servant are trapped within the same labour system, slavery, they operate from different belief systems.

In *The Canadian Brothers*, Sambo’s superstitious moments are staged moments, a way for readers to recall and, more specifically, for the Canadian brothers to access a

restricted knowledge: the extraordinary event at Fort Michillimackinac in 1763, where Wacousta and Clara de Haldimar meet their death by falling into the abyss below the bridge. Because Sambo witnessed this event, and because the event radically disturbed him, “governed his whole life and conduct” (288), the superstitious moment might be understood as another device for Richardson to merge the political terms of the event with their effects on Sambo and, in so doing, to represent the moment of being possessed by the historical spirit of the event as a conflict in the practices of faith, hence pulling together spirituality and labour in interesting ways. On the one hand, the moment allows Richardson and his characters to marshal the language of “possession” to “dismiss” Sambo and the “alarm” (158) of the superstitious moment. For Sambo’s masters, the narratives of wild possession offer proof of black backwardness and pathology, not a mark of intense discipline, or a reminder of African cultural and religious practices and not, as these episodes of possession show in this text, their possible repertoires of resistance to bounded servitude. As a result of this anti-superstition sentiment, the alarm is pressed into colonialist rationales of primitivism, which, at the same time, is harnessed for the colonial state formation. For example, Richardson makes use of the terror and horror of the superstitious figure as a way to encode fantastic histories, to foment the circulation of the sociological realities of the narrative’s past (285), to frame belief systems not fully understood by British North Americans in order to berate certain religions or certain religious opinions and customs, to construct those who practiced or believed in them as inevitably weak and destructive (290) and, owing to this colonial epistemology, dismiss the antagonisms and oppositions that their practices might raise.

Not surprising, the alarm is not regarded as a different kind of alarm, of Sambo challenging the smooth flow of history in the text, of him expressing the unnamed drudgery of indentureship and slavery that he bears within the context of the texts. This disregard of black spiritual belief adds further explanation for why Sambo is described as a faithful Negro servant and not a faithful slave. On the other hand, that “every faculty” belonging to Sambo is described as having been “taken possession” of by “the world of the spirits” (158, 288) alludes to the “trembling of his every joint,” which tellingly functions to reveal a connection between servitude and bodily strategies of resistance in this early Canadian text. Also, what is key to note here is the verbal and bodily transactions between the spirit and physical world and the service of Sambo’s body as a medium in this transaction.

Superstition is on par with, perhaps even indistinguishable, from faithfulness. Superstitious faith serves Sambo’s interests. It preserves his knowledge-labour, upon which his masters’ daily intimacies and Upper Canada’s cultural, economic, military and naval enrichment depend. Therefore, it is not surprising his faith in superstition is described as an act of “dread,” supposedly an act out of sync with a rational account of reality (289). Note the dialogical opposition within which Sambo, the faithful Negro servant and the superstitious Negro, operates, of how the faithful Negro’s service is to the master and the superstitious Negro’s is to the preservation of the self; note, in either scenario, how these oppositions mutually engage the labour of Sambo to establish the dominance of British culture and religion. For example, when Sambo identifies a link to the world of the spiritual, when he sees the ghost of Wacousta and hesitates to accompany

his master, he is accused of “apostrophizing some spirit visible only to himself” (288). Moreover, according to the Canadian brothers, superstition utterly alienates reason, evidenced to them by Sambo’s wild and fearful ravings, and how “nothing could remove from his mind that the face he had beheld was that of the once terrible Wacousta” (288). The assessment of the brothers’ dismissal of Sambo’s faith in, reverence for, and fear of “the world of the spirits” (159) relies on British policies of Christianization in Upper Canada, policies ignorant of the nature and meaning of African beliefs and practices, intolerant of non-Christian and creole-Christian ways of being religious. In a sense then, Sambo’s willful and tactful refusals to recall the “local influences” that have “governed his whole life and conduct towards each succeeding generation of the [Grantham] family” (288) more than express how recalling the past in the form of knowledge disturbs his senses (289).

In a telling conversation between Sambo and his master at the mysterious cottage in Detroit, Gerald Grantham sits Sambo on a bed in the cottage and abruptly asks,

“how old were you when the Indian massacre took place near this spot. You were then, I think I have heard it stated, the servant of Sir Everard Valletort?”

The old negro looked aghast. It was long since direct allusion had been made to his unfortunate master or the events of that period. Questioned in such a spot, and at such an hour, he could not repress the feeling of terror conjured up by the allusion. Scarcely daring to exceed a whisper, he answered.

“Oh Massa Geral, for Hebben’s sake no talkee dat. It berry long time ago, and break poor nigger heart to tink ob it—”

“But I insist on knowing,” returned Gerald loudly and peremptorily; “were you old enough to recollect the curse that poor heart-broken woman, Ellen Halloway, uttered on all our race, and if so what was it?”

“No, Massa Geral, I no sabby dat. Sambo den only piccaninny and Sir Ebbered make him top in e fort—oh berry bad times dat, Massa Geral. Poor Frank Hallbay e shot fust, because he let he grand fadder out ob e fort, and den ebey ting go bad—berry bad indeed.”

“But the curse of Ellen Halloway, Sambo—you must have heard of it surely—even if you were not present at the utterance. Did she not,” he continued, finding that the other replied not: “Did she not pray that the blood of my great grand father’s children might be spilt on the very spot that had been moistened with that of her ill fated husband—and, that if any of the race should survive, it might be only with a view to their perishing in some unnatural and horrible manner. Was not this the case?”

“Oh yes, Massa Geral, berry bad tongue Ellen, affir he lose he husband—but, poor ting, he half mad and go sabby what he say. He time to start for he gun boat, Massa Geral.”

The part Sambo had sustained in this short dialogue was a forced one. He had answered almost mechanically, and not altogether without embarrassment, the few queries that were put to him. Nay, so far was he governed by surrounding local influences, that the anguish he would, under other circumstances, have experienced, at this raking up of recollections he so sedulously avoided, was lost in terror, produced by his near and midnight propinquity to the fatal theatre of death. His only idea now was to leave the spot as quickly as he could. (286-67)

The details of this passage are important for a number of reasons. First, Gerald finally gains a frustrated access to the restricted knowledge of the cursed fate of his family’s line. It is frustrated because Sambo initially refuses, justifying his reluctance with “It berry long time ago, and break poor nigger heart to tink ob it—.” If the term “nigger,” according to Hosea Easton, “is an opprobrious term, employed to impose contempt upon [blacks] as an inferior race” (qtd. in Kennedy 5), then, what is at stake for Sambo to self-identify with this injurious term? Arguably, as a tool of subjugation, nigger marks Sambo’s status in the slave society of Upper Canada. Sambo’s response is striking because, here again, he is weighed down with a broken heart.⁶⁸ As a result, Sambo’s

⁶⁸ In “Life in the South West,” found in the 1856 edition of *United States Magazine of Science, Art, Manufactures, Agriculture, Commerce and Trade*, Volume 2, a gentleman giving an account of his stay at Chikowoko narrates how on his walk to his hotel he “was arrested by the notes of a bango” and the voice of a “negro slave, singing one of those plaintive melodies so characteristic of the race, and which they invariably indulge in after their days of toil.” The song went,

De Lord makes de flowers,
And de bee makes de honey,
Poor nigger makes de cotton,
And de *white man* makes de money.

evasion of “berry long time ago” is significant in that it temporally liberates him from the “unfortunate events of that period” and rejects being dragged back into the structures of signification that threaten to destroy him. Second, when Gerald “insist[s] on knowing,” on knowing “the curse that Ellen Halloway uttered on all our race,” his insistence privileges a regime of perception that he has previously contested. And, when Sambo withholds the details of the curse, his reticence (regardless whether he is withholding because he does not know, or was not in ear shot, or whether he is withholding because although he could see everything he did not have first hand knowledge) conveys his knowledge power in this forced dialogue. Third, in light of the effects that this narration and this historical site of terror has on Sambo (“his reason was utterly alienated” (288)), the curse from Ellen can be read as carrying the curse of slavery in Upper Canada: the continued “feeling of terror” that fell upon Sambo’s body, terrifying him to the edge of delirium, an experience that his master, and the text, can “not repress.” In this way, and for a moment, it might be possible to argue that the suffering that this recollection rakes on Sambo lures Henry Grantham into confession:

Shocked as he was at the condition of Sambo, Henry was even more distressed at witnessing the apparent apathy of his brother for the fate of one, who had not merely saved his life on a recent occasion, but had evinced a devotedness—a love for him—in every circumstance of life, which seldom had had their parallel in the annals of human servitude. (290)

Devotion. Love. Human servitude. This reasoned discourse forms the terms of Henry’s recognition, which, again, betrays the codependency of Hegel’s slave and master. His

Come day, go day,
De Lord send Sunday;
'Tis enough to break poor nigger’s heart
To go to work Monday. (364)

reasoning, then, is rooted in principles of Christianity, commerce and colonialism, and they point to Sambo's states of bondage. Here Henry grows aware of Sambo's life and not simply his labour time, which, unlike the conflict necessary to the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, underscores Fanon's formulation that "[t]here is not an open conflict between white and black. One day the White master, *without conflict*, recognized the Negro slave" (217, emphasis in original). Prompted into this state of recognition, of him recognizing his mastery depends not upon himself but upon the labour of Sambo,

Henry paced up and down the room, violently agitated and sick at heart. It seemed to him as if Sambo had been a sort of connecting link between themselves and the departed parents; and now that he was suddenly and fearfully afflicted, he thought he could see in the vista of futurity a long train of evils that threw their shadows before, and portended the consummation of some unknown, unseen affliction. (290)

As a connecting link for whiteness, Sambo is a conduit, an instrumentalizing conduit. Sambo guides, and is tasked by a promise to his mistress to guide, the Canadian brothers into the future. Also, he crosses (or is asked to cross) borders, such as those between reason and unreason, consciousness and the unconscious, past and future, emphasizing, in these superstitious moments, the impact of the material and psychic dimensions of imperialist, racialized, national, and labour-based domination on his subject positions. Therefore, these fluid moments of his characterization could be read as strategies of rebuttal, in the sense that the coercive representations of him as a faithful servant are counteracted by the superstitious Sambo. Regardless of whether or not his rebuttals work within the terms of the coercive representations, it is important to note that it is in the moments when he is "reluctant" to serve as his masters' "compliance" (155) that he becomes "the brave but superstitious negro" (288). Here, the "but" acts as a racial-

making bar, elevating the brave negro above the primitive superstitious negro.

Superstition, in this light, is framed as a demoniacal craft, as different from Christian spirituality, as marking the boundary of primitive and civilized, underlying the concept's moral weight, the perception of it as demonic, meaningless and/or trivial theology. And yet Sambo maintains literacy, a strong faith in the spiritual world. What, then, does it mean for Henry to think, *now*, he can see into the future? Might it be that he has inherited a form of Sambo's superstition? Or that Sambo stood in the way of an afflicted white futurity? And if so what "evils" has Sambo absorbed? A paradox is that Henry's ability "to see in the vista of futurity" rests on Sambo's inertia,⁶⁹ his "fearful affliction," of him not being able, physically, to work to save him and his brother "in every circumstance of life." And yet, presumably, Sambo's paralysis of fear is because he can see into that future, and so his seeing the future parallels and does not contradict Henry's growing awareness of the fulfillment of the prophesied curse. Inertia is consistent with Sambo's horror, and, as the novel goes on to show, Henry himself is helpless before that future horror, too. The train of "evils" that drags Sambo into a continuum from the past and into the present is also what drags Henry into the future. At stake in this paradox, where logic of inertia prompts one of futurity, is the narrative exit of Sambo. However, in saying the past moves away for (with) the future, I am also saying Sambo's exit from the narrative might be read as the "disease" that physician Samuel Cartwright, in his report "Disease

⁶⁹ "Filled with the terror that ever inspired him on approaching this scene [of] past horrors, his usually dark cheek wore the dingy paleness characteristic of death in one of his colour, while every muscle, stiff, set, contracted by superstitious fear, seemed to have lost all power of relaxation" (285)

and Peculiarities of the Negro Race” (1851), called “drapetomania,” apparently a mental illness that caused African slaves to attempt to escape, runaway from their masters.

Let us return to the conversation and note that when Sambo narrates this past event, which reveals parts of his own back-story, he does so in the detached third person. For example, his response to Gerald’s question about whether he was “old enough to recollect the curse [of] that poor heart-broken woman” is, by all indication, an ambiguous one: “No, Massa Geral, I no sabby dat. Sambo den only piccaninny and Sir Ebbered make him top in e fort—oh berry bad times dat, Massa Geral.” Although it highlights his youth at the time, and might be said to suggest that Sir Everard’s action, of sending Sambo to the top of the fort, might have been an act of protection, it also highlights that the memory of the past is painful for him to incorporate as part of his identity, perhaps explaining why he uses the externalized framework of the third-person narration to reveal crucial information about his identity.

Furthermore, I am interested in Sambo’s self-identification as “piccaninny,” because it offers further support that he was more than a servant. From Sambo’s use of the term, we can understand “piccaninny” as referring to a black child of African origin or descent. This understanding is complicated when we examine the fictional account (but perhaps memoir) of *Marly, or, A Planter’s Life in Jamaica* (1828). Describing the different class of labourers on the plantation estate, the anonymous writer explains,

The different bodies of the people upon the estate are classed into gangs. There were two field gangs which [I] have already mentioned, and in addition to them there was a small gang called the pickeniny gang—these were the most numerous. The pickeniny gang, consisted of the children, who were taken to the field under the superintendence of an elderly woman, who carried a small whip to keep her young charge[s] in order, and to whom were given small hoes, with which they

wrought in the best way they were able—but as was to be expected, the work they performed was of very trifling consequence. The placing of these children in a gang was . . . the school to which they were sent to learn the duties which would be required of them during the whole course of their lives. (93-94).

If we put Sir Everard Valletort in the position of the superintendent, and situate young Sambo as a child in the field, then, we can read Sambo's account of "Sir Ebbered mak[ing] him [view the event from the] top in e fort," as central to the labour policies during apprenticeship. We might also consider Sir Everard's harshness as a way to prepare Sambo for a whole life as a labouring black man. In this sense, then, the labour of black children, far from being "trifling," was appropriated, disciplined, and channeled for the work of white settlement. Here, truly, part of the enslaved women's duties was to apprentice black children into the industrious commerce of slavery. Also, here lies how black women, and generally those like Sir Everard who took the charge of a superintendent, are used as instruments of reproducing the institution of slavery. The fact that a system of wardship directs the grooming of these children for the labour force raises the significance of the etymology of piccaninny, which comes from *picayune*, which, according to the *OED*, is a "coin of little value." While it may be the case that the discourse of piccaninny is folded into a general discourse of childhood, of children being of little value until they are of a certain age, and that it may also be true that the slave child is of little value and may even cost less, it is not the case that purchasing slave children was cheap or that their value will not accumulate, unlike other children; after all, as I mentioned above, these children functioned as status symbols for British officers. As a result, I invoke the relationship between piccaninny and *picayune* not simply to highlight young Sambo's value as a material commodity and his role as narrative

commodity (simply think of the way he disappears from the narrative for instance) but, in so doing, to use this currency, first, to read superstition as a mark of slavery's legacy, to devalue black cultural life, and, second, to challenge how anti-superstition sentiments work in this text to overshadow Sambo's valuation in the colony.

If we consider these superstitious moments in relation to the material conditions and the political injustice of Sambo's representation in the text, and remember that these relations are not culturally, economically, politically or spiritually autonomous from the labour of Sambo. And if we remember that, as constructed moments, they emphasize a complex interplay between the multiple border crossings that Richardson's text constructs and the sociological or religious reality of superstition, then, these superstitious moments must be considered as black ingenuity under duress, as manifestations of the psychic costs of years of servitude, rather than cast off as "superstitious fear" or devalued as disruptive practices because they do not serve the desires of his master nor entrench the hegemonic colonial values and ideologies that bind him to Upper Canada. To sum all of this up, then, black superstition operates in *The Canadian Brothers* as a form of faith, one that does not limit epistemology to rationality, suggesting that Sambo's faith in superstition draws on a level of consciousness far beyond the logical or rational. This is not an attempt to explain what wills Sambo to survive a life of bonded servitude; rather, I mean to say that in spite of the physical, psychological, and emotional brutality of enslavement, he retains, to borrow an idea from anthropologist Melville Herskovits,⁷⁰ African cultural traditions in

⁷⁰ In *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), anthropologist Melville Herskovits challenged the work of sociologist Frazier E. Franklin, who, in his work *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), denied the existence of African cultural continuities across the Atlantic, arguing that enslavement stripped Afro-Americans of their African cultural heritage, leaving them to be a kind of tabula rasa in the Americas. For

Upper Canada. Although on the one hand, the reduction of Sambo's intelligence to the quivering, fearful body fits with my sense that Richardson disparages African spiritualism, on the other hand, the narrative justifies Sambo's fears, shows them to be correct and accurate. The ghosts of the Morton/de Haldimar violence do haunt the border country of Detroit and Michilimackinaw, and the curse of doom on the de Haldimar family/race, in gothic fashion, does come true. So the narrative itself suggests that Sambo's premonitions were accurate forecasts. His way of "knowing" is doubtful, but what he perceives is shown to be true.⁷¹ The point is not so much about authorial intent as it is about the ways in which economies of significance circulate in contradictory ways. This lays particular weight, then, on the institution of criticism, to track these economies and to lay bare their cultural politics. Hence, if we were to begin with a different assumptions about superstition, to view it as part of the spiritual presence of black religious culture in the Americas, as part of the diverse and robust religious faith in the African diaspora, if we view it as a kind of meaningful spiritual force that links Sambo to Afro-Caribbean peoples as well as an African past, then, I believe, Sambo's superstitious moments can tune us to the various practices of faith (Voodoo, Santeria, Obeah, for example) that informs and preserves the religious-cultural exchange and movements in the black Atlantic landscape.

more on Herskovits' stance, and how others have extended his challenge see Nathaniel Murrel's *Afro-Caribbean Religions: An Introduction to their Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Tradition* and Lorand Matory's *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*.

⁷¹ Recall the young Sambo from *Wacousta*, and remember the narrative importance attributed to his supernatural abilities to hear: it was "he [who] distinctly heard a groan towards the skirt of the common."

As we see in Richardson's *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Brothers*, the work of blackness is marshalled to cultural and creative end. Both novels point out ways in which the cultural work of blackness haunts frontier exchanges in the Americas and transatlantic worlds. The reoccurrent performances of blackface minstrelsy, acts of servitude, the economies of affect and devotion, the hauntings and manifestations of spirits, spirituality and faithfulness through the narrative, and the fact that one character, Sambo, is made to bear significant cultural work of the nation, is a testament to ways in which blackness is foundational to the formation of the colonial project of Canadian nation building.

There by Absence: Catharine Parr Traill's Upper Canada and its Epistemologies of Blackness

I

This chapter reads blackness for its absence against and through the grain of an imperial archive. I am calling Catharine Parr Traill's 1855 manual, *The Canadian Settler's Guide*,⁷² an imperial archive for two reasons: first, settler manuals are sites of materiality; second, I wish to take up absence within a text that purports to be a (more or less) complete assemblage of experience as opposed to a single story aware of its uniqueness, and I suggest this absence is a form of avoidance. Trail contends, with the use of the definite article *the*, that her text is not an account of 'a Canadian settler's life,' but rather that she speaks and archives for a generality which acts as a totality instead of simply accounting for herself. This is what requires that her guide not only be taken up, but also be taken up as an archive. Therefore, that I frame *Guide* as an archive is, undoubtedly, guided by Traill's own self-conscious detailing of her views and settler experiences of life and housekeeping in Upper Canada. Of *Guide*, she says, I write this "simple useful book to give them [future settlers] an insight into the customs and occupations incidental to a Canadian settler's life[.] I have taken upon me to endeavor to supply this want, and have with much labour collected such useful matter as I thought best calculated to afford the instruction required" (xviii).

⁷² Catharine Parr Traill is best known for her meticulous accounts of settler life and living (for women) in Upper Canada in *The Backwoods of Canada* and *The Canadian Settler's Guide* (1855). Out of these two texts, *Backwoods* is firmly embedded in the institutional canon of CanLit. So, if, in my Introduction, I argued that I have chosen texts that become "textbooks" of Canadian cultural and literary development, then, why, of these two texts, have I chosen the lesser known and read text as opposed to the more widely circulated one? As I soon point out, I have chosen Traill's *Guide* for analysis because as a settler manual it is an archive and also because *Guide* positions itself as the Canadian Settler textbook.

In this chapter, I spend a lot of energy framing this text. I do so in order to, at least, point out that the practice of avoidance I am tracing in Traill's *Guide* is not the paranoid consciousness that literary writers of the nineteenth-century produced, nor even a politics of concealment. Rather, it is a resoundingly ignored and foundational point of significance in Upper Canada's history: its *management* of blackness. With this in mind, I do not focus on the invaluable insights on housekeeping that Traill supplies or on the local materials she collects and archives into her *Guide*; rather, I focus on insights that were available to her project but not collected, or deemed unarchivable: the conspicuous absence of blackness, the invisibility of its workings, and its resulting epistemologies. Specifically, I attend to the ways in which black presence is expendable to the needs of European settlers, and I make the claim that notions of black absence, even avoidance, entail a precondition of narrating Upper Canada, its whiteness and its security. I understand that the manner with which I formulate and organize blackness as an absence, an avoided presence in Upper Canada, can be a foreclosing argument, particularly since its intelligibilities are inextricably linked to the colony's desires to be reputed as white. Nonetheless, I hold on to this line of argumentation because first, my title is meant to lead a reader to ask: is it that blackness is there *by* absence, or that it is (falsely) absent by disavowal? And second because critics attending to the whiteness of settler expositions have narrowed the character of blackness in early Canada, rendering the remarkable questions of black absence unasked, and its particularities underexamined, avoided. Also take Traill's observations of Upper Canada in both *Backwoods of Canada* (1832) and *Guide* and note that the informational significance in both expositions does not account

for blackness, hence enabling its absence in the imagining of Upper Canada. It is well documented that there were black people in the British North America that Traill and her husband migrated to, yet, different from her sister Susanna Moodie's settler writing, Traill never refers to black neighbours in her *Guide*. The strange absence of blackness in a settlement text positioned as foundational for documenting the perplexities of life in Upper Canada brought me to inquire: what "points of knowledge," as Traill calls them, are "essential for the instruction of the emigrant's wife" (xviii)? How do absence and repression generate each other, and, with this in mind, how do we "recognize the limits of representation" that Sara Ahmed says "exceed 'our' knowledge" (*Queer Phenomenology*, 1, emphasis mine)? Hence, a study of the avoided black presence in Traill's *Guide* is an important pedagogical imperative for critical race studies and early Canadian studies, a field that is consciously remaking its history during these times of revision and reassessment.

In Traill's *Guide* she notes that here in Upper Canada "our safety lies neither in bars nor bolts, but in our consciousness." Continuing, she adds, "Here we have no bush-rangers, no convicts to disturb the peace of the inhabitants of the land, as in Australia. No savage hordes of Caffres to invade and carry off our cattle and stores of grain as at the Cape; but peace and industry are on every side" (44, 46). I use this passage as one of the overlooked moments in which to read the presence of black avoidance and its epistemologies in Traill's *Guide*. I argue that while, on the one hand, overlooking blackness functions to secure the colony's reputation as a white settler colony, on the other, this avoidance works *against* the very body of instructions and facts that Traill's

Guide purports to offer, and that many critics take up as archival documentation. I read the above notice, that there are “no savage hordes of Caffres,” as part of the generative colonial animal-human binary discourse that was fundamental in colonial oppression. I also read another overlooked piece of advice in the opening of *Guide*, that British wives and daughters emigrating to Upper Canada should bring “fine white cotton stockings” (9) from England. I maintain that these two pieces of advice operate as a symptomatic intrusion, a spectral disclosure of the avoided (black) object and subject into the narrative. I focus on this “fine white cotton stocking” as a way to map the intercolonial trade in cotton, which stretches from the American South to India, onto a history of labour and race relations, one in which bodies as much as natural resources served as “raw materials” for an industrial world. In this instance, the white female body, constructed through the commodity of cotton as decorative surface and boundary, functioned symbolically to represent Englishness intact in the “new world.” Reflecting upon Traill’s castoff references to “Caffres” and “fine white cotton stockings” as archival evidence of repressed black presence (unconscious calls to attention of that which is avoided), this chapter proposes that the avoidance and/or omission of blackness, in fact indexes not only its polymorphous nature but also, to borrow a phrase from Jacques Derrida’s *Specters of Marx*, its hauntological refusal – its attempted exorcism, or conjuring away. Towards this end, my reflections on fine white cotton stockings, for example, explore the links among whiteness, cotton, and refinement, and note that the consumption of this feminine commodity operates within an economic system of racial symbols. I want to draw more attention to the union here between racialized bodies as industrial components at the level

of both commodity production and consumption. This case demands the revision of Marxist analysis of capitalism and commodity, as here industry is inherently based upon racist psychology, not only charged by racial pathology, but its very enactment and practice: having black people picking cotton to dress the whites as white provides a distanced drama or stage to haunt the racial economy, to allow it to remain unconscious and unfronted. My general argument is that blackness is there by absence: to miss its functioning role in Upper Canada is to miss seeing that the colonial desire involved in the structure of white settlement substitutes presence for absence. I contend, in this early period in Canada, blackness resists territorial location⁷³ and this resistance casts black absence as a material document, a form of repressed or unconscious cultural memory, with its own record keeping, its own form of knowledge, one specific to an institutional operation.

The Canadian Settler's Guide is commonly taken to be a settler's manual, which in all respects it no doubt is. Too often, however, the text is treated as a historical document and, as a result, the generic slipperiness that positions this text and settler writers as Artful Dodgers of genre is ignored. I am interested in the resourcefulness of settler writers like Traill who, in the service of a far flung empire, provided information about colonies like Upper Canada and yet dodge the role in contemporary criticism of being seen to function as colonists. I am not suggesting here that this interest rests on some moral economy; rather, my interest lies in the way her text animates colonial

⁷³ I am thinking largely of the way Queequeg is described, the way there is so little differentiation between native Americans, pacific islanders and Africans in *Moby Dick*. Does this not beg a connection with ideas of Indigenous people, who, as a result of settlement, 'owned' less and less the rights to land and/or territory?

institutional historiography and how this animation shapes knowledge formation.⁷⁴

Because knowledge-producing manuals like Traill's *Guide* are also a kind of archive-making, engaged with burgeoning disciplines of geology, biology, and natural history, what do we make of the different disciplinary homes that the *Guide* simultaneously inhabits? And how, for instance, do we become mindful of the fact that the *Guide*'s power, organized through Traill's and subsequent CanLit critics' knowledge of space/place, class, "race" and gender expectations, articulates a point of capture that maps a particular settler subject?

Because Traill's *Guide* is a colonial intertext,⁷⁵ by which I mean because it is reinforced by other literary texts, because sections of it draw on genre traditions of the novel, on multiple social allusions and, at the same time, it offers itself as a comprehensive and exhaustive catalogue of catalogues, how, then, do we approach this settlement text? Is it a culinary text, or a literary text, a post/colonial text? Is it a text belonging to the discipline of anthropology, botany, history, feminism or horticultural studies? Recognizing that these catalogued fields share an interest in Traill's *Guide*'s

⁷⁴ In terms of paying close attention to the process of archiving, Stoler explores us in her essay, "Colonial Archive and the Arts of Governance," to move "from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject." Adopting this process helps us read both the *form* and *content* of the archive.

⁷⁵ The word from critical theory that describes the work I'm undertaking here is intertextuality. Suggesting that a "text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture," Roland Barthes, for example, institutes a semiosis or a theory of signs, a "field without origin—or which, at least, has no other origin than language itself, language which ceaselessly calls into question all origins" (*Image-Music-Text* 146). Instead of a lack of origin instantiating a crisis in representation or a *mise en abîme* of any self-legitimizing claims to knowledge, Julia Kristeva's classic formulation that intertextuality is "the *passage from one sign system to another*" recognizes its broad intra- and intercultural function, not limited to language *per se*, where all discursive practices can be assimilated to sign systems. Linda Hutcheon sees in Kristeva's proposals "the irreducible plurality of texts within and behind any given text" (6), while Thais Morgan also concludes on this basis that as "one text can connect significantly with a virtually unlimited set of other texts . . . semiotics logically requires a theory of intertextuality. Indeed, *culture* itself, or the collection of signifying practices in a society, *is radically intertextual*" (246).

expressions and repressions of Upper Canadian life, and also recognizing, as Franco Moretti does, that texts do not respect national boundaries but are more like networks connecting dispersed points of exchange,⁷⁶ who, in a clear-cut way, can tell anymore what the borders are between these competing factions' claims to Traill's *Guide* when the question is about disciplinary and generic boundaries? I pose this question of disciplinary and generic possibilities not only to remind us that early Canadian women writers (Susanna Moodie, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, to name two) successfully archived more than one mode of writing, but also, in so doing, to *orient* us to understand the multi-directional purpose of settlement and the ways empire "solve[d] the problem of imperial control at a distance" (Richards 6). Put differently, the local flows of values within Upper Canadian texts reveal the proximity of other British colonies throughout the empire and, thereby, not only encapsulate the dramas of settlement as dramas of colonial intimacy, but also materialize this colonial intimacy through objects that colonial-settlers consumed. These texts promulgate Britishness as a global network of intimate relations in an attempt to overcome the vast distances between the colonies, while also securing Britain's place at the centre of this network.

II

Beginning with the knowledge that my thoughts on settlement are structured by my readings of settlement literature, I want to point out that the educating process of emigration, the reading of narratives of settlement, of settling in, yield intimacy. The word intimacy is derived from the Latin verb *intimo*, meaning "to make known." *Intimo*'s

⁷⁶ Like Edward Said, I too "have found it a challenge *not* to see culture in this way—that is, antiseptically quarantined from its worldly affiliations—but as an extraordinarily varied field of endeavour" (xv).

origin is the Latin word *intimus*, that is, “what is innermost.” Yoking together these two etymologies – to make public that which is private and private that which is public – emphasizes a brand of intimacy recorded in settler guides: namely, an exposition on transposition. We must pause over this notion of intimacy in settler manuals to consider its centering effect: as an *Intimsphäre*, as a sphere of private feeling shielded from intrusion, settler manuals attempt to link, in the Habermasian sense, publicness and communication to democracy and accountability. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Jurgen Habermas points out the subject-making experience of letter writing. For him, the epistolary conventions and the protocols of the domestic novel were important because they “apparently set [the writer] free from the constraint of society, [they were] the seal on the truth of a private autonomy” (46). According to Habermas, a public sphere was predicated on the particular forms of intimacy “whose vehicle was the written word” (48). Such intimacy, though discursive, turns the private happenings in the colony into a public exchange and provides an effective and influencing link between the reader’s conceptualization of the colony and his/her desire to emigrate there. This vehicle of correspondence of intimacy sealed contracts between settlers already here and settlers to come. Settler manuals became public guarantors of settler thought and letters. Here, of course, the exposition serves the end of a settler society seeking to transform cultural fears around transposition and to transmit its own vision of the social and class world—privacy, in other words, in the service of a colony. Traill’s descriptions of life in the colony, for instance, offer a course of development for future settlers, an opportunity for them to experience a social life otherwise private from them and distinct from theirs.

Whatever else a settler guide was, it was a contract of intimate communication, one that would maintain strong and continuous contact with future settlers in their countries of origin, and would communicate patterns and irregularities of life to these future settlers. Bearing this sense of colonial intimacy in mind, we must consider what there was about settler guides that produced this form of intimacy across national and continental borders, and how they were largely deployed during periods of emigration as a remedy not only to support the colonial-settler contract, but also to promote Upper Canada as a *terra-nullius*.⁷⁷

Much of the composition of intimacy in Traill's *Guide* is a directive conduit of making known, of making a colony (like Upper Canada) arrive at the imaginative doors of future settlers, thus conveying that the narrative design in settler's guide instructions determine the parameters of readers' imaginations. Narratologically these guides acted as disciplinary tools as well as cultural compasses that brought prospective settlers imaginatively *closer in* to the colonies. English readers' reliance on settler narratives from afar engendered long distance relations by means of a distance education. Thus,

⁷⁷ In "The Settler Contract," Carole Pateman casts European settlement in the colonial history of Australia and North America within the social contract tradition as a way to note the operative power relations in the polity and the values that justify European settlement. "The settler contract," she writes, "is a specific form of the expropriation contract and refers to the dispossession of, and rule over, Native inhabitants by British settlers in the two New Worlds. Colonialism in general subordinates, exploits, kills, rapes, and makes maximum use of the colonized and their resources and lands. When colonists are planted in a *terra nullius*, an empty state of nature, the aim is not merely to dominate, govern and use but to create a civil society" (38). Continuing, she writes, "In America, a *terra nullius*, there is no private property, no husbandry, no money, and no real sovereignty – neither proper *dominium* nor *imperium* – therefore the settlers have found themselves in a state of nature" and "this (actual) state of nature *waits to be transformed and developed*, to be turned into civil society. The settlers know what they have to build because they are familiar with the opposition between the 'natural' and the 'civil'" (54, 55). It is worth thinking about which groups of settlers are included or excluded as signatories of settler contracts. The settler contract is still a racial contract in the sense that Charles Mills explains racial contract: It "establishes a racial polity, a racial state, and a racial juridical system, where the status of whites and non-whites is clearly demarcated, whether by law or custom" (13-14).

settlement literature, with its devotion to education, shaped and coloured a network of transatlantic intimacies, marking the empire's successful inroads into its colonies. This approach to thinking settlement as foraying might sound severe, given the fund of information that settler texts convey, but how else might the complexities of colonial settlement be engaged, women's role in the Victorian project of empire building be understood, if not by re-positioning our questions? Focusing on Traill's *Guide* as a way to articulate the disavowed black presence, I reposition the colonial devotion to education as a form of devotion to colonial intimacy. I do so not only to highlight the attitude-framing work that settler guides—those highly effective informational weapons—engender about Upper Canada, but also to show that as part of the larger project of imperial education, this sense of colonial intimacy organized who is imagined to be here and who is not, allowing us to interrogate the enabling and rationalizing logic of settler narratives in order to get a clearer sense of the messiness and complexity of the “useful knowledge” that Traill's *Guide* offers.

In the colonies, settler regimes of intimacy often rely on the chain of familial interdependencies between those who wrote guides such as this, as well as familial relations across the British empire. In the context of Upper Canada, these relations can be traced in the caring for and about that transpired between the Strickland family:⁷⁸ between

⁷⁸ “The Strickland family,” as William and Robert Chambers point out in *Chambers's Journal* Vols 19-20, “is already favourably known for capability in authorcraft” (123). They were a literary family before the migration to Upper Canada. Three of the Stricklands who migrated from England to Upper Canada were Samuel Strickland, Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Strickland Moodie. Clara Thomas, Carl Ballstadt and others point out that the Stricklands, Catharine, Samuel (author of *Twenty-seven years in Canada West*) and Susanna all pioneered in life and the literature of Upper Canada. It is noteworthy that the migration of the sisters and their husbands were facilitated by their brother, who, in 1825, was the first Strickland to emigrate to Upper Canada. Here lies part of the economic politics of care in colonial intimacy. Moreover,

the brother, Samuel Strickland, and his sisters who were settler wives in the families of the Moodies and the Traills. These filiations, when regarded as microsites of colonial life, offer glimpses through which readers can imagine the intimate relays between continents, between England and its colonies. For example, the information on security that Traill offers to her British readers about Upper Canada (and, by extension, about Australia and the Cape) functions to conflate geographical knowledge with colonial and imagined assumptions about the moral make-up of British North America and its inhabitants. Little wonder, then, that when we take up Edward Said's invitation, in *Culture and Imperialism*, to explore "overlapping territories" and "intertwined histories" of empire we discover colonies in the British empire were intimately intertwined and not as remote as we often imagine.

Let me be the first one to ask, why explore the subject of Upper Canadian blackness in a text that is not at all concerned with, and thus does not address questions of, blackness? I do so because much of what is compelling about Traill's *Guide* is that her text, re-issued and re-titled from *The Female Emigrant's Guide, and Hints on Canadian Housekeeping* (1854), employs the anachronistic term "Canadian" to differentiate between the domestic, feminine housekeeping practices in the British and British North American homemaking.⁷⁹ The revised title is key not only because, before and after 1867, this text has cast its shadow on contemporary imaginings of what the nation was to

the Stricklands maintained connections with publishers in England, publishing their accounts of life in Upper Canada, furthering settler forms of colonial intimacy. In addition, their older sister was renowned as a biographer of the Royal family, and helped promote their work in Britain.

⁷⁹ See Misao Dean's *Practicing Femininity: Domestic Realism and the Performance of Gender in Early Canadian Fiction* for an articulation of the changes and challenges that emigration played on domestic housekeeping.

become in terms of citizenship and national belonging, and so demands critical engagement.⁸⁰ Nor is it simply because, as both titles of Traill's *Guide* already imply, hers claims to be an inventory of all that is here. Although these points are true, what compels my examination is the very question of how Traill's text, as it records the perplexities of early Canadian living, also erases the presence of blackness in Upper Canada's connected histories of settlement. The absence of blackness in a text whose changed title emphasized "Canadianness"—and which has since been read as archetypally Canadian—in a time when the underground railroad brought many black people to Canada West stands out for the way it constructs "Canadian" by means of avoiding blackness. Put differently, because the controlling image of "The Canadian" settler in the early- to mid-nineteenth century is consistently the English, or Irish or Scots, and because the rhetorical force of Traill's title, *The Canadian Settler's Guide*, suggests an idea of the *Guide*'s comprehensiveness, my aim, in focusing on blackness in this settler text, is to understand how the making of the "The Canadian," and the racial thinking that inscribes and is inscribed in that making, can partly be understood as a construction of black absence.

Besides my reasons for addressing the subject of blackness in Traill's text, let me also say a little here about why I address this subject in a text that claims to assuage emigrant agitation. By this statement I do not want to simply call attention to the fact that

⁸⁰ Not much critical work has been done on *The Canadian Settler's Guide*. When Traill's *Guide* is invoked in Traill scholarship, it is overshadowed by her other emigrant writing, *Backwoods*: for example, see Elizabeth Helen Thompson's *The Pioneer Woman: A Canadian Character Type*. Recently, critics writing on food have turned to *The Canadian Settler's Guide*: see Elizabeth Driver's *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949* (especially from 290 – 300); Hersch Jacob's "Structural Elements in Canadian Cuisine" in *The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures* 2.1 (2009).

settler accounts worked to lighten the heavy question of whether or not to emigrate; that, as Traill's *Backwoods of Canada* attests, future settlers capitulated to her experiences and regarded them as learned opinions; or, importantly, that these accounts governed that decision; rather, it behooves us to observe how what is trusted by prospective emigrants as learned opinion actually conveys more than the ostensible "information" it claims to communicate. Whether these studied opinions were in the form of public guides or in the compass of private letters, they both took on the educating role of advice, and ought to challenge us to think about their sociological functions and about the writers employing them. To put it simply, behind the duty of care demonstrated by settlers in their guides is a broader agenda that goes beyond mere "information and advice."

As a cultural object preoccupied with producing and imagining the exchange-space of colonial intimacy, settler guides recodified the larger dynamics of (agricultural) colonization and consumption in the colonies. These processes of invasion, of robbing the land of its natural resources and displacing its Indigenous peoples, are underwritten and the colonies are presented as places with desirable opportunities where one can gain a substantial living by strict industry and sobriety. Therefore, an underlying value running through Traill's *Guide*'s instructions to settling in is, at once, an entwined history and economics of ecology and empire. Traill details in her text the knowledge of how to make use of Upper Canadian land, offering, on the one hand, a botanical account of ecological life including the plants that grow on the land and, on the other hand, instructions on how to use the botanical properties of plants, on how to live life in Upper Canada. Many critics have referred to her as "an enthusiastic naturalist" and as "a realist and a botanist"

(Thomas xii; xiv). “Traill’s books, both early and late,” Carl Ballstadt writes, “indicate that she read widely in natural history.” Ballstadt goes on to explain that Traill’s interest in natural history “never ceased to probe the mysteries of the earth nor to wonder at the adaptation of species to environment” (*Catharine Parr Traill* 7).

This chapter, however, is not about developing a relationship between botany and conquest, or articulating how the goals of botany coincided with the goals of empire to categorize, determine the feasibility of settler transplantation, and devise methods by which to advertise and market their uses for commercial and domestic profit. Instead, what this kind of context allows me to do is put Traill’s *Guide* on a larger historical canvas and engage an understanding of settlement literature as a key site to read and/or experience the intimate ways settlers *made use of* power (empire) and resources (ecology) in early Canada. On the surface, “[e]cology’ and ‘empire,’” Tom Griffiths writes,

are words that suggest very different dimensions of life on earth; one is local specific to place, the other is geographically ambitious; one is often seen to be scientific, amenable to laws and exclusive of humanity; the other is political, quixotic and historical. Brought together under the scrutiny of scholarship, these worlds and world-views make for creative friction. But ‘ecology’ and ‘empire’ also had a real relationship. They forged a historical partnership of great power – and one which, particularly in the last 500 years, radically changed human and natural history across the globe. (1)

As my examination of fine white cotton stockings will demonstrate, I am interested in interrogating the implications of the injunction of “forged historical partnership,” one concerned with circumventing and concealing relational histories as they relate to the scientific conservationist concerns in the empire, especially since Traill’s local botanical lore, her cataloging Upper Canadian ecological life, is useful to empire. Even though Traill’s *Guide* is meant to provide local knowledge and practices to prospective settlers,

when viewed in the light of empire, one of its main concerns is to ensure the most convenient use of nature in the service of settlers, “to cheer the heart and smooth the rough ways of the settler’s first outset in Canadian life” (35, emphasis added). For instance, that the text opens by promising readers “the most approved recipes for cooking certain dishes” (x); that it is “better,” she says, “to confine my recipes to dishes that are more peculiar to the cookery of Canada” (126) goes beyond her passing on knowledge to indicate her “manag[ing]” the tastes “of [the] Canadian settler’s house, its economy or profit” (x).

The imperatives in recipes, like the forged partnership between ecology and empire, authorize a set of instructions, dictate the order of appropriate actions for auspicious outcomes. So, the well-managed, catalogued recipes that Traill’s *Guide* provides, that make it easier for settlers to consume and manufacture the different raw materials that grow in Upper Canada, that are needed for Canadian cookery, all narrate an economic history of ecology and empire in Upper Canada.⁸¹ That is to say the recipes in *Guide* tie into the larger commerce in colonial goods that includes imperial exploitation of Canadian resources. It seems to me that when we situate Traill’s *Guide* as a work of ecology and empire in Upper Canada, it will help to remember that as an agricultural settler colony that exports commodities such as timber and grain, we note that the impact of clearing the forest fulfills imperial desire for expansion and creates colonial profit.

Obviously, then, in view of Traill’s knowledge of botany, her familiarity with the

⁸¹ She gives, for instance, “Recipes for drying and preserving the native fruits” (84); “Some good recipes for the cooking . . . of Apples” (74). She goes on to explain which apple in which season (whether Autumn, Summer or Winter) to use for, say “Apple Pie; Preserved Apples; Apple in Syrup; Apple Jellies; Apple Butter or Apple Sauce; Cider; Red Apple Jelly; Apple Rice” (67-8).

binomial system of plant taxonomic narrative which draws upon the same racial typologies of the great chain of being from medieval times, one that traced a hierarchy of beings from God down to the humblest rock, the unacknowledged induction of blackness in Upper Canada in her *Guide* seems suspicious.

Trail's botany reminds us to return to the fine white cotton stockings: the botanical epistemologies of the *Sea Island* or *Santu* cotton seed points out a relation between blackness, ecology and empire. It is precisely this figuration of the discourse of race within ecology, the fact that botanical taxonomies are not unrelated to taxonomies of race, that might explain the absence of blackness in Trail's text. If, as my title suggests, blackness is there through absence, and if botanical epistemologies are related to discourses of race, in what other ways is blackness represented in this and other early Canadian settler texts?

By turning to the *Guide*'s regimes of instruction, particularly Trail's remark that there are no "savage hordes of Caffres"⁸² in Canada, we come to understand how trails of black presence are discerned through inter-textuality, through the text's systems of permeability. Also, this trail serves as a long-overdue occasion to ask how the discursive image of blackness is bound with Upper Canadian settlement literature.⁸³ In the play of settlement literatures, generic boundaries are not discrete or clearly demarcated but rather

⁸² Remember that in the Victorian period, the Zulu people of southern Africa were popularly known to the British imagination as Caffres – sometimes spelled Kafir or Kaffir. Although the word "Kaffir" is now properly regarded as insulting and inappropriate, it was used during the mid-19th century to indicate members of the Xhosa tribe, as distinct from other "Natives." The spelling "Caffre" was infrequently used at that time; it is a survival of the Portuguese usage referring to pagans by way of a term borrowed from Arabic. Its form in Arabic is *kafir*. In its proper usage, it refers to anyone not belonging to one of the three monotheistic faiths.

⁸³ Trail extracts passages from the following texts: Major Strickland's *Twenty-Seven Years Residence in Canada West*; Thoreau's *Walden*, etc.

inclusive and open. Because I associate Traill's mission "to supply the female settler with information to meet her daily ways; and to put her in the best way of acquiring the knowledge she needs in making use of what material she has at her command, and turning them to the best advantage, with the least expenditure of money and trouble" (153) and her mission to bring together "instructions" on "the particular duties" that "the wives and daughters of the future settler" need in order "to meet the emergencies of their new mode of life" in Upper Canada (ix) as part of the literary tradition of Empire, I suggest that Traill's settler texts master the idealization of empire. Within the context of Traill relating the best advice for prospective settlers, her *Guide* masters the idealization of empire because of its devotion to assuage emigrant agitation, ensure emigration satisfaction, and the stability of future settlers. Significantly then, not only does this intimate devotion to faraway readers help define the "literary character type" that Elizabeth Thompson, reading Traill's work, identifies as "an ideal pioneer" (58-9), but also the *Guide*'s distortions, omissions and restrictions result in the circulation of inaccurate images and perceptions of the colony, including prescribed behaviour for interracial engagement and interactions once the British settler arrived in Upper Canada.

III

As a way to begin unpacking the conspicuous absence of blackness in Traill's *Guide*, and to start to flesh out the triangulation between racial thinking, ecological thinking and empire made intimate, conflated through economy, I turn our attention to the "fine white cotton stockings" (9) that, according to Traill's advice to wealthy white women, are more "advantageous to purchase in England or Scotland than in Canada"

(8).⁸⁴ Traill's emphasis on the value of this "advisable and needful purchase" (9), compared to the "common white calicos," "factory cottons" and "cotton fast prints" (9)⁸⁵ worn by servant-girls in Canada, modulates commodity and imperial and feminine desire, thus articulating a relationship between feminine consumption, subjection, and political participation. Notwithstanding this economic participation has political ramifications for women's consumptive desires, nor the gendered coordinates of that participation in the mid-nineteenth century, for the sake of this section of the chapter, I am more concerned with the racial labour that mediated feminine-commodity relations. I am aware that on the subject of dress Traill informs her readers that, "It is one of the blessings of this new country [sic], that a young person's respectability does by no means depend upon these points of style in dress; and many a pleasant little evening dance I have seen, where the young ladies wore merino frocks, cut high or low, and prunella shoes, and no disparaging remarks were made by any of the party" (9). Of course this implies that Traill does not advocate the wearing of fine white cotton stockings for protection from the weather or even for fashionable display. In fact, she writes, "How much more sensible I thought these young people, than if they had made themselves *slaves* to the tyrant fashion. Nevertheless, in some of the large towns the young people do dress extravagantly, and even exceed those of Britain in their devotion to fine and costly apparel" (9-10, emphasis

⁸⁴ Even though Mark Quintanilla observes that "By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Britain's textile industry had developed in three main districts: northwest England, the Midlands, and the Clyde Valley of Scotland" (287), underlying the placement of Scotland in the black Atlantic (through the imperial tensions between England and Scotland) through this Atlantic commodity. It is also worth noting the excluded presence can be expropriated, brought inside the colony by an act of purchase.

⁸⁵ Lara Kriegal's *Grand Design: Labour, Empire, and the Museum in Victorian Culture* points out how the ubiquity of calicos expresses the everyday benefits of imperialism in Victorian Britain, thus calling attention to the colonial labour of these benefits.

added). In this light, the wearing of fine white cotton stockings connotes a class—and a moral—imperative for “those ladies who expect to live in some of the larger towns or cities; the farmer’s wife in Canada,” she points out, “has little need of such luxuries – they are out of place and keeping” (9). And yet, I am concerned with how Traill’s statement about “fine white cotton stockings” brings together feminine commodity desire, the commodity’s role in constructing an intimacy between England and the colonies (the stockings must be purchased in England, it makes you more English, so the lands do overlap), imperial commerce, and the avoided presence of blackness. To get a better sense of the conjecturing racial sensibility between white feminine skin and fine white cotton stockings, it is useful to move this personal feminine accoutrement into a historical context and examine the material and symbolic conditions out of which this commodity was produced.

The central question that interests me in this section is the following: what are the conditions of forgetting this colonial fabric? And what do we learn when we link this material to an imperial culture? We know that after the American Embargo and Non-intercourse Years between 1807 and 1812, and prior to 1861, Britain increasingly imported raw cotton from the U.S.⁸⁶ In fact, by 1847, almost 80 percent of its ample and

⁸⁶ Before 1832, India and Brazil provided much of the supply. And after 1861, because of the American Civil War, India and Egypt became Britain’s main cotton suppliers. Mark Quintanilla notes that by the 1860s “the rise of King Cotton and the dependence of Southern planters on slave labor ultimately led to the succession of Southern states from the Union, the creation of a Southern Confederacy, and a bloody civil war between North and South” (286). So the window for US cotton was the thirty years between the 1830s and 1860s: this smaller window is important for a number of reasons. First, Traill arrived in Upper Canada in 1832, which suggests that when she first arrived the cotton likely came from India or South America, whereas by the time she published *Guide*, it would have come mostly from the US. Another significance here is that the 1830s are when Britain abolishes slavery in the colonies, so at the very time when Britain gets out of the slave business, it increases dependence on slave-made US cotton.

secure supply of raw cotton had been produced by slaves on plantations in the Southern states of America (Martin Hewitt; Mark Quintanilla; James Mann). Historians like Mary Ellison and cotton shippers and cotton merchants like Mr. George Agneu Carruthers and Mr. John Bruddock confirm in interviews with the *East India Company* (May 1830 in the House of Lords) that slaves were the main source of labour used to produce Southern cotton. And if we attach the oppressive conditions “of the laboring” South to many of the “colored Canadians” who fled to Upper Canada against this backdrop of mid-nineteenth century British-US trade relations, we highlight that black emigration from the South, as we learn from the many collected testimonies in Benjamin Drew’s *The Refugee; or The Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada. Related by Themselves*, communicates more than, as Drew suggests, a “means of escaping the evils under which they groan” (1, 16, 1). Also, it communicates, to borrow a phrase from Philip Fisher, the hard fact of slavery: namely, it brings to light an enslaved black’s alienation from and dispossession of her or his labour reenacted through the circulation of commodities. And the presence of white cotton in *Guide* indicates the presence of those her narrative attempts to avoid—slaves who had run away from producing the cotton she values, in fact declares “luxuries” (9), in her text. With this in mind, we cannot overlook the perennial question of globalization: how does an imperializing system enable commodities to circulate *across* borders yet subject the people who produce the raw material for these commodities *under* the same borders?

Karl Marx's assertion of the relations between the development of the British cotton textile industries, the colonies, and plantation slavery in *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847) is worth highlighting. He writes,

Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, &c. Without slavery you have no cotton, without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery which has given their value to the colonies, it is the colonies which have created the commerce of the world, it is the commerce of the world which is the essential condition of the great industry. Thus slavery is an economic category of the highest importance. (121)

On this point, also note that Theodor Adorno has suggested, “on the one hand, the commodity is the alienated object in which use value withers; on the other hand, it is the surviving object that, having become alien, outlives its immediacy. We have the promise of immortality in commodities” (498). Let me suggest that in the wake of “cognitive failures” to recognize race history in early Canadian texts and criticism, and because these failures mark a moment when the project of representation is faced with its own impossibility, the idea of assigning immortality to the alienated object is good news. On the one hand, it suggests that the loaded linguistic marker within “fine white cotton stockings” drags with it an uncomfortable, unstable *yet* informative chain of historical and affective associations; on the other hand, these associations instantiate the pedagogical value of ignorance: namely, how sanctioned forms of not knowing, themselves inseparable from colonial domination, reign high in the cultural knowledge of colonial consumption. I will go as far as to argue that this pedagogical value does not only accrue to subsequent generations of readers, who have the benefit of my analysis, but also that the normative function of the negation of blackness in the *Guide* for Traill's immediate readers continues to inform racial politics in Canada today.

While Traill herself devotes a great deal of time and energy to assigning value to objects, discussing their proper function in the context of the settler colony, her normative account of objects effaces the origin, human relations objectified within, and conditions of production that are indissociable from these objects. Indeed, the relations between humans and objects provides more insight into the racial politics of the period than can be gleaned from the relations between humans in Traill's *Guide*. She did not extend the careful silence with which she surrounded the question of blackness in her book to her discussion of objects, specifically clothing. In "Coziness and Its Vicissitudes: Checked Curtains and Global Cotton Markets in *Mary Barton*," Elaine Freedgood notes that "[c]ultural knowledge is stored in a variety of institutional forms" (23), in words, and in things. While this is true, and while the signifiers "fine" and "white" abide by nineteenth-century notions of white female domesticity, and by a mid-nineteenth century American consumer trend, one that archaeologist James Deetz remarks preferred whitened and refined commodities, the factual designation of the stockings' whiteness extends the racial value of an already racialized commodity. The whiteness of these stockings signifies not only in the realm of race but also in the economy of cotton (or conflation of the realms of race and economy), in which American cotton was seen as superior to Indian cotton. In 1830, when the Lord President in the Chair in the House of Lords asked cotton dealer Mr. Ryder, "to what do you attribute the great inferiority of the *Indian Cotton*?" Mr. Ryder responded that it "has more Dirt" and asserted that "The Value of the [American Cotton] certainly is improved [in price] by its being free from any Dirt or Stain" (473-78). In this statement where the commercial ethics of profit stipules over the

cultural stain to conceal not only the cultural politics of racialized labour, but also to render invisible the stain of race, how do we register the disparate ways in which the racial stain of blackness intrudes and extrudes and, like the stockings themselves, clings? One way to feel the clinginess of race is to recognize that the fine texture of the cotton stockings alludes to the quality of cotton imported into Britain from the American South. This allusion guides us to recognize that these fine white cotton stockings are most likely made out of the *Sea Island* and *Santu* American Cotton. Although both kinds of cotton are known for their soft, silky, and fine fibers, the *Santu* cotton is particularly known for its whiteness if not for being particularly silky (Greeley 853). Here *lies* a fine, white object betraying the stocked susceptible desire for things black. What could be made about the fact that Britain (including Canada) abolished slavery in the midst of this period but maintained the economic practices that staged the very drama of racist dominant racial ideology that defined slavery? Understanding that The Embargo Act of 1807 (December 22) was precipitated by an act that Parliament passed on 25 March 1807, the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and that slavery in the British Empire would not be abolished until 1833, highlights that the lack of stain corresponds to a displacement of the racial stain. Indian cotton is produced by Britain's own colonial labour, and thus the stain is visible; American cotton by the racist economy Britain consciously and legislatively disavows, casts off from itself, but still participates in.

What, then, do we make of the racial hierarchy between the brown labour that produces dirty cotton from areas controlled by (British) India and the black labour that produces "white(r)" cotton from the plantations in the American South, especially if we

note the following: first, that in the racial discourse of pigmentocracy brown-skinned people occupy an intermediate position while the black-skinned ones occupy the bottom of the social hierarchy? Second, securing a reliable supply of black labour meant, according to chief judge of the island of Dominica, Thomas Atwood,⁸⁷ “to have recourse to measures that appear cruel, in order to oblige them to labour,” the idea being that “Negroes are in general addicted to drunkenness, thievery, incontinency and idleness,” and that “idleness is so very predominant in negroes, and their dislike of labour is so great” (qtd. in Fryer 164)? Third, in the political arena of the nineteenth-century, not to mention within the labour history of black Atlantic discourse, the role of Indian labour through objects of material culture migration has taken a back seat to discourse on slavery? Understanding this racial hierarchy in terms of changing unit labour costs, in the sense that British manufacturers shifted from Indian to American Southern cotton because labour costs were cheaper there in the South, offers another perspective from which to grasp the political expediency of and interests at stake within this characterization of brownness and blackness. By casting black and brown labour on the colonial stage as a system in which Britain exploited labour and racial rivalries, I offer an example of the racial relationalities I mentioned in the previous chapter.

If wearing the fine white cotton stockings signifies more than simply a display of wealth or even a desire for black-made objects, but also a means to displace the black maker of the white object, to guard, or clothe, one’s whiteness by displacing the black object, then wearing it is about encountering and coming into contact with the enslaved

⁸⁷ In 1790, Atwood published a pamphlet titled, *Observations on the True Method of Treatment and Usage of the Negro Slaves in British West India Islands*.

cotton picker, and feeling their *grip*. I use the word *grip* to invoke the felt firmness of stockings; to align the contact with blackness as an encounter, “a meeting which,” Ahmed in *Strange Encounters* suggests, “involves *surprise*” (39, emphasis added). The word “surprise” here is crucial; it suggests that the anxiety of racial proximity embedded in Traill’s profile of a “secure” Upper Canada has something to do with the politics of the colony’s reputation, its desire to distance the image of the Canadian *backwoods* from the Australian *outback*. Consequently, what remains beneath conscious thought and affect for Traill and her readers is the unsettling of cultural and racial biographies onto skins covered by these fine white cotton stockings. Marx’s influential insights concerning the way in which class struggle and labour relations become concealed in objects, and thus rendered illegible, merely offers a starting point for the analysis Traill’s *Guide* demands. Not only labour relations, but race relations, and the very concepts of blackness and whiteness as they came to inform nineteenth- and twentieth-century politics, are concealed within this object (the fine white cotton stockings). This unsettling of black labour history onto white skin, therefore, expands the surface of the preserved skin and marks the stockinged skin as a site of exposure *and* protection (that defines whiteness itself...as colour, symbol, race). From this vantage point, we can read this intimate convergence in relation to Ann Stoler’s formulation of intimacy, as the “tense and tender ties” of imperial governance and colonial knowledge production. For me, these tender and tense ties encapsulate the *drama* of colonial intimacy. Behind the scene of covering the legs, where a commodity of settlement facilitates intimacy, is the traffic of transatlantic crossings and crossovers. In the grip of these white stockings on the white legs of settler

women, we feel the surprising encounter of colonial intimacies, felt on the skin, and linking slave-labour with domestic and personal refinement in the peace of Canada. As such, using the words in “fine white cotton stockings” as materials to recall the histories within and without this object is more than a literary desire to conjure up the fingers on the figures of those who produced the raw material for this object. Also, it is to suggest that between the interface of the skin and skin-tight stockings lies the settlement politics that dramatizes colonial intimacy. And when we layer this dramatization with the settler colonial writer’s management of civility, domestic arrangements, and racial memberships; her conflation of geographical territories; her concealment of racialized labour and of what anthropologist Sonia Ryang, writing on love and colonization, identifies as the interiorities of racism and imperialism; all these preoccupations *insist* we regard the *emotions of colonial settlement*, in all its positives and its many negatives, in terms of the crossings and crossovers of colonial intimacy.

IV

Working with Sigmund Freud’s theorization of idealization, where he points out that the drive to form ideals alters the object-choice by either aggrandizing or exalting it,⁸⁸ it seems to me that Traill’s idealization of Upper Canada, her commitments to paint a

⁸⁸ In “On Narcissism: An Introduction” Freud writes, “Idealization is a process that concerns the *object*; by it that object, without any alteration in its nature, is aggrandized and exalted in the subject’s mind. . . [An] over estimation [of the object] is an idealization of it” (74). Elsewhere he’s written that “[t]he same overvaluation [either aggrandizing or exaltation] spreads over into the psychological sphere: the subject becomes, as it were, intellectually infatuated (that is, his powers of judgment are weakened) by the mental achievements and perfections of the sexual object and he submits to the latter’s judgments with credulity” (*Reader* 248). Suspending judgment as a result of idealization, Freud maintains that “overvaluation—the fact that the loved object enjoys a certain amount of freedom from criticism, and that all its characteristics are valued more highly than those of people who are not loved, or than its own were at a time when it itself was not loved. If the sexual impulses are somewhat more effectively repressed or set aside, the illusion is produced that the object has come to be sensually loved on account of its spiritual merits, whereas on the

“favourable impression of Canada” (Traill 214) to the empire and its imperial readership marks an “overvaluation” of her optics of place. Aside from the historical and geographical landscape of her childhood, the habits of perception of her upper-middle class upbringing also influence her inability to complicate the realities present within the Upper Canada she represents in her *Guide*’s narrative. She writes, “Here all is new; time has not yet laid its mellowing touch upon the land. We are but in our infancy; but it is a vigorous and healthy one, full of promise for future greatness and strength” (30). Clearly, Upper Canada’s supposed newness, its infancy, its belatedness in relation to European understandings of progress, underscores the privileged episteme that legitimated settlers’ claims to land rights, the narrative through which this action was legitimated (and continues to be to this day). Working through this cultural outlook will mean noting her reports to “encourage and satisfy” new settlers and help them “form some little notion of what is going on in this comparatively newly-settled country,” or to help them “form some idea of what it is likely to become in the course of a few more years, when its commerce and agriculture and its population shall have increased, and its internal resources shall have been more perfectly developed” (30), as an indulgence in the practice Allan Johnson calls “the luxury of obliviousness.” That is to say, this luxury of ignorance allowed European settlers “the freedom to live unaware of [the occupation and economic drain of resources they were] participating in and how and with what effect” (Johnson 180). Therefore, these reports of assistance give more than flourishing accounts of Upper Canada. Its optics of conceiving Upper Canada’s industriousness, as determined by “a

contrary these merits may really only have been lent to it by its spiritual charm . [. . .] The tendency which falsifies judgment in this respect is that of *idealization*” (Group 12).

land full of promises,” configures an effective mode of attracting and producing the ideal settler subject. This production becomes an important means of regulating and thus setting standards for the colony.

The ideological perspective of *Guide* shows that the ideal settler subject has explicit connections to ideals of whiteness. Underpinning the futurity of Upper Canada is rhetoric to improve the future race of the colony. For example, Traill instructs husbands and fathers “leaving [their] native land to become a settler in Canada” to seriously consider whether or not they have “sufficient energy of character.” Continuing, she writes that “cheerfulness of mind and activity are essential” (13). She goes on to warn that “Canada is not the land for the idle sensualist. He must forsake the error of his ways at once, or he will sink into ruin here as he would have done had he staid in the old country. *But it is not for such persons that our book is intended*” (13, emphasis added). More lay behind this weeding of readers than the colonial idea of idleness being seen as an obstacle to the civilizing project. In tune with the era’s mission to establish types of settlers fit for the colonies, two striking points are worth noting. First, Traill’s *Guide* mobilizes the specter of ruin to discourage the emigration of the idle sensualist. And second, in this colonial thought, the mobilization seeks out energetic ways to destabilize threats that concern Upper Canada’s racial and social malleability (degeneration and perfectibility) even as it offers hope for future settlers. John Stuart Mill asks, what is a cheerful disposition “but the tendency, either from constitution or habit, to dwell chiefly on the brighter side both of the present and of the future?” (484). He observes that “if every aspect, whether agreeable or odious, of every thing, ought to occupy exactly the same

place in our imagination which it fills in fact, and therefore ought to fill in our deliberate reason, what we call a cheerful disposition would be but one of the forms of folly” (484). Cheerfulness, as Mill helps me understand, idealizes. It even filters the imagination. In essence, Traill’s narrative is a pretext for presenting a settled colony in which there are obvious culturally conditioned dispositions that are deemed desirable. In her narrative, cheerfulness is a desirable criterion for the white settler project of colonial development. This is due to the fact that, as opposed to the idle sensualist who embodies intense emotions, whose “ways,” Traill believes, “will sink [him] into ruin” in a colony functioning with an already settled pattern of living, the cheerful settler with a cheerful mind embodies moderate emotions and, as a result, is believed to be suited to contribute to the work of settler expansion. Moderation, in this context, is a form of sublimation: the emotions are not destroyed or repressed. The intensity is sublimated and the energy, the “activity,” is put into remaking the land, highlighting the socioeconomic function of settler colonial development.

In this sense, when Traill identifies “cheerfulness of mind and activity” as “essential” characteristics for this new and promising land, she is highlighting the social functions of cheerfulness, and cheerfulness of mind becomes racially correlated to productive (read: puritan) work ethics. It is important to recognize that this brand of white-making through cheerfulness relies on an analytics of affect that is also an analytics of race, by which I mean Traill moves from descriptive accounts of race to deploy rhetorical strategies that manipulate emotions. For example, the rhetoric of development is how I have come to understand how whiteness, in *Guide*, articulates itself. Land

development works as a racializing discourse in the sense that it assumes to acclimate the colony and, by doing so, supplant indigenous animals, plants and people. Traill and her *Guide*'s insistence on cheerfulness, then, emphasizes it as a cohesive instrument for a *white* settler colony. I emphasize whiteness as a way to draw attention to how imperial race thinking functions within the logic of cheerfulness. If cheerfulness is a desired criterion for white settlement, is part of a settler contract, then it is important to note how white cheerfulness differentiates itself from black cheerfulness. While cheerfulness is a mark of desirability for a white settler, for a black settler, it marks their inferiority: "For what man [sic] could remain cheerful and forgiving despite the insults and humiliations that had been thrust on him in America? Black cheerfulness in the face of Black degradation demonstrated that the Black man was not like the white" (Ladner 126). To not be like the white on the basis of affect denotes cheerfulness as a racialized subjectivity. By incorporating the faculty of the mind into cheerfulness, the phrase "cheerfulness of mind" conjoins these two faculties that are often considered distinct, particularly among black people. Unlike white cheerfulness, believed to be cultivated and moderately expressed, the logic during settlement believed in the notion that black cheerfulness was excessive, hopelessly unrestrained.

My argument is that cheerfulness is a valuable emotion for white settlement not simply because it is linked to settler capitalism and industry; but also, more importantly, it is a stabilizing force that manages settler differences. From this, we can come to understand Traill's warning to the "idle sensualist" as a labourious preoccupation meant to safeguard Upper Canada's productivity and reputation from easy morals and irrational

passions. Desirable settlers are meant to occupy themselves, not because their time was precious but because idleness was unchristian and could breed mischief. And the warning of making sure future settlers are those with the right character, those who will gain the rights to property, operates as shorthand to guard the desired accommodation between a settler's sense and sensibility. The perception is that the settler who is without a sense of sensibility is also without discipline and, as a test of character, a settler without discipline, who lacks moderation is understood to be one who will decrease the cultural output (and integrity, even the implied racial integrity) of the colony. In the end, Traill's remark should alert us to ask, who else, and in what guise did settler writers like Traill weed out unfit settlers in order to cultivate a cheerful and improved character for Upper Canada, and what characterizations were used to mark these emigrants as unfit for the colony?

On this question of Traill restricting membership as a way to improve the social character of Upper Canada, her contemporary, Hugh Murray, author of *An Historical and Descriptive Account of British America* (1839), offers a sketch that explains why colonialists committed themselves to "improve the breed" in Upper Canada. He writes,

The tone, especially in the western district, appears to have been in a great measure given by such Americans as came, not from the civilized portions of the Union, but from the back wood tracts, breathing rather the spirit of Kentucky than of New England. Disbanded soldiers and sailors were not well calculated to improve the breed; and even the voluntary emigrants were not always composed of the respectable classes who, under the pressure of the times, have lately embraced this resource. The removal of the ordinary restraints of society, and the absence of religious ordinances and ministration, concurred in giving them a reckless and unprincipled character. (60)

Here, Murray's anxious tone elevates restraint and homogeneity to desirable virtues and, as a consequence, characterizes Upper Canada's increasing heterogeneity as one of

disorder. The weight of “the tone” already contains within it many valuations, one being the idea that Americans who emigrate to Upper Canada do “*not [come] from the civilized portions of the Union, but from the back wood tracts, breathing rather the spirit of Kentucky than of New England.*” And this valuation conditions the meaning of character and the ontological possibilities for recognizing different characters of settlers in Upper Canada. At this point, however, it is important to reflect on the fact that Murray’s desirable emigrants are those from New England (a northern region that was prominent, during the nineteenth century, in the movement to abolish slavery) as opposed to those from Kentucky (a Southern state commonly referred to as Upper South). Within this discourse of improvement lies an expression that idealizes (and even fantasizes about) a colony free from the uncivilized portions of the Union. This idealizing force—the forward-looking sketch of Upper Canada—relies a great deal on a transhistorical structure of cultural psyche, one that has never been historically realized.

Murray’s standpoint, the idea that what gives Upper Canada’s tone, its “reckless and unprincipled character,” is its uncalculated ways, foregrounds the racial projections codified, and even constituent of Traill’s idea of cheerfulness and her articulation that future settlers must be of “sufficient energy of character.” If, as Daniel Coleman argues about the enterprising Scottish orphan, “character *is* economy” (111), then the moral and political economies of settler characterization need serious consideration. The moral tone of character as economy (not to mention the political orientation of that tone) shows the reinforcing role that a moral economy and its economic prosperity have for white settlers. With this in mind, to improve the social body of and tone in Upper Canada is to slay, blot

and drive out the reckless and unprincipled characters, those who allegedly have succumbed to “the removal of the ordinary restraints of society.” It is within this ideal analytics of Upper Canada that the stock representations of the unfit abound. Again, back to Traill’s command, “he *must* forsake the error of his ways at once”: in it lay Traill’s fantasy of place, her mission to separate the idlest from the colony so as to make Upper Canada’s character coherent and energetic. Here in the new country where the old country is entwined with the new, differentiation is the ceremony of life, explaining why, for Traill, a “cheerfulness of mind” and a “sufficient energy of character,” when exported to Upper Canada, are moral and eco-political drives that guide British colonial settlers.

Beyond underscoring these preferential politics, those that emerge for consideration as a result of the ways Traill contains or obscures blackness, her object-choices, “all [British] classes,” the group her text is “written for,” and which includes “the wives and daughters of the small farmers, [with] a part of it . . . also addressed to the wives of the labourer[s] and mechanics” (xviii), serve to highlight settlement literature as “anaclitic” and/or “narcissistic” objects,⁸⁹ objects that exalt the ideal subject of the Empire. All this is to say that Traill’s *Guide* must, to quote Freud, “vanish out of consciousness” (112) histories of bodies and objects that disturb the empire’s livelihood. Remember, “[t]he formation of an ideal would be the condition of repression” (Freud 74).

⁸⁹ For Freud “the finding of an object is in fact a refinding of it” (*Three Essays* 222). According to him, there are two methods of finding an object: “anaclitic” and “narcissistic.” The anaclitic method is “based on attachment to early infantile prototypes”; that is to say, seeking of a love object based on someone, “a thing” which will care or look after them as their parent figure did. The second, “narcissistic” type of object-choice “seeks for the subject’s own ego and finds it again in other people” (144). Here, the “ego” develops through identification with the other, but an other already “based” on the ego (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*). Whereas in the anaclitic relation there is an attempt to find the same object, in the narcissistic relation the openness to differentiate leads to idealization, to introjecting the other as the same as one’s own ego object.

Against this background, with Traill decrying “the idle sensualist” as not the intended subject of her book, and idealizing those with “sufficient energy of character,”

it becomes comprehensible that those objects to which men [sic] give most preference, their ideals, proceed from the same perceptions and experiences as the objects which they most abhor and that they were originally only distinguished from one another through slight modifications. Indeed, [. . .] it is possible for the original instinctual representative to be split in two, one part undergoing repression, while the remainder, precisely on account of this intimate connection, undergoes idealization. (Freud “Repression,” 108)

What is perhaps most striking about this passage for my study of absent blackness is the way it represents idealization as a product of simultaneous denigration and exaltation.

That is to say idealization operates by splitting: exalting the loved object even as abhorred objects are suppressed. Therefore, the subject of blackness previously considered absent in Traill’s text cannot be understood only on the grounds of epistemological idealization subsumed under the symbolic economies of denigration and exaltation, within their “intimate connection,” and within a set of heterogeneous genres. Also, it is certainly the case that as Traill’s *Guide* documents the role settlement literature played in disseminating idea(l)s to English readers, and as it participates in and responds to the imperial and colonial demands of Victorian England, the psychic reality and stability of the settler’s fantasy, the protective belief that in Upper Canada there are “no savage hordes of Caffres” (46), is undermined by the force that the word Caffre exerts. Seizing upon the subject matter of “savage hordes of Caffres,” and examining Upper Canada from the perspectives of what Traill’s *Guide* excludes, and in the cultural context that illuminates the exclusion, I argue, blackness is present in her text in the mode of absence and negation.

V

Under the capitalized heading, “REMARKS O[N] SECURITY OF PERSON AND PROPERTY IN CANADA” Traill writes:

[Here in Canada] our safety lies neither in bars nor bolts, but in our consciousness. [...] Here we have no bush-rangers, no convicts to disturb the peace of the inhabitants of the land, as in Australia. No savage hordes of Caffres to invade and carry off our cattle and stores of grain as at the Cape; but peace and industry are on every side. (44, 46)

To examine Traill’s project of preserving and producing Upper Canada as an idealized cultural place free of crime, I concern myself with the colonial value and legacy of black criminality that this production of knowledge links to black bodies both “here” and abroad. Particularly so because the racial iconography that surrounds the Xhosa abounds within the colonial circuit. For example, on January 10, 1852, a correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* reported on the mutiny of the British troops at the Cape Colony: “Many [soldiers] openly declare they will go there no more to be butchered like cattle. [. . .] Courage here is of no avail; discipline and steadfastness under fire only render the men better targets for the lurking savages” (19). In the May 1853 issue of *The Court Journal*, a report used the phrase “Zulu Caffre” to describe the Xhosa as a “wild and formidable race” (300), making a link between the two terms Caffre and Xhosa. On May 18, in the *London Times*, a review of the highly popular African display mounted in 1853 at St. George’s Gallery, Hyde Park, described how “Eleven men, with a woman and a child, [we]re assembled into a company.” The reviewer wrote,

instead of performing one or two commonplace feats, [the company of Caffres] may be said to go through the whole drama of Caffre life, while a series of scenes, painted by Mr. Charles Marshall, gives an air of reality to the living pictures. Now the Caffres are at their meal, feeding themselves with enormous spoons, and

expressing their satisfaction by a wild chant, under the inspiration of which they bump themselves along without rising in a sort of circular dance. Now the witchfinder commences his operations to discover the culprit whose magic has brought sickness into the tribe, and becomes perfectly rabid through the effect of his own incantations. Now there is a wedding ceremony, now a hunt, now a military expedition, all with characteristic dances; and the whole ends with a general conflict between rival tribes. The songs and dances are, as may be expected, monotonous in the extreme, and without the bill it would be difficult to distinguish the expression of love from the gesture of martial defiance. (8)

These popular racial spectacles that circulated the figure of the Caffre were woven into wider British debates about race, and, in turn, impacted the metropolitan sensibilities of British audiences and readers. “Most of the associations connected in the mind of an European with the name of Kaffir have,” Harriet Ward writes,

been formed upon the represented bad character and conduct of the nation so called, now engaged in a serious and expensive war with the old Colony; and are consequently highly unfavourable to any people bearing a name which, by common consent, attributes all the cunning faithlessness of the savage, with an admixture of many of the depravities of civilized life, to its bearer. (10)

By citing the racist circulation of the trope of “Caffre” in popular discourse of the 1850s in the British press, I mean to show how Traill’s whitening of Upper Canada for productive British settlers necessitated many mediations and modifications and, to show who Traill’s whitening of Upper Canada circulated in this textual sociability.

On closer inspection, the repetitive “no” are ad hoc reasons that function as part of a mobilizing process that stabilizes the affective ties of “peace on every side” of Upper Canada. However, how does this oxymoron work? Within the project of developing Upper Canada, it works in the sense that the desire to remake the land, to arrange the geographical space and recruit desirable settlers to move in, works to fix in place (if not negate) certain flows of movement. The stabilization is an important guard against

mobility alleged to be a threat. Hence, a mobilizing process that stabilizes functions to reduce distances over which movement occurs and, having reduced distance, excludes the presence of black people who allegedly threaten peace. Though blackness is never explicitly tied to these savage, bestial threats that are signaled as not present in Canada, this relation, as I pointed out, is alleged, taken for granted in her text. For example, when in 1830, the *African Repository* commented on a group of Cincinnati black refugees, “they are already viewed as unwelcome intruders, and neither the Government, the people, nor the climate of Canada, are favourable to their wishes” (qtd. in Pease and Pease 202), more was at stake in these sentiments than mere “opposition.” Opposing the migration of black people evokes at least two pieces of anti-black immigration propaganda. Climate and the racist stereotype or perception of black people as trouble-makers become powerful means to restrict black mobility. The race thinking of the time was that the inhabitants of the South are black and those of the North are white and “that southern nations have almost invariably been inferior to and subjugated by the men of the north” (Haliburton 3). Supporting Haliburton’s line of argument, poet William Henry Taylor characterizes “the cold” and “the snow” in Canada as “sanitary virtues” (cited in Berger 3). Canada’s northern climate was a justifying reason for why the black population was unsuitable for settlement. The preoccupation with referring to blacks as “intruders,” who enter by force and disturb the peace is ironic in that it highlights to British settlers that those who make their way by force supplant those who already legitimately occupy the territory. However, in Traill’s logic of settlement in Upper Canada, she pathologizes black settlement and reads their resistance to racism as an unwelcoming intrusion in the

colony. If you remember my earlier point about Traill re-territorializing the imperial history of threat, we can see why she would rather invoke the distant “savage hordes of Caffres” because slavery, especially via the Underground Railroad, is too close for comfort. As a result, the denial of black people is paradoxically mobilizing and stabilizing: it stabilizes a white-only Canada by mobilizing ideologies like racialized meteorology, that Black people are southern and will not like Canada’s white, cold and northerness.⁹⁰

If hailing constitutes the subject, then, we can consider the intruder as a subject who allows the law to mark out its terrain. For example, in the 1830s, members in the House of Assembly of Upper Canada explicitly nominated black escapees as intruders. Assembly members who wished to help the black fugitive engineered this remark: “the sudden introduction of a mass of Black Population, likely to continue without limitation, is a matter so dangerous to the peace and comfort of the inhabitants, that it now becomes necessary to prevent or check, by some prudent restrictions, this threatened evil” (qtd. in Pease and Pease 202). Joining conversations in the House of Assembly, the inhabitant of the Western District of the province petitioned the government to retain the Amherstburg garrison in the mid-1830s as a way to block the passage of black people. Understanding the race-bound economics of settlement, their petition was a response to a fear that “the Civil authority of the Frontier parts of the District [was] insufficient in case of an emergency to control the very numerous and troublesome black population daily coming

⁹⁰ “Warmest climes but nurse the cruellest fangs: the tiger of Bengal crouches in spiced groves of ceaseless verdure. Skies the most effulgent but basket the deadliest thunders: gorgeous Cuba knows tornadoes that never swept tame northern lands.” – Ishmael, *Moby Dick*, Chapter 119, “The Candles”. Also see R.G. Haliburton’s “The Men of the North,” where he theorized the savagery of southern races and the vigorous virtues of northern ones.

into the District from the Slave States” (qtd. in Pease and Pease 205). Moreover, restricting the right to enter went beyond economics. The petition also read, the black population “are of the most depraved and reckless description generally speaking”; they “are almost daily violating the laws and even threatened to put civil authority at defiance” (qtd. in Pease and Pease 205). These accounts depend on an *a priori* assumption that blacks are ignoble savages.

Like Traill, who depicts the colony as free from the Cape’s savage hordes of Caffres as a way to represent Upper Canada as a peaceful colony, heads of the House of Assembly represent blacks as “dangerous to the peace and comfort” in an appeal in 1840 to the government. They write, “some legislative check might be placed upon the rapid importation of this unfortunate race, such as have of late inundated this devoted section of the province, to the great detriment to the claims of the poor Emigrant from the mother country upon our consideration” (qtd. in Pease and Pease 205). If blacks disturbed any values in the colonies, it was not the colony’s peace that they disturbed; rather, their presence destabilized white stabilizing presence and offered a moral challenge to the settler ideology of whiteness. Within this entrenched ideology was the belief that Upper Canada was to be a colony for white people. In addition, white settlers did not understand “security” to be a commodity black people sought; it could only be a possession of whites. Blacks could only threaten white security, not get any of their own. To this end, it is helpful to understand that peace plays itself out in white settlers’ minds by way of elimination, and the practice of this play relies on the player’s concept of blackness. The Assembly’s request that government keep out the inundation of black refugees shows

how the threat of blackness is fantasized into overwhelming “hordes,” to use Traill’s phrase. The image of black hordes invading white settlements is, then, a malleable representational formula that has become a repeated pattern of representation. Hordes pollute. Hordes, as these representational patterns go, besiege social structure and racial character. Conjoin these meanings around the word “horde” to the consolidated colonialist projections around “Caffre” and we begin to see not only that the absence of blackness is overwhelmingly present in the public imagination, but also Traill’s account of “savage hordes of Caffres” reveals the degree to which reality often imitates imagination. Thus, *Guide* inculcates her readers’ imagination with a pro-colonial consciousness and a bifurcated ideal of blackness: they are (not) there by absence or, in obscurity, by unfavorable prestige.

Returning to Traill’s socio-philosophical plot of security, note, while the collective pronouns of “our” and “we” register a growing incongruity between *the people* and *the population* of Upper Canada, highlighting (in this passage) the desirable members of the national community, the missing presence of First Nations people in the secure making of this national community, and specifically posing blackness as a non-threat to Upper Canada’s coherence, the concept of security that is circulated in Traill’s *Guide* postulates a vision of a peaceful, lawful people and, at the same time, co-opts historical threats in order to embed a vision of absence in Upper Canada’s purported lawfulness. Here, security is envisioned not only in terms of strategic negations, but in order to be negated, security must depend on the limits that negation draws as a way to imagine the terms of what and who is not in reach – or simply not there. Security is not just negation,

but can also connote a state of being where security itself is not necessary in the first place, a sort of absence before negation, and an attempted, transcendent absence.

Understanding the valence of security to be highly mediated, let us seize on the content of the “Caffre” and imagine negation, like Sara Ahmed does in *Queer Phenomenology*, “as a form of extension” (115) and, accordingly, understand that negation facilitates relations between different regions and testifies to a prior attachment: for example, while, on the one hand, the constitutive outside of Upper Canada, marked in this case by two settler colonies, Australia (with its convicts) and the Cape (with its Caffres), allows the peaceful “inside” of Upper Canada to be presented as *given*, on the other hand, this security measure serves to bring the outside world in and contributes to intercultural communication across cultures and continents “by subjecting the whole world as far as possible to [Upper Canada’s] sway” (Kant 27). What is striking about this sway is the rule of logic that Traill makes use of to relate a “here,” her neighbourhood to a “not here,” a not now home for her far away English readers. In this move to actualize Upper Canada’s desirability within the Empire, and to create her single goal of facilitating settlement, this strategic logic of comparison slips from a narrative of attachment into one of detachment. That is to say that Traill detaches the local history of Australia and the Cape in order to attach the image-concept of convicts and caffres to the local history of peace in Upper Canada. This strategy of attachment by detachment is a luxury of ignorance, one that willfully blinds readers to the Empire’s tradition of violence, one that obscures the historical reasons why the colonies of Australia and the Cape are not at peace. In this light, how else do we recognize this slippage, which is largely (but not

only) a process of incorporation? Of intimacy, of fear, even...? How do we articulate (as this chapter demonstrates) the sway of colonial distance? That is to ask: how do we critique Traill's detaching Upper Canada from the colonial specificities of Australia and the Cape colony, even if we agree that this sketch of cultivated distance is entirely what enables the cultivation of Upper Canada? For Upper Canada to become a/like colony it cannot be a/like colony. And given how Moodie, in *Roughing It*, argues, "a Canada mania pervaded the middle ranks of British society" (xvii), Traill's highly racialized discourse becomes an early ad campaign for immigrants from Britain.

Through the phrase *Homo homini lupus*, man is a wolf to man, Thomas Hobbes allows us to grapple with the animalizing treatment of blackness in Traill's settlement politics. Hobbes's analogy of human as animal to other human, that is to say the human-animal divide in his theory of sovereignty, opens up a conceptual and contextual space for us to engage the animalized signification of Traill's phrase, "savage hordes of Caffres." The phrase invokes blackness through an anthropological and a zoological lens, and, despite having avoided an account of black presence in the territories of Upper Canada, we might suppose that lurking behind these reflective devices is Traill's awareness that the Caffre, as a "savage" from Africa, is a dependable symbol that provokes threatening animality, and so, by burdening it with significations the colony does not desire to associate with its self, exposes the limits of avoiding blackness. Further, let us remember that the "savage" and "horde" are charged concepts with a racial genealogy – think, for example, of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), of how Friday "graduated" from being a man-eating savage into a servant, or of the confrontation between the savage

Friday and the civilized Crusoe. Hence, when Traill forms a relation of alliance between these charged words, and this relation is aligned with “Caffre,” itself a racially charged identification, we must read the human-animal binary into her phrase, “savage hordes of Caffres,” and note with Kelly Oliver that “the [hu]man-animal binary is not just any opposition; it is the one used often to justify violence, not just to animals, but also [hu]man’s violence to other people deemed to be like animals” (2009: 304).

With the Hobbesian prescription of peace in mind, the kind of peace that cedes sovereignty to an overarching power, I turn to another limiting condition of peace politics. In his 1795 work “Perpetual Peace,” that celebrated treatise on inter-continental and national relations, Immanuel Kant argues that an ideal peace must be both positive and cosmopolitan. With attention to the limiting condition of politics in Hobbes’ and Kant’s work, I am highlighting the colonial mentality pervasive in the settler logic on peace, which is exactly that of civilizing, of bringing lawful, divine sovereignty, to beasts. Or asserting that beasts are not there . . . even the relatively mild wildlife of Canada compared to poisonous creatures in the outback and the Cape. In fact, in general, the beast is as absent here as the savage, or rather, in overall theory, the lack of savage hordes commands a lack of savage, bestial, unruly (read: those fugitive American migrants) slaves. I am also noting how this mentality conditions people and population to the need for “founding violence” as a way to create peace and urge on a (colonial, migratory) desire to make home elsewhere. Because the place of Upper Canada was deeply rooted in a rural consciousness, it separated itself from the cosmopolitanism of the urban, often opening settlers up to alternative consuming practices, distinguishing itself from the

excessive desires of the urban, and holding strong suspicion of the socially corrosive lifestyle of the urban, particularly when centered on the consumption of alcohol. This rural attitude frames Upper Canada to be a home for a settler cosmopolitan. On this point of settler cosmopolitanism, on reversing the notion of cosmopolitanism by resituating settler rurality (rather than urbanity) as an idealization of peaceful cosmopolitanism, I am particularly motivated to read Upper Canada as a place with a continually moving on and settling in of imperial processes. As a settler cosmopolitan colony, Upper Canada's ethos of peace exists in the disjuncture between Hobbes and Kant's conditions of peace.

Returning us to the negated subject of blackness, I turn to Freud, who writes that through negation, the "subject-matter of a repressed image or thought can make its way into consciousness on condition that it is *denied*" ("Negation" 213-14).⁹¹ "To deny something in one's judgement," Freud explains,

is at bottom the same thing as to say: "That is something that I would rather repress." A negative judgement is the intellectual substitute for repression; the "No" in which it is expressed is the hall-mark of repression, a certificate of origin, as it were, like "Made in Germany."⁹² By the help of the symbol of negation, the thinking-process frees itself from the limitations of repression and enriches itself with the subject-matter without which it could not work efficiently. (214)

⁹¹ To a small extent, a clarifying note that situates Freud himself in a diagnostics of *Victorian cultural* psychology in particular helps us understand the psychological discourses of the *Guide*, not to mention the ways in which Upper Canada drew the boundaries of the white colony. To situate Freud in the Victorian era, therefore, is to acknowledge ways in which Victorian psychological discourse affected writers. My point is that just as much as Freud used metaphors to explore wider social processes, of how he encodes the language and preoccupations of mid-nineteenth-century social, psychological and economic thought in his work, so too did Traill. Hence, as opposed to reading Traill's manual as a realist text, it might do us well to read its psychological discourses, the powerful illusion of realism that is attached to her manual.

⁹² In a footnote in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book 1*, Jacques Lacan and Jacques-Alain Miller explain: "The phrase 'Made in Germany' appears in English in the original German (and in the French), thus highlighting that the hall-mark of repression is written in a foreign language. There is a historical aspect to this: the requirement that German goods display a hall-mark of origin (written in English) was imposed on the governments of Germany and Austria following the First World War (and hence a few years before Freud was writing): the ruling was intended to facilitate discrimination against German goods by stigmatizing them. In fact, it had the opposite effect, since goods bearing the stamp 'Made in Germany' thereupon became sought after." (290)

By this line of reasoning, the “No” in which Traill’s subject-matter (the Caffre negated from Canada) is expressed highlights the hall-mark of repression. In this sense, repression operates by means of a certificate of assertion and denial. Not only do we see the certification of Britishness in the settlement narrative, but also we can see that *Guide*’s negation of Caffres seizes the disappearance of blackness and in this act makes visible the repressed certificate of black presence in Upper Canada. Negation is, after all, the hall-mark of repression, a certificate of origin – like, let us say, in the “No Caffres” example, “*Made* in South Africa.” In this language of commercial exchange, international export aimed at identifying the true birthplace of an object, absence gains presence through negation but this negation, Freud’s negation, is explicit, while, I have been arguing that blackness is implicitly denied. At no point (in *Guide*) does Traill say there are ‘no blacks’ in order to draw attention to repression. It is rather the lack of ‘bestial men’ that she represses. Something else is afoot than straightforward Freudian/Imperial psychodynamics. But what kind of repression is this?

Because blackness continues to be overlooked, deferred, displaced, ignored, not seen, invisible, rather than explicitly negated, repressed, or denied in the literatures in early Canada, this complicates the Freudian dynamics. The image-concept of black absent presence being invoked through detachment, perhaps, is a more nuanced way of talking about what is there but not there, than the Freudian negation, because there’s this strange displacement that goes on with blackness in Canada. Even “negation” ends somewhat strangely though, because there is no ‘no’ in the unconscious. Notwithstanding this act of displacement, negation turns out to be a means by which its materiality is *made* available.

In fact, at the same time that blackness is absent (because it is repressed), it also graphs the capitalist making of the colony. This is so in the sense that a future settler whose geographic stamp or socio-demographic information (certificate) read “Made in the United Kingdom” was the desirable candidate. Without it such a settler was deemed outside the vision of the colony. Whatever it may be that the word certificate implies, we learn from Harriet Ward’s diary that under the regulations and conditions under which emigrants are selected by the Emigration Commissioners for passage to the colonies, “no applicant will be accepted without decisive certificates of good character” (17).

To critics who might challenge my argument about black absence in the *Guide* by pointing to Traill’s familiarity with the abolition movement because of her sister, Susanna Moodie’s work, I say, with Freud’s help, the intellectual function of judgment is separate from the affective process, and, as a result, the very articulation of the question helps to keep intact the repression even if analysis succeeds in “bringing about a full intellectual acceptance of the repressed” (214). Rejection, repression, foreclosure and disavowal are, therefore, negating mechanisms that underlie the power of white settler self-adjustment, further underlying Freud’s “hypothesis [that] perception is not merely a passive process” (216). In other word, the absence of blackness in *Guide* required a constructive process moved to the unconscious, a making invisible. No matter what Traill’s conscious motives might be, the affect of her statement is about the exclusion of blackness. What if there were actually conscious motives to excluding blackness here, a la the misguided liberal ‘I don’t see race’ stance? In this sense Caffres could function to displace or distract the ideas or concepts unfairly attached to blacks. In other words, yes, the settler might be

white, but that there are blacks in the colony would not disrupt its lawfulness, its security, its submission to sovereignty. Rather than repressing blackness, Traill would be sublimating it. It seems more likely that Traill may have been repressing or negating the connotations of savagery that were attached to African American slaves than the presence of the freed slaves themselves.

Seen in this view, Traill's articulation of peace "here" not only buries colonial violence to uphold "the colonial mission" that Coleman, in *White Civility*, notes, combines a temporal notion of progress with a "moral-ethical concept of a peaceful order" (10). Coleman's outlook on white civility's moral-ethical, temporal project, when read in light of Traill's remarks, gives focus to a new order of knowledge beyond the geographical insides of Upper Canada. To put it another way, Traill blends what can be described as the racial stains of other colonies to mark off Upper Canada as a separate domain, one where these blemishes, ironically, infect and become transits across Upper Canadian geographical borders, invisible or displaced. One reason to underline this sociability of stains (as reflected in Traill's prescription and circulation of who is not in reach) is so that we can observe how her *Guide* attaches a wider meaning and a common measure of peace, conveyed in her clearly mistaken superlative, "on every side."

Acknowledging these arguments means to take up the question of who is not in reach, of the savage-horde figure and its ideological performativity, about wildlife and certainly their relevance to the savage hordes. We also become aware that the fantasy of peace, understood in Traill's *Guide* as a discourse of *who* is not here, of who will not be encountered here, reflects an *appearance* of absence and not a manifestation of absence, a

lack of presence. In other words, while appearance is meant to indicate an absence of the mindless anarchy, bloodshed, and brutality of the warlike Caffres, the absence of the Xhosa people in Upper Canada is transformed into an instrument for the construction of industry, law, and peace. What lies behind this discourse of industry and peace, then, is a racializing invitation, a colonial encouragement to future white British settlers. Securing of peace, in this case, takes on a double role: of activity and chatter. As an activity, it makes absence in order to hide disturbing propensities, conditions that Kant describes as “internal strife” and “internal disease” (6). Nevertheless, this is not all. If Kant was correct in saying that “most of the time the methodical chatter in the universities is merely the consent to evade a question, which is difficult to solve, by means of variable meanings of words, simply because the comfortable and mostly sensible: ‘I do not know,’ is not often heard in the academy” (925), then the appearance of black absence is a condition of agreement to use the image-concept of the Xhosa people, as a tool, to attack blackness and assert Britishness. As chatter, then, attention turns from the cultural work of imported speech to the illusory grounds of peace, with its intimate, “theoretical schemes, connected with constitutional, international law, or cosmopolitan law,” schemes which Kant insists, “crumble away into [an] empty impracticable idea” (33). So constructed, *Guide* frames peace within a conditional and limited sense in Upper Canada and, thereby, the imagined comes to be known as real. Moreover, this hegemonic “real” is parceled off to far-off “imagined communities” in the British Empire. The political and pragmatic considerations of both roles turn Upper Canada into a place where the fear of criminal violence and deviant behaviours belong elsewhere, where the preoccupations

with race are not displaced onto class alone, but also lived from a distance, “where whiteness,” to borrow a phrase from Melissa Steyn, “is more secure” (128).

In this matter of justifications, the banked security of whiteness (as in, the embankment and the protected boundaries of whiteness) is, on the one hand, signposted by the repressive citational heading from which I quote Traill’s remarks on denial. However, on the other hand, the capitalized heading about “Security” fails to consider the heated question of security for black people who had fled the United States of America. In this light, a large Upper Canadian security question (would American slave re-capturing parties be allowed to enter British North America and re-enslave escapees) remains unaddressed in her discussion of security. But there is a certain logic to Traill’s approach: since she has repressed the presence of Blacks in Canada, she cannot now address the issue of their security, which would immediately testify to their presence. Further, since she has evoked black Africans/Caffres as an explicit, but absent, threat, she cannot now consider African Americans in Canada as the threatened, the vulnerable; that would defeat her own argument. Hence, her denial plays on the notion of interpellation, where white British readers are hailed to make connections across continents (Africa, North America, Europe and the Pacific); in turn, they are hailed to “be-long” (Philip). As we observe who Upper Canadian settler writers expend emotional energies on in order to build ties with, and see the transforming processes at stake in the commonplace, everyday intimacies of being and longing, we also note the dual perspective of interpellation – one of subjectivation, the other of re-positioning. What Upper Canada is not, what lies outside (or hidden inside) the peaceful bounds of these fantasized boundaries, are black bodies,

whether refugees or otherwise, each with its own personal and cultural history, each with its own promise of vulnerability. Yet, what Traill's denial does is recruit white British settlers to a fantasy of Upper Canadian security by reference to their intercontinental knowledge, all of which depends on the suppression and exclusion of black bodies.

VI

In the light of these presuppositions, the ethnographic invocation of "No savage hordes of Caffres to invade and carry off our cattle and stores of grain as at the Cape" suggests that the spectral invocation of Caffres determined the shape of the social imaginary in powerful ways that were not easily pulled apart, which is why similar discourses find popular support today, because ideological positions were carved by Traill and her contemporaries. For example, note that colonial relations between Canada and South Africa have a long-standing history. This relationship did not begin with official relations like the South African government modeling its apartheid regime on the Canadian reservation system. Nor should we mark the eve of this relation on the 1905 publication of E. Maud Graham's *A Canadian Girl in South Africa*. As important as this travelogue is, another traveling narrative precedes it, Lieutenant John Dunbar Moodie's *Ten Years in South Africa* published in 1835. The point I am arguing here is the importance of colonial intimacies and circulation. Traill's account of racialized peace acts as an advertisement, circulating in the colonial news industry to attract desirable white settlers and playing on white racial fears by relying on a common colonial story about black South Africans. At the same time, because she projects an absence onto these objects of fear, we can accept that this comparative model that articulates peace and

industry here sets in motion a relay of whiteness, that indisputable reign of colonial domination throughout the British empire. In a sense, this ethnographic account goes beyond assuaging emigration concerns over frontier security to lending force to Traill's structured deployment of peace. If the argument on assuagement suffices, we cannot ignore that "there is an intimate and necessary correspondence between how we conceive of others and how we treat them" (Oliver 3), making the work that links vices such as invasion, savagery and theft to black South Africans a vitriolic act that recasts these colonial vices onto black people in Upper Canada, even though Traill does not acknowledge the presence of Black people in Canada. The vices that Traill ascribes to Caffres convey an ethnographic inscription onto blacks (denied) in Canada, an inscription that an 1853 debate on blacks' natural tendency to thievery in Elora, Upper Canada attests. When the question was debated, "Whether the Indian or the Negro suffered most from the aggression of the white man?", all assembled agreed that Negroes were thieves, implying that black suffering was legitimate (Winks 149).

Besides the fact that Traill's reproduction of this intercontinental narrative has damaging local consequences for black settlers, who, unlike white settlers in Upper Canada, find themselves 'homeless' (in the symbolic order), what suffers in her mobilization of this social imaginary is the sea change of meanings lost on the way. Therefore, for us to fail to situate Traill's 1855 statement within the context of the eighth of the nine frontier wars already launched on the Xhosa people by the British colonists in the Cape colony, for us to ignore these social imaginaries, is for us to wish away or dismiss the conditions of possibilities for Xhosa at the Cape. For example, there were

nine Cape Frontier Wars, increasing in level of severity: 1779-81, 1793, 1799-1802, 1811-12, 1818-19, 1834-35, 1846-47, 1850-53, and 1877-78. British policy became one of containing the Xhosa, and by the end of the series of wars, the Xhosa had lost much of their prime pastoral land. The 7th and 8th Frontier Wars were particularly bitter, and resulted in what is now referred to as the Xhosa Cattle-Killing, a millenarian movement amongst the Xhosa of the Ciskei area based on the prophecy of a teenage girl, Nongqawuse, that said self-purification through the destruction of crops and cattle would result in an intervention by the ancestors.⁹³ By this practice, I highlight the ways that *Guide* leads us away from the prospect of recognizing the interiority of actually occurring events on the Cape and, instead, orients toward the barbarously objectified Xhosa. I not only underline the “uneven distribution of attention” to the textured historical conditions of the Xhosa at the Cape, I also call awareness to ways in which the Cape Colony is *fixed* and Upper Canada *prioritized*, fissuring attention and intention as conditions of Upper Canada’s maturation. Particularly so because when settler attention is dictated by or even addicted to colonial projections, it gets stuck in particular ways of thinking, thus settling settler imaginations down into a conceptual trap. Traill’s political ideologies of peace are limited by forms of awareness that are mired in the inherited discourse of her tutelage (one from which she has not been able to escape). Because these ideologies are future-directed and act as a racializing invitation, they adhere to the colonial ideology that,

⁹³ See H.I.E. Dhlomo’s *The Girl Who Killed to Save: Nongqause the Liberator*. In this text we learn of Nongqawuse, the young woman whose prophecy sparked the Xhosa grain disposing and cattle killing of 1856-57. The prophecy promised freedom from the depredations of colonial invaders if Xhosa people threw away their grain and killed their cattle. With Nongqawuse’s narrative in mind, what can be said about Traill’s narrative of the “Caffres” in her *Settler’s Guide*?

according to Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*, assumes “the cause is the consequence” (40). For example, preoccupied with the project of disseminating an image of a peaceful Upper Canada, Traill and her *Guide* must ignore or forget to attend to the nine wars of aggression waged by the British against the Xhosa. She must turn attention to Canada’s lack of Caffre savagery instead, a turn that depends upon racialized tautology: the Caffres are savages because they are black, the Caffres are blacks because they are savages. Capsuled in this circular argument, it comes as no surprise that Traill foregrounds the violence of the Caffres and relegates the Xhosa people to the background in order to sustain a certain direction for her text: “Perception,” Ahmed argues, “involves such acts of relegation that are forgotten in the very preoccupation with what it is that we face” (547). Like Freud’s negation, this political economy of forgetting reorients attention toward the Caffre. It even reconfigures the Caffre as if to say that what is here by absence is the very “what” that white settlers at the Cape face. This highlights a fear towards the weakening ideology of white settlement and, as well, highlights the Xhosa’s material confrontation of British displacement, which they have maintained through years of military aggression. The Xhosa’s liberation tactics, their legitimate military strategies (which has included land burning and cattle stealing) are labeled savagery and recast by Traill (and others) into stereotypical images of depraved, illegal activity.

If we make a point to take in how continentalism accompanies regionalism in Upper Canada, attention reveals that embedded within the thematic preoccupation with security are attempts to put to rest metropolitan anxieties over infringements of both racial boundaries and British white civility. Certainly, we cannot forget Traill’s agenda of

civil education. She, after all, wants to emphasize the discontinuities within the British Empire: Upper Canada is a particular space, distinct. In other words, she is not so much interested in the global geography of empire, the ways in which colonies may overlap, or map out connections between Australia and the Cape. While Traill's agenda, as I have been arguing, is to incorporate Upper Canada into the Empire, bring it closer to Britain, this incorporation exposes the work of race. Hence, Traill's project is not merely to bring Canada closer to Britain within the embrace of Empire, but also to allay anxieties within the racial project of white civility by distinguishing Canada from those other colonies.

In his 1882 poem, "Your cattle are gone, my countrymen!," Xhosa poet I.W.W. Citashe highlights black grievance and challenges colonial attempts to flatten out relations of power. Citashe recasts the recidivistic image that has come to stand in for black actuality in the Cape and appeals to his "countrymen" to adopt a different response to the violent encroachment and dispossession of their cattle and land. When Citashe suggests his "countrymen" take up the pen rather than the gun, the poem marks a sign of Xhosa agency around the time that Traill was writing. Attending to work such as his reverses attention from "Caffres" as plunderers to seeing Xhosa people as rescuers of cattle and territory from British "savagery." He writes,

Your cattle are gone, my countrymen!
Go rescue them! Go rescue them!
Leave the breechloader alone
And turn to the pen.
Take paper and ink,
For that is your shield,
Your rights are going!
So pick up your pen.
Load it, load it with ink.
Sit on a chair.

Repair not to Hoho.
But fire with your pen.

Understanding that “our sources are mainly colonial,” that they “do not give us graphic details of colonial misdeeds. At most, they leave us with the dark hints implicit” (Dhlomo 19), means that more is at stake in this poem than a duel between print and oral culture.⁹⁴ To the colonial world, “sit[ting]” down to write is a site of self-fashioning. The trope of penmanship grants formal authority. However, when we consider Citashe’s advice to his countrymen, that they replace armed resistance (“the breechloader”) with political resistance (“the pen”) we must, in this light, consider the fact that a “turn to the pen” challenges the colonial fantasy that “[t]he settler makes history and is conscious of making it” (Fanon 51). Citashe’s demand that Xhosa people “turn to the pen” is not a call to adopt the settler’s perspective. It is not the dream that Fanon, in *Wretched*, fears the native never ceases to dream: “putting himself in the place of the settler—not of becoming the settler but of substituting himself for the settler” (52). In reading writing as a practiced expression, we do better to think of a “turn to the pen, to fire with it” as Citashe’s way of positioning Xhosa people as history-making subjects. He may also be positioning Xhosa people as literate people, and so “human,” recalling the debates in the US over whether Black slaves were human or not, a debate that hinged on concepts of literacy.⁹⁵ Because “paper,” “ink,” “pen” are markers of English literacy, and because as tropes of writing they compress the distance between Africa and Europe, they mark Xhosa people as members of the modern world, even understanding what Fanon means

⁹⁴ The Xhosa is an oral culture and critics writing on this poem tend to focus on the poem’s lack of literariness or comment on how this text is a mix of both oral and scribal culture, highlighting it as a mark of South Africa’s modernity.

⁹⁵ See Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s “Writing ‘Race,’ and the Difference it Makes.”

when he writes, it is “the settler who has brought the native into existence, who perpetuates his existence.” When we situate Citashe’s textual production as part of the coming into colonial existence and as part of the colonial exchange, the poem marks an aggressive intimacy between white settlers and black natives. What I am pushing towards with “aggressive intimacy” in relation to Fanon is to highlight the notion that the violence of settler presence is in and of itself the violence of remaining a settler on the land and is not limited to the moment of arrival.

So, how do we read Traill’s pseudo-ethnography when we consider I.W.W. Citashe’s civility? First, it must be read as an ethnographic scene, one that relies on a repertoire of interpretations and their antinomies of indigenous, black South Africans as a technology to deflect attention from North American racism, and, as well, to relax Upper Canadian sensibilities about these racial tensions showing up in Upper Canada.

Secondly, it relies on Upper Canada’s profile—as a mythical haven for fugitive black slaves—as a way to situate the colony as a place of comfort. Against this profile of comfort, by which I mean to bring the hidden tension out in the open, and to keep in mind the racial politics of Upper Canada’s trans-generational tensions, questions that trouble thoughts of a peaceful Upper Canada must come to the surface. After all, “true peace is not merely the absence of tension. But,” to insist with Martin Luther King Jr., “the presence of justice” (195). But, I wonder, justice by what force? As theorists of justice have wondered, can justice exist other than by the spectral, the yet to come, in the plurality (Benhabib; Derrida, King Jr.). The notion that there are no savage hordes of Caffres here turns concern around animality/bestiality, savagery, war and race, as the

essential rejection necessary for the qualities Traill reveres – peace, discipline, law and order, or, in other words, sovereignty.

VII

In my discussion so far, I have not moved immediately toward recovery and recuperation. Rather, I have used Traill's remarks on security and the needful purchase of fine white cotton stockings as two moments through which we can pause to reflect on the ways in which privileged epistemologies obliterate competing epistemologies and how ignorance about commodities of colonial consumption gets embedded into epistemology as absence, thereby making absence itself an epistemology, one which can be traced through the objects we 'thoughtlessly' consume. Consequently, my efforts to dis-embed ideas of black absence are not simply meant to grant visibility to the dialogues and exchanges between colonies, even though they are crucial; rather, for example, the point I am making about "fine white cotton stockings" is, in a manner, akin to the argument Martin Delany's character, Major Armsted, the Southern slave-trader, makes about cigars to Judge Ballard, the Northern slaveholder in Delany's *Blake*. He asks, "Did it occur to you that black fingers made that cigar, before it entered your white lips?" (63).⁹⁶ This subversive and threatening question, reminds readers that the subject of abjection and the subject of absence are constituted through the identificatory objects we consume, and, that on these objects, their human biographies and social histories are imprinted and engrained. The consumption of the cigar, of it entering white lips, a deliberately potent

⁹⁶ The full passage reads: "Did it occur to you that black fingers made that cigar, before it entered your white lips! – all tobacco preparations being worked by Negro hands in Cuba – and very frequently in closing up the wrapper, they draw it through their lips to give it tenacity" (63).

metonym by virtue of its sexual innuendo, becomes a practice that is cast in terms of its racialized mode of production (the closing up of the cigar wrapper by black lips licking them) as a way to double back on itself, explaining the dynamics of distance and proximity and, within this dynamism, it is possible to begin to witness how social recognition is granted to the black labouring class. Note that this discursively materialized form of racial recognition, mediated through the filter of the cigar wrapper, is grasped and mapped onto the surface of the cigar, as well as providing a way to indicate the jettisoned interrelations of threat and contagion attached to race. Hence the cigar wrapper, moistened with black lips and tongue, goes from being a filter into an object of fear. Though, on the one hand, it becomes a conveyer of contagion, one that inherits a racialization of disease assisted by a history of public health discourse, on the other hand, I wonder, what desires prompt black workers to eliminate any barriers of social boundaries and borders? Perhaps, what might be termed harm is a growing intimacy, with white and black lips invested in an object, and this moment of moistening tells us about the double impulse of disgust and desire towards interracial intimacies, and this cultural panic sounds alarms about black (im)migration into the vulnerable nascent national body at a time when its sovereignty is in question.

On this note, I end by suggesting that the perplexities of knowledge that Traill's *Guide* offers about early Canadian living are not only known *against* blackness; they are also known *through* it. As methodologies, knowing against and through follow the consequences of what Traill says beyond her own explicit intention. That is, the *Guide's* knowledge becomes intelligible/legible as the antinomy of the figure of blackness, while

the figure of blackness remains a lens through which this knowledge can be prescribed. In the form of absence, the difficult presence of blackness saturates the text to the extent that it becomes the lens through which the text produces knowledge prescribing the repression and fear of blackness, ideas that served the dominant interests at the time. The deep roots through which this knowledge anchored itself through Traill's text are not easily displaced. In a way there is an intimacy of epistemological pedagogy (exemplified by manuals and guidebooks prepared by a professional) in how to know, and this intimacy mediates not just the anxiety but also repositions the intimacy of this whole circuit.

Roughing Him Up in the Bush: Blackness through Village Voices and Customs

The killing of Tom Smith, a fugitive slave in “The Charivari” sketch in Susanna Moodie’s canonical text *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852), is certainly not another story to pass on. I echo the weight of historical memory in the line, “This is not a story to pass on,” repeated at the end of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, so that I can engage with a comment George Elliot Clarke recently made in an interview with Kristina Kyser. He says,

the politics of Susannah Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) may seem clearer if we understand that the author, a former transcriber of slave narratives and an abolitionist, sees her settler self as suffering privations not dissimilar to those experienced by slaves. In other words, Moodie’s memoir is really – audaciously—a displaced slave narrative. (863)

It is unclear from Clarke’s comments what he means by the politics of Moodie’s text, and I am not convinced that, in its entirety and at the deeper level of ideas and relations, *Roughing It in the Bush* is “a slave narrative,” however displaced.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, I accept, following Gayatri Spivak’s aphorism, that “Empire messes with [settler] identity” (qtd. in Suleri 7), and so I aim to demonstrate in this chapter that Moodie’s work as an abolitionist should importantly influence how we frame our interpretations of this text. And still, the suggestion that she “sees her settler self as suffering privations not dissimilar to those experienced by slaves” is “misleading,” aligning the “life history of a slave, which necessarily records [one of] the most brutal forms of colonial exploitation, as in any way paradigmatic” of the settler (Whitlock 10). Moreover, this positions her as having a profound misapprehension of the life experiences of an enslaved person – *as if*

⁹⁷ By “displaced” I am assuming Clarke is gesturing to the fact that the genre of the African-American slave narrative formally emerged after Moodie had worked as a transcriber of British slave narratives, which Gillian Whitlock suggests “is in many respects quite different” from the African-American tradition (10).

to say the privation of the enslaved is the hardship of settling into a living and not a profound question of equality, justice, liberty.

Susanna Strickland, now commonly known as Susanna Moodie in the field of Canadian literature, was a British abolitionist who, before emigrating to Upper Canada in 1832, transcribed two slave narratives: *The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave Related by Herself* (1831) and *Negro Slavery Described by a Negro: Being the Narrative of Ashton Warner, a Native of St. Vincent's* (1831). Indeed, we cannot not register the gendered creative labour of transcribers of slave narratives, nor overlook the bonds of interracial intimacy that ensued as a result of the collaborative work between abolitionist-transcribers and previously enslaved black people, two groups of people “whose implications in processes of colonization are so different” (Whitlock 9). My wariness of Clarke’s argument is not concerned with privileging a monolithic conception of what constitutes a slave narrative. I know this would be an insular practice which would draw hard disciplinary boundaries which, in turn, would ignore the leakages between genres. Nor am I committed to determining the authenticity or safeguarding the sacred archive of black voice in the autobiographies of enslaved peoples, as John Sekora is in his provocative essay, “Black Message/White Envelope.” Sekora notes that for many white abolitionist editors of the American slave narrative, white authentication was more important than black storytelling, hence, he argues, “black message [was] sealed within a white envelope” (502). Gillian Whitlock is also concerned with how slave narratives “might engage a ‘believing’ reader” (10); however, her monograph *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women’s Autobiography* reads for co-operation rather than the co-option that

Sekora reads in abolitionist sponsorship, complicating whether the collaborative work is a representation of co-option, coercion or cooperation. Whitlock acknowledges that Mary Prince's *History* and Moodie's *Roughing It* are "two autobiographies which do not seem to belong together at all and yet," she suggests, "through the course of Empire, are deeply implicated one in the other" (8), thus highlighting the unrealized influence of one on the other, which is akin to the covert collaborative practice that Lorraine York, in *Rethinking Women's Collaborative Writing*, dubs "implied collaboration" (21).⁹⁸ Whitlock asks, "What does it mean to read these texts with colonialism and its aftermath in view?" (8). Also, "how do we read from them the implications of different gendered, racial, class markings in colonialism's culture?" (9).

And, in the context of Clarke's suggestion, what can we make of the particular relations between slavery and white American and European settlements in Upper Canada? What do we make of the fugitive slave whose supposed refuge in Upper Canada was complicit in projects that continually displaced Indigenous people? And, recalling that Native leaders like Joseph Brant owned slaves, what about the complicity of Indigenous people in institutions such as slavery? As these questions suggest, and with settler colonialism still ongoing, I am simultaneously concerned with how such a reading might read over the class and racial privileges that are not neutralized by Moodie's privation and with what it means to read *Roughing It* as a displaced slave narrative, especially given the ongoing cultural work in Canada to avoid the historical facts and

⁹⁸ I understand that my suggestion that Moodie's text is a form of collaboration with the people she interviews and reports about is itself a suspicious claim, especially if we consider how much say these people had in the way they were represented by Moodie in her text, and I agree; however, I think it is important for readers to note the collective conditions in which this text is produced and regard this text "as one example of a collective production of text" (York 23).

effects of slavery in the making of the nation. And yet, in the intimate village of the bush, where white settlers lived side by side with fugitives from slavery, I am interested in how thinking about Moodie's text in terms of Clarke's comments precisely pinpoints how slavery informed the making of the nation. In fact, his comments make room for us to consider the "mutual narrative of complicities" in Upper Canada (Suleri 2), allowing us (1) to engage the works in early Canadian literature in terms of their racial relationalities, of how these literary and cultural works "operated within an international cultural network that was literally world-circling" (Akenson 386); (2) to use the cultural logic of diaspora to frame *Roughing It in the Bush* as a British diasporic text to be consumed by a British reading public; and (3) to invoke the peculiar, even necessary intimacies of the black Atlantic and transatlantic worlds within which *Roughing It* and its author are implicated.⁹⁹ This is to say, as a British diasporic text,¹⁰⁰ *Roughing It* sketches what happens when a group moves across space and time and reconstitutes, renews, and reinvents itself in a new place.

⁹⁹ The language of "peculiar and necessary intimacies" is borrowed from Sara Suleri's *The Rhetoric of English India*. Cautioning us against the binary relations between center vs. margin, colonizer vs. colonized, Suleri uses the term "peculiar intimacy" to describe the dynamics between the colonizer and the people colonized. Situating her theorization in "The necessary intimacies that obtain between ruler and ruled create a counterculture not always explicable in terms of an allegory of otherness." For her, "[r]ather than examine a binary rigidity between those terms—which is an inherently Eurocentric strategy—this critical field would be better served if it sought to break down the fixity of the dividing lines between domination and subordination and if it further questioned the psychic disempowerment signified by colonial encounter" (230).

¹⁰⁰ *Roughing It* has been framed in so many different ways: commenting on the "elements of poetry, fiction, travel writing, autobiography and social analysis" contained in the text, Michael Peterman suggests, "it eludes definition" (81). Susan Glickman has characterized *Roughing It* as "a miscegenous work, resisting generic classification" (22), similar to the way in which I read settlement literature as "Artful Dodgers of genre." Carl F. Klinck suggests we read this text as a novel while T.D. MacLulich has discussed it as part of the Crusoe story.

In my previous chapter I use the language of “colonial intimacy” rather than diaspora to describe the transnational ties in settler writings. However, here, I shift registers and formulate my discussion of colonial intimacies in relation to diaspora theory not only because the content of the sketch I analyze narrates the consequences of an Irishwoman marrying a runaway nigger but also, in addition to highlighting the intertwined “routes” of migration to stress the importance of relationships between diasporic communities outside the wider African diaspora, the concept of diaspora enhances our understanding of the notion of slave narrative from George Elliot Clarke. To this end, the concept of diaspora helps me pry apart the notion of Britishness as an in(di)visible category by comparison with blackness.

What fascinates me about *Roughing It* is the way in which Moodie directly addresses her British audience: “Reader,” she calls in the closing sketch of *Roughing It*, “I have given you a faithful picture of a life in the backwoods of Canada, and I leave you to draw from it your own conclusions” (236). I have at least two reasons for choosing to begin my framing of *Roughing It* as a British diasporic text with this particular statement. First, Moodie’s claim that her sketches are accurate and truthful impressions of the past is a suspect *and* significant statement.¹⁰¹ The suspicion is in the work itself, the fact that the weighted impressions of the past collected by Moodie are invested in and shaped by the expressions and impressions of collective attachments, overlooking the collaborative conditions of her text, making her faithful picture of a life in Upper Canada a faithful

¹⁰¹ On the impression of these debates, it might be time for critics of early Canadian literature to heed Sara Ahmed’s definition of impression in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. On impression she writes: I “use the idea of ‘impression’ as it allows me to avoid making analytical distinctions between bodily sensation, emotion and thought as if they could be ‘experienced’ as distinct realms of human ‘experience’” (6).

impression of a collective imagination. This interplay in settlement literature manifests in the ongoing critical debates around the generic boundaries of this text. The significance is in the fact that, unlike her sister, Catharine Parr Traill who claims in her settler text to offer *the* guide for Canadian settlement, Moodie claims to give *her* faithful picture of a rural life. This forthright admission in her representational sketches reframes the cultural significance of experience beyond the individual, in the sense that her sketches are not necessarily meant to cohere the self but importantly to offer alternate records to official accounts of emigration, and, in so doing, highlights the fact that individual accounts are not wholly autonomous from the customs and practices in the settlement community.

However, and relevant to my reading of *Roughing It* as a British diasporic text, if we recall the services of the faithful subject from Chapter One, we might even say Moodie's faithful pictures of life in the backwoods communicate dense social relations and colonial histories of Upper Canada. Her sketches export less than perfect ideas about life in this settler colony back home to the by then well-established British market and a reading audience yearning for news from the colonies.¹⁰² "To the benevolent philanthropist, whose heart has bled over the misery and pauperism of the lower classes in Great Britain, the almost entire absence of mendacity from Canada would be highly gratifying. Canada," she goes on to point out, "has few, if any native beggars; her objects

¹⁰² I am aware of the history of this book, of its different modes of production (British and American publishers), and, as a result, also aware that the readership pattern, the mode of consumption is more extant than Britain, particularly given its American cultural transmission. And yet I emphasize its British readership as a way to recognize *Roughing It's* intended readership. This is important because we can read Moodie's depiction of and response to the murder of Tom Smith and her treatment of the Irish people in *Roughing It* in their historical and colonial context. That is to say, we can invoke her previous abolitionist work with Mary Prince in London and the colonial relations between England and Ireland as preexisting filters that subsequently impact her interpretations of both of these events in Upper Canada.

of charity are generally imported from the mother country, and these are never suffered to want food or clothing” (143). By addressing an imagined philanthropist, a reader beyond the immediate geographic boundaries of the backwoods, these moments of exchange open up ways to mark the diasporic context of settlement and to situate *Roughing It* in a diasporic terrain. Nowhere is this terrain clearer than at the end of her “Quebec” sketch where she writes

The lofty groves of pine frowned down in hearse-like gloom upon the mighty river, and the deep stillness of the night, broken alone by its hoarse wailings, filled my mind with sad forebodings—alas! too prophetic of the future. Keenly, for the first time, I felt that I was a stranger in a strange land; my heart yearned intensely for my absent home. Home! the world had ceased to belong to my *present*—it was doomed to live for ever in the *past*; for what emigrant ever regarded the country of his exile as his *home*? To the land he has left, that name belongs for ever, and in no instance does he bestow it upon another. “I have got a letter from home!” “I have seen a friend from home!” “I dreamt last night that I was at home!” are expressions of everyday occurrence, to prove that the heart acknowledges no other home than the land of its birth. (37, emphasis in original)

Typically, the concept of diaspora is reserved for describing the relocation of a culture and the experience of racial, religious and ethnic displaced/dislocated minorities. But, as we see, the “hearse-like” disappointment at the Upper Canadian landscape not only resembles Edmund Burke’s theory of the sublime as awe and terror, but also positions Moodie’s loss of home, her sense of displacement marked through her shift in geography, evidenced by the posted letter, the spatial-temporal distance from the land of her birth. From this unsettling vantage point, where the settler debates her future, is not at home, and feels detached from where she is, Moodie’s sense of displacement in the landscape parallels her sense of social displacement, learning by experiencing what it feels to be a stranger in a strange land. Following Susan Glickman, in *The Picturesque and the*

Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape, we can read Moodie to be “describing a real and specific scene that speaks to [her] of [her] own time and place” (6) and not necessarily clinging strictly to models from elsewhere and before, marking a sense of settler melancholia in diaspora, similar to what Gilroy in *Postcolonial Melancholia* describes as the “protracted condition of social mourning,” resulting from “a degree of alienation from one’s place of birth and types of cultural estrangement” (335). Moreover, Moodie’s grief-stricken adjustments, her intense yearnings for an absent home, and her idealization of the homeland comes into tension with the imperial ambitions that motivate “the well-educated sons and daughters of old but impoverished families” to emigrate. On this she writes,

the emigration of such persons may be summed up in a few brief words – the emigrant’s hope of bettering his condition, and of escaping from the vulgar sarcasms too often hurled at the less wealthy by the purse-proud, commonplace people of the world. But there is a higher motive still, which has its origin in that *love of independence* which springs up spontaneously in the breast of the high-souled children of a glorious land. They cannot labour in a menial capacity in the country where they were born and educated to command. They can trace no difference between themselves and the more fortunate individuals of a race whose blood warms their veins, and whose name they bear. The want of wealth alone places an impassable barrier between them and the more favoured offspring of the same parent stock; and they go forth to make for themselves a new name and to find another country, *to forget the past and to live in the future*, to exult in the prospect of their children being free and *the land of their adoption great*. (xv, emphasis added)

To be sure, I understand that positioning *Roughing It* as a British diasporic text is an “unfashionabl[e]” task (Tololyan 108): unfashionable not simply because of its privilege in the field of Canadian literature, a privilege which highlights as, Rinaldo Walcott notes, “the discourse and literary tropes of ‘roughing it in the bush’ and ‘survival’ in a barren landscape (national tropes which deny a First Nations presence)” (51-52), but also

because in “emphasizing the role of the communal elites and the institutions they develop in the precarious conditions of diasporic existence” (Tololyan 108), I risk reifying, to quote Coleman on white civility, “the privileged, normative status of British whiteness in English Canada” (6). And yet I place Moodie’s text in deliberate relation to the imperial diaspora of the British for a number of reasons. First, it is very important that we not mislabel, as historian Donald Akenson cautions, the “British Isles diaspora of the late eighteenth century and, especially, the nineteenth centuries.” “It consisted of people who were *anglicized* but, most emphatically, were not necessarily English. It consisted of Welsh, Scottish, Irish and English persons. One can denominate these persons as being either of ‘British Isles origin’ or [. . .] as ‘Anglo-Celtic.’ The crucial point,” he points out, “is not to confuse this ethnic and cultural amalgam with the ‘English,’ or even the ‘British,’ despite such terms having been used extensively by contemporaries” (392, emphasis in original). Akenson argues that “the concept of diaspora is one that should be approached with a fair degree of skepticism, as well as with an appreciation of its potential robustness” (378). He asks, “Must a group be as severely persecuted and oppressed as were the Jews, the Africans, and the Armenians in order for ‘diaspora’ to be applicable? Apparently not” is his response, citing as examples the volitional and active dispersal of the Chinese, Korean and Sikh diasporas, with the implication that extensive oppression is not the *sole* purview of diasporic experience (382-83).¹⁰³ He also

¹⁰³ Citing economic rationales as key to the Sikh and Chinese diasporas, he points out that with the Korean diaspora, movement happened “after, rather than during, the fearful oppression the Koreans experienced at the hands of the Japanese” (382). And is economic oppression not oppression? Akenson’s comparative oppression model reifies a hierarchy of oppression. For a more productive engagement of different diasporas see Lisa Lowe’s “Intimacies of Four Continents,” which casts colonialism and diasporic movement mainly in terms of labour exploitation.

recognizes that as a collective umbrella, “the term ‘diaspora’ threatens to become a massive linguistic weed,” with the result that we wonder, “What does the term diaspora exclude?” (382). Do we, for example, “exclude from consideration” “the early history of the Europeanization of North and South America” (Akenson 385)? These questions situate early Canada and its literatures, as Chapters One and Two demonstrate, in the context of a broader Atlantic world.

Second, I frame *Roughing It* as a ‘British’ diasporic text as a way for us to recast, following the above quotations from Moodie, the ‘British’ diasporic group within the “structures of kinship,” that Judith Butler suggests enforce “‘positions’ that bear an intractability that does not apply to contingent social norms” (*Antigone’s Claim* 30). Such a frame helps us not to focus on diasporic communities always as “minorities, and thus inevitably as potential victims, never as victimizers,” thus overlooking how “diaspora groups often have totally displaced, oppressed, or enslaved the indigenous peoples they have encountered” (Akenson 385). In other words, settler denial of First Nations presence is also a diasporic denial, in particular if we acknowledge diasporic subjects as also settler subjects. Lee Maracle puts this well when she sees the “current Diaspora” as participants of a “chronic invasion” (68) of First Nations territories. I hear Robert Young’s argument about settlers as “doubly positioned” subjects resound in Maracle’s argument: Young argues, settlers are on the one hand “colonists who have freed themselves from the colonial rule [including class, gender and racial structures] of the mother country,” and, on the other, “the oppressors of the indigenous peoples who already occupied the land”

(19-20). Nowhere is this relationality clearer than in the borrowing practices that articulate a relational economy in rural Upper Canada. On “borrowing,” Moodie notes,

When we first came to the colony, nothing surprised me more than the extent to which this pernicious custom was carried, both by the native Canadians, the European settlers, and the lower order of Americans. Many of the latter had spied out the goodness of the land, and *borrowed* various portions of it, without so much as asking leave of the absentee owners. Unfortunately, our new home was surrounded by these odious squatters, whom we found as ignorant as savages, without their courtesy and kindness. (66, emphasis in original)

Embedded within this rural economy are the ambitious diasporic investments in settlement: “native” Canadians,¹⁰⁴ the European settlers and the lower order of Americans all assert various claims over the land. Though not surprising, especially given the logic of settler colonialism, which justifies the exploitation of vast resources by settlers who view them to be underused by the Indigenous peoples because of their ecological awareness, it is important to note that this land theft, disguised as part of the local practice of borrowing, has ideological and theoretical implications for diaspora studies. Ideologically, tension characterizes the encounters of competing diasporas in the colony, with the issue of “absentee landowners” referring to the Loyalist grants system, where Loyalist from the Revolutionary War were offered grants of land in British North America, thus obscuring First Nation prior legal claims and history in the land in order to legitimate ‘British’ Loyalist settlement as a lawful settlement of Upper Canada. The wealthier of these “Loyalist settlers” often lived in larger settlements such as York (Toronto) and either waited for the land to be cleared (and prices improved) by settlers or hired folks to work their farms in their absence. Either way, absentee landowners

¹⁰⁴ For Moodie, “native Canadians” would refer to settlers who were born in the Canadas.

benefited from the labour of settlers like the Moodies who cleared land, built roads, established mills, etc.—all of which raised the value of their properties. For these upper class Loyalist “settlers,” squatters were a mixed blessing, occupying the lands absentee owners claimed, but improving those lands and making them more valuable. The ploy was to allow the squatters to do the improving, and then use legal means to remove them from the land and sell it when the prices were favourable (Knowles 20-25). The Bagot Commission Report (1844), which was commissioned by Governor General of British North America Sir Charles Bagot to investigate settler theft of First Nations land, reports serious problems with squatters.¹⁰⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville’s 1863 *Democracy in America* echoes this insight when he points out that

With their resources and their knowledge, the Europeans have made no delay in appropriating most of the advantages the natives derived from their possession of the soil; they have settled among them, having taken over the land or bought it cheaply, and have ruined the Indians by a competition which the latter were in no position to face. Isolated within their own country, the Indians have come to form a little colony of unwelcome foreigners in the midst of a numerous and dominating people. (334)

Moreover, note that in Sir Richard Henry Bonnycastle’s 1846 *Canada and the Canadians, Volume 1*, he cautions settlers in and to Upper and Lower Canada on the importance “of tracing the original grant, and that the land, if he buys from an individual,

¹⁰⁵ The Report investigated the operations of the Indian department in both Canada East and West. The three appointed Commissioners were John Davidson, a former Crown Lands Commissioner, William Hapburn, Registrar of the Court of Chancery, and Rawson W. Rawson, an experienced public servant, who, in 1842 when the report was commissioned, had just arrived in Canada to assume the post of Civil Society. The *Report*, supportive of assimilative policy, recommended that in order for First Nations people to “progress” towards civilization, they needed to adhere to the principles of industry and knowledge through European education. Regardless of the diverse First Nation groups in the Canadas, the Commissioners pointed to similar difficulties: “squatters on reserves, improper recording of land sales and leases, lack of progress in agriculture and education, inept administration of band funds, disappearance of wildlife, and excessive use of liquor.” In fact we learn that “legislation to control liquor, protect reserve land, and prevent trespass had been evaded or ignored by the new settlers” (Leslie 39).

is neither Crown nor Clergy reserve.” He also advises settlers to “never buy” from “a squatter, or land on which a squatter is located, for the law is very favourable to these gentry.” Continuing, he writes,

A squatter is a man who, axe in hand, with his gun, dog, and baggage, sets himself down in the deep forest, to clear and improve; and this he very frequently does, both upon public and private property; and the Government is lenient, so that, if he makes well of it, he generally has a right of pre-emption, or perhaps pays up only instalments, and then sells and goes deeper into the bush. Every way there is difficulty about squatted land, and very often the squatter will significantly enough hint that there is such a thing as a rifle in his log castle. Squatters are usually Americans, of the very lowest grade, or the most ignorant of the Irish, who really believe they have a right to the soil they occupy. (31)

Moodie’s phrase “absentee owners” has a large racial context. In addition to squatters’ rights in the legal system of the colony, it also harkens back to “the debates concerning the exploitation of Irish tenants by English absentee owners in the [nineteenth] century” (“[absentee ownership](#)”), calling upon English rules of Common Law and Equity to refer to ‘British’ diasporic settlers as “owners” and to certain classes of settlers such as “the most ignorant of the Irish” and the “lower order of Americans,” which includes runaway slaves, as “squatters.” Working from the understanding that early Upper Canadian farmers and settlers started off by displacing First Nations peoples from the land, my point is to highlight the irony in Bonnycastle’s and Moodie’s statements, to suggest, by reading against their grain, that within the ‘British’ diasporic settlers’ fear of squatters’ right of pre-emption is a recognition of themselves as squatters. This becomes clear when we juxtapose the goodness of the land that, according to Moodie, odious squatters borrow from the absentee owners with de Tocqueville’s argument that Europeans have made no delay in appropriating most of the advantages the Natives derived from their possession

of the soil. In others words, although the logic of hierarchy of competing diasporic groups in the colony signifies overlapping claims to the land, this signification is haunted by the absence of First Nations people who should be there in her statement, thus highlighting the unlawful grounds in diasporic settlement.¹⁰⁶ So if, from this early Canadian viewpoint, European and Yankee settlers are squatters, then, theoretically, all diasporic settlers are also diasporic squatters. It is with all this colonial and racial relations in mind that, first, I consider a British woman's life writing that charts the strategies used in the colony to reproduce the British cultural heritage a diasporic text, and, second, I describe a majority of people that established themselves in a new territory through an aggressive and continuing strategy of conquest and imperial expansion a diaspora. To put it otherwise, reading *Roughing It* through the lens of diasporic theory is an attempt to situate this text as "part of a truly *multipolar* diaspora literature" (Akenson 389), and, as mentioned above, within the transatlantic worlds of literature.

We know from Daniel Coleman's line of reasoning in *White Civility* that "to read Canada's popular allegories of White British civility backwards from the accretions of naturalness in their present 'forgotten' state so that we can perceive the efforts that went into their construction and recognize them once again for the artificial constructions that they are" (40) we have to acknowledge that "what has come to be known as English Canada is and has been," in practice, "a project of literary, among other forms of cultural,

¹⁰⁶ This argument is complicated in Moodie's particular case, especially because the government of Upper Canada purchased rights to the land in the Rice Lake region, where Moodie settled. This land was valuable to the Crown because, according to Robert J. Leslie, it "provided itself with lands to accommodate new settlers from the United Kingdom" (75) and opened an inland water communication to Lake Simcoe, which, Leslie points out, was "desirable for military purposes" (76); hence, the expropriation was strictly legal in 'British' terms, even if it was a shady deal in terms of fairness.

endeavour and that the organizing problematic of this endeavour has been a British model of civility” (5). If we read white civility as a rally for white identity, then we can also read this rally as a marker of ‘British’ diaspora in Canada. For example, through the figure of the enterprising Scottish orphan, one of the four allegorical figures through which Coleman traces white civility in Canada, he points out how “the pan-ethnic leeway of Britishness allowed Scots who were being driven off their lands in Scotland an upward social mobility in the colonies unavailable back home” (6).¹⁰⁷ It is keeping this racial project of a “pan-ethnic [‘British’] civility” (Coleman 83) in mind that I further turn to diaspora as both a heuristic and a material site highly relevant to framing Moodie’s *Roughing It*.

So, as material objects and sites of cross-cultural communication, facilitating settler forms of colonial intimacy, Moodie’s sketches can be read as diasporic warnings and support for prospective settlers desiring to cross the Atlantic waters. “Now, take my advice,” she tells readers, quoting Uncle Joe’s mother’s advice to her, “return while your money lasts; the longer you remain in Canada the less you will like it; and when your money is all spent, you will be like a bird in a cage; you may beat your wings against the bars but you can’t get out” (105). *Roughing It* consists of more unhappy images of settlement. Beginning with the journey across the Atlantic Ocean, Moodie remarks on the

¹⁰⁷ I understand, from Euan Hague’s report on the Scottish Diaspora conference held at University of Guelph in 1999, “the Clearances were not a singular, tragic event around which all Scottish migration was generated,” and also understand “that rather than being evicted, many Scots chose to leave Scotland, and for a variety of different reasons, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (www.scottishaffairs.org/backiss/pdfs/sa31/sa31_Hague.pdf). Coleman focuses on the figure of the “enterprising Scottish orphan” in order to highlight, to quote him, that the “regularly repeated literary personifications for the Canadian nation mediated and gradually reified the privileged, normative status of British whiteness in English Canada” (6).

stench, illness, and the overcrowded discomfort of ship traveling. Furthermore, she shares her realization of the leveling of class status in Upper Canada, demonstrated by the way a poor Irishman, on arriving at Grosse Isle, “leaped upon the rocks, and flourishing aloft his shillelagh, bounded and capered like a wild goat from his native mountains. ‘Whurrah! my boys!’ he cried. ‘Shure we’ll all be jintlemen’” (27). These transmissions of Upper Canadian culture to Britain alongside the cultural concerns in *Roughing It* (images of vulgar Yankees, quarrelsome Irish servants, thieving land speculators) and concerns regarding bush living (fires, bears, mosquitoes, health concerns, deaths, borrowing practices, undesired neighbourly visits, etc.) turn this faithful sketch into a sort of advertisement for the degeneracy and absence of the art of English restraint in the colony. Therefore, it comes as no surprise when, in the last paragraph of *Roughing It*, having sorted out her disappointment with the rough life in the bush, she writes,

If these sketches should prove the means of deterring one family from sinking their property, and shipwrecking all their hopes, by going to reside in the backwoods of Canada, I shall consider myself amply repaid for revealing the secrets of the prison-house and feel that I have not toiled and suffered in the wilderness in vain. (237)

I am not outlining these moments in Moodie’s *Roughing It* in order to frame her text as a book of lamentation; rather, to show that Moodie’s commitment to correct the “false statements” around settlement functioned as part of the settler form of colonial and diasporic intimacy. I raise this point to argue that when I refer to the sketches in *Roughing It* as diasporic warnings I am arguing they passed on to those at *home* the everyday, ordinary hardships of settler living, the rough geographies of life in the bush, in Upper Canada, and, as part of the settler work in diaspora, relayed a “mobility and porousness”

that, following Khachig Toloyan's readings of the role elites played in the Armenian diaspora, "claim the privilege of representing [the rural life in the bush] and can loosely be termed political" (112). These diasporic warnings highlight the social conditions that informed the dispersion of 'British' settlers in and through Upper Canada, inform 'British' settlers' relations with the land in Upper Canada while, at the same time, marking their interrelationships with other settler communities in Upper Canada.¹⁰⁸ By noting that the 'British' diaspora in Moodie's text maps out a distinct set of histories and complex relations with the British Empire, I am recognizing its gendered relations with other diasporas within the diaspora in Upper Canada – namely, fugitive slaves, Irish and the Yankees. So while Traill's text acts as propaganda to attract colonists to Upper Canada, Moodie's acts as a warning to those same potential settlers.

In reference to the "Yankees" as one of the diasporas present in the village, it helps, in framing *Roughing It* as a 'British' diasporic text, to position them in relation to pan-ethnic 'Britishness.' When we provincialize the Yankee we note that this figure is already a 'British' diasporic group in the American colonies. In further provincializing the Yankee we realize 'true' Yankees remained in the northern states of the United States and, as a result, can guess that the Yankee presence in Upper Canada identifies them as British Loyalists who left the United States during and after the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Moodie, however, is committed to separate the Yankee from her own more elite 'British' migrant group, evidenced by the fact that she identifies these doubly

¹⁰⁸ This articulation of diasporic warnings is informed by Kim Butler's suggestion that diasporas be analyzed around a set of analytical variables: these include (A) the reasons and conditions of the dispersal (B) the relationship with homeland (C) the relationship with hostlands (D) the interrelationships within communities of the diaspora and (E) comparative studies of different diasporas.

diasporic 'British' subjects as "Yankeefied British" (144). In other words, a "Yankeefied British" is a 'British' diasporic migrant from the United States but also is 'British' historically, hence marking the presence of a doubly diasporic 'British' subject. In this diasporic moment in Upper Canada, where the respectable, elite 'British' diasporic groups want control of the colony, note, however, how an imperial encounter (identified as the Yankee's discourteous speech) marks a diasporic connection: "It [the discourteous speech] is only practiced by the lowborn Yankee, or the Yankeefied British peasantry and mechanicals. It originates in the enormous reaction springing out of a sudden emancipation from a state of utter dependence into one of unrestrained liberty" (144).

As a way to engage *Roughing It* as a gendered and racialized diasporic cultural project, one that "attempts to guide her reading public according to gendered codes and hierarchies" (Thompson 2), the rest of this chapter will focus on "The Charivari" sketch. This sketch has two halves. The first half dwells on the social politics of Upper Canada. Moodie calls these politics "serious subjects" of the country, on which she writes, "[I will] leave my husband, who is better qualified than myself to give a more accurate account of the country" (144), allowing us to consider the particular gendered dimensions of the white British settler diaspora in Upper Canada. For example, when Moodie writes that men write serious subjects "while I turn to matters of a light and livelier cast" (144), she is not only acknowledging a gendered difference in narration, she is also highlighting the gendered dimension of settlement's "diaspora space." In other words, and here following Avtar Brah's theorization of the phrase, she emphasizes a gendered space cross-hatched by the cultural, political, economic, psychic and social intersections in the

diaspora (241-248). To understand Moodie's imagined space, we must extend the interpretive frameworks for evaluating the sketches in *Roughing It* beyond the boundaries of an individual ideological lens and the Canadian nation-state so as to acknowledge their diasporic frames, their multiple axes of difference.

Of significance to racial relationalities is the second half of the sketch, supposedly the "light and livelier" material, where Moodie experiences her first charivari. "It was towards the close of the summer of 1833," she writes, when "I was startled one night, just before retiring to rest, by the sudden firing of guns in our near vicinity, accompanied by shouts and yells, the braying of horns, the beating of drums, and the barking of all the dogs in the neighbourhood." Continuing, she underlines, "I never heard a more stunning uproar of discordant and hideous sounds" (144). The reference to 1833, and its significance, in 1852 when her book was published, was not lost on the reading public across the Atlantic. Mapped within and outside the confines of Canadian national history, 1833 marks the British Empire passing the Act to Abolish Slavery and the start of the American Civil War, events that mark the sketches in *Roughing It* as histories of Upper Canada but also as part of nineteenth-century Atlantic and American histories. Also note the link between Moodie's psychological and perceptual distress and the loud noise and how this synchronicity makes the night hideous. Moodie is not the only one startled into "alarm" by these rough sounds; Mary, her Irish "maid-servant," is as well (144).¹⁰⁹ "The

¹⁰⁹ Notice how "maid-servant," the compound word Moodie uses, distinguishes domestic servitude, which was the predominant labour for Irish women in Upper Canada, from Richardson's "negro servant." As for these servants Moodie admits to "prefer[ring] the Canadian to the European servant. If they turn out good and faithful, it springs more from real respect and affection, and you possess in your domestic a valuable assistant and friend; but this will never be the case with a servant brought out with you from the *old country*" (142, emphasis added). For more on Irish domestic servants in nineteenth-century Ontario see

goodness *defend* us,” Mary remarks, “We shall be murdered. The Yankees must have taken Canada, and are marching hither” (144, emphasis added).¹¹⁰ Acknowledging the pan-ethnic ‘Britishness,’ again, note the association between the rough sounds and the image of the invading, violent Yankee. I understand that Mary and Moodie’s responses can be read in gendered terms, especially if we consider that when the noise nears their log hut, Moodie says to Mary, “Hark! they are fighting again. Bring me the hammer and nails, and let us secure the windows” (144). And yet, if, in their gendered responses to these sounds, we also consider a union of sensory-impressions (what they hear and the feelings it elicits), these hideous and discordant sounds might be said to evoke a visualization of race, and this racial association is supported by the pan-ethnic British identification in Mary’s “we.” Moreover, in Mary’s remarks, one can even imagine a nationalist discontent, to learn the “meaning of this strange uproar” is not the 1837 Rebellion against British authority, but rather, as Moodie learns from her neighbour, Mrs. O_, a charivari. ““What is a charivari,’ [Moodie] said, ‘Do, pray, enlighten me.’” After laughing at Moodie for not knowing the charivari after her “nine months” stay in Canada, Mrs. O_ explains,

The charivari is a custom that the Canadians got from the French, in the Lower Province, and a queer custom it is. When an old man marries a young wife, or an old woman a young husband, or two old people, who ought to be thinking of their graves, enter for the second or third time into the holy estate of wedlock, as the priest calls it, all the idle young fellows in the neighbourhood meet together to charivari them. For this purpose they disguise themselves, blackening their faces,

Lorna R. McLean and Marilyn Barber’s “In Search of Comfort and Independence: Irish Immigrant Domestic Servants Encounter the Courts, Jails, and Asylums in Nineteenth-Century Ontario.”

¹¹⁰ If, according to the text, this discordant sound happened “towards the close of the summer of 1833” (144), and if the American Civil War and the Rebellion of 1837 attracted many Yankees because they looked on the British as traditional enemies, then, I would like to underline that in addition to gendering the “us” and “we” as women, the pan-ethnic British identification in the Irish maid-servant’s “us” and “we.”

putting their clothes on hind part before, and wearing horrible masks, with grotesque caps on their heads, adorned with cocks' feathers and bells. They then form in a regular body, and proceed to the bridegroom's house, to the sound of tin kettles, horns and drums, cracked fiddles, and all the discordant instruments they can collect together. Thus equipped, they surround the house where the wedding is held, just at the hour when the happy couple are supposed to be about to retire to rest—beating upon the door with clubs and staves, and demanding of the bridegroom admittance to drink the bride's health, or in lieu thereof to receive a certain sum of money to treat the band at the nearest tavern. (144)

Earlier in this sketch, when Moodie articulates the social politics of Upper Canada, she remarks that the native-born Canadian's "taste in music is not for the sentimental; they prefer the light, lively tunes of the Virginian minstrels to the most impassioned strains of Bellini" (149).¹¹¹ Understanding the hold that the tunes of minstrelsy exerted on the taste of the native-born Canadian, along with the visual drama of all the idle young fellows in the neighbourhood walking in blackface, helps us to connect the practice of charivari to the nineteenth-century popular form of entertainment, blackface minstrelsy. Mrs. O_'s story confirms the arguments that labour and social historians like Joan Kent, Bryan Palmer, and E.P. Thompson have suggested about charivaris, that there are many variations of the charivari in the early modern era, and each with its own cultural logic. I note that the popularity of blackface minstrelsy in nineteenth-century Upper Canada transforms the character of and intrinsic features of this medieval European ritual.

Marked as a queer custom, signaling, to borrow David L. Eng's use of the term *queer*, "a stake in nonnormative, oppositional politics" (50), the charivari is a form of local governance as well as an expression of communal feeling in the village. Mrs. O_

¹¹¹ The "Virginian minstrels," led by an Irish American, Daniel Decatur Emmett, an early blackface performer, is dubbed the first professional white troupe of blackface entertainers. Initially a troupe of white minstrels, it is a widespread belief that, it was not until 1843, at the New York Amphitheatre, that the troupe began to perform an entire show in blackface, and this appearance marks the "birth" of minstrelsy and American popular music (Cockrell 36; Nathan 58-9; Saxton 4).

underscores the charivari as an imported cultural practice from France to North America and, in so doing, distances the custom from British North America, Upper Canada. She explains: the Canadians, in the Lower Province of Canada, *got it* from the French. Here, distance functions to separate the two Provinces, Upper from Lower Canada, to mark, as Moodie expresses, a “*feeling*[,] a truly British indignation at such a lawless infringement upon *the natural rights of man*” (152, emphasis added). I will return to the general question of “the natural rights of man” later, but for now recall from Chapter One that Upper and Lower Canada were formed because the British captured Quebec from the French in 1759-60, and, through the Treaty of Paris in 1763, was assigned the colony. Also recall that the Constitutional Act in 1791 divided the colony of Quebec into two Provinces, Upper Canada for the British, and Lower Canada for the French. My point is simple: British dominion over this territory did not mean complete annihilation of French cultural practices. In fact, as an example, consider the Quebec Act in 1764, and how it guaranteed the continued use of Quebec civil law. We can therefore read the charivari in Upper Canada as an incomplete cultural transfer and also as a political specter of the French empire, an acknowledgement of the ways that cultural groups retain their practices, and, in so doing, mark geographical territories. Moreover, the transfer highlights a transit of cultural practice (knowledge) from one geographic location to another, and, in this case, the mere fact that Mrs. O_ knows this history suggests that the transit of knowledge and practices is not only between the empire and the colony, or between colonies, but also intra, within the colony, emphasizing that settlers bring more than their bodies with them to the colony; they bring songs, tunes, and cultural practices.

Therefore, in reading the charivari as part of the cultural practice and/or performance and also, as a result of the racial-gender politics in the cultural and political transfer¹¹², as part of the cultural politics in Upper Canada, the significance of its origin is that this cultural practice offers a moment not simply to mark a French and British connection in Upper Canada, but, significantly, how this connection influenced the structuring of kinship relations in the “neighbourhood.”

In her summation of the charivari, Mrs. O_ uses the term “neighbourhood” specifically to characterize the *sites* in the “village” where all the idle young fellows publicly deliberate to disguise their faces with masks and blackface. This term is suggestive, particularly, in how it underscores the place of coming together to manage difference, hence dramatizing the gathering place as an intense public site, encoding it with an intense affective life. In these affectively charged public sites, the neighbourhood becomes the heart of the village’s understanding of itself, as an affiliate, a microcosm of the colony (the young fellows gather to “form in a regular body, before they proceed to the bridegroom’s house”). It becomes the locus of the elaborate effort to control, defend, define, and regulate the parameters of marriage. If we pick up on feminist critiques of the institution of marriage, as inherently patriarchal and oppressive, particularly with concerns to the gender subordination of women in marriage, and, in turn, if we note that women, as a result of an ability to biologically re/produce members in the village, play a significant role in reproducing the colony/neighbourhood, then, the charivari is itself a

¹¹² If we understand the phrase “the natural rights of man” as invoking the philosophy and political realizations of freedom of the French Revolution, then, the charivari can indeed be considered a political transfer as in a form of governance.

form of institution; it marks the working together of different patriarchal institutions to regulate intimacy and define “certain forms of kinship as the *only* intelligible and liveable one” in the neighbourhood (Butler, *Antigone’s Claim* 70, emphasis added). Lauren Berlant encourages us to consider intimacy as a force that “builds worlds; it creates spaces and usurps places made for other kinds of relation. Its potential failure to stabilize closeness always haunts its persistent activity, making the very attachments deemed to buttress ‘a life’ seem in a state of constant if latent vulnerability” (282). As a result, when members of the charivari party police marriages against the social norm, and, through this process, vest themselves with the rights and duties to regulate those who should and should not be included in its benefits and burdens, this marriage discrimination (based on age and on an elderly person’s decision to remarry) allows us to witness some of the tactics used in white racial formation, its formation of British North America, thereby showing how the social norms of the charivari uphold the norms of age, sexuality, race, gender, and class in this Upper Canadian village. Therefore, rather than dismiss the shame these young fellows inflict onto the couples as the idle work of youth, emptying out its ideological components, as Mrs. O_ does, I emphasize that it is the shame’s violent means of drawing and showing borders in the neighbourhood, borders between young and old, outsiders and insiders, rich and poor that upsets Mrs. O_ and not the fact that these borders are being drawn and shown. I understand it is the case that Mrs. O_ asks “What right have [members of the charivari party] to interfere with [the groom’s] private affairs” (152), and this would suggest that she does not condone the charivari; however, note further that she goes on to explain that “a charivari would seldom be attended with bad

consequences if people would take it as a joke, and join in the spree” (155). So, read as a “context,” the neighbourhood “provide[s] the frame or setting within which various kinds of human action (productive, reproductive, interpretive, performative) can be initiated and conducted meaningfully.” In this light, again to quote Appadurai, the term neighbourhood describes, “the actually existing social forms in which locality, as a dimension or value, is variably realized” (208). Here, Appadurai differentiates between locality and neighborhood. For him, neighbourhood is “primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial” (204f). It is, in his view, inherently fragile and, as a result, must be continuously reasserted.

To my mind, Mrs. O_’s version of the neighbourhood, when considered in the context of settlement, as illustrated in her story of the origin of North American charivari, conflates locality and neighbourhood. On the one hand, this conflation underlines the intercontinental relations of the charivari as part of the ceaseless process that *spatially* produces Upper Canada (Appadurai 205). On the other hand, it situates the rural location of the charivari not simply in terms of its size but also in terms of its structures of feeling (the intentional structures that allow it to reproduce itself), allowing us to acknowledge that the forms of the charivari are never fixed, but instead are produced out of an ongoing tension between “official consciousness” and “practical consciousness” (Williams 130) in the neighbourhood.¹¹³ Acknowledging the disjunction between these two forms of

¹¹³ “Practical consciousness is almost always different from official consciousness,” Williams notes. For him “practical consciousness is what is actually being lived, and not only what is thought is being lived. Yet the actual alternative to the received and produced fixed forms is not silence: not the absence, the unconscious, which bourgeois culture had mythicized. It is a kind of feeling and thinking which is indeed social and material, but each in an embryonic phase before it can become fully articulate and defined exchange” (131).

consciousness, the event of the charivari registers “an unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency: the moment of conscious comparison not yet come, often not even coming” (Williams 130). Vitrally, it marks an endless succession of competing intimacies in the neighbourhood, evidenced by the fact that the neighbourhood, through the charivari, is governed by competing European empires, as well as by the fact that the charivari that Moodie describes (of an Irish woman marrying a black man, of which I will turn to shortly) interferes with the popular assumption that marriage is the couple’s private affair. Despite the patriarchal structures of colonial society, surely part of the issue here is “why would a (white) Irish woman marry a black man”? And this assumes choice and agency on the part of the woman, probably on the basis of her race. Also, I cannot help but read the competition between European empires and the abundance of exchanges between members of the charivari party and their bridegrooms as queer moments. What do we make of the fact that Mrs. O_’s narration pays more attention to the charivari party and the bridegroom than to the bride? Here, in this instance, lies a slightly different dynamic of the homosocial triangle that Peter Dickenson, following Eve Sedgwick in his queer-readings of Canadian literary texts in *Here Is Queer*, argues is re-productive of patriarchal power structures. Moreover, I am particularly struck by the ways in which Mrs. O_’s accounts of the charivari return us over and over again to the merging of public and private spheres. Shamed through discordant noise, the intimate, private night of the married couple becomes a public affair, whether the charivari party is beating upon the doors at the bridegroom’s house, or surrounding the wedding house, just at the hour when the happy couple are supposed to retire to rest. The charivari positions marriage as a

space for masculine intervention, and the charivari party is marked as integral to the organization of the rural intimacies depicted in Moodie's *Roughing It*.

Moreover, in terms of the organization of the rural village, if we conjoin Mrs. O_'s views on marriage as a "private affair" (152) to her later reference to the murder of Tom Smith as "another affair that happened, just before [Moodie] came to the place, that occasioned no small talk in the neighbourhood" (154), we come to see the place of the village as a concentrated overlap between public and private affairs. In the context of the charivari practice, place is not only negotiated, it is also relational, recalling David Theo Goldberg's notion of periphractic space. Goldberg argues that "[t]he notion of *periphractic* space is relational: It does not require the absolute displacement of persons to or outside city limits, to the literal margins of urban space. It merely entails their circumscription in terms of location and their limitation in terms of access—to power, to (the realization of) rights, and to goods and services" (188, emphasis in original). According to him, a periphractic space "implies dislocation, displacement, and division," and this space, he points out, is "the primary mode by which the space of racial marginality has been articulated and reproduced" (188). Goldberg uses the idea of periphractic spaces to emphasize the role that the intersections between race and class play in its creation and maintenance. Although Goldberg's site of analysis is the urban and mine is the rural, his insights are useful in this early period in Upper Canada because the periphractic directness, definiteness and possessiveness mobilized to marginalize the racialized other depended on the cumulated inscription of meaning attributed to the "space" of the village. Thinking the place of the village as a periphractic space is a

realization that “the ideas ‘space’ and ‘place’ require each other for definition” (Tuan 6). Human geographer Yi-Fu Tuan pointedly asserts, “Place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other” (1). For him, “In experience, the meaning of space often merges with that of place. ‘Space’ is more abstract than ‘place.’ What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value” (6). This tension is realized when he suggests, “From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place” (6). If pause, as place, connotes mindful and discerned approach to settling in a place, and if the rural place of the village is demarked by physical and ideological boundaries, one where whiteness can negotiate and, as a result, secure the most advantageous physical space, then, the periphractic space of the village is the long pause of settlement. Therefore, in order for members of the charivari party to protect the pulse of the pause, which is the village, they roughly evacuate the pause of undesirable villagers.

Tracing the genealogy of blackface minstrelsy in the United States, W. T. Lhamon points out that “the minstrel show has seeped well beyond its masked variants into vaudeville, thence into sitcoms; into jazz and rhythms ‘n’ blues quartets, thence into rock ‘n’ roll and hip hop dance.” Continuing, he writes that it has seeped “into the musical and the novel, thence into radio and film; into the Grand Old Opry, thence into every roadhouse and the cab of every longhaul truck beyond the Appalachians” (56). And as

David R. Roediger has argued, “Blackface could be everything – rowdy, rebellious and respectable – because it could be denied that it was anything” (116). As a result, if we listen carefully to the acoustic entanglements, the audible drama of the noise, we hear that the sounds of the charivari rituals rough the neighbourhood, evoking a colour similar to the charivariers’ faces: both are racialized black. Following this line of argument, that charivari sounds are racialized sounds, recall the gendered dimension of Mary and Moodie’s fear and let me suggest that to the ears of these two Pan-British diasporic subjects, the sounds did not elicit fear simply because they were hideous and discordant but also because these sounds were blackened. This allows us to situate their fear within a long-standing discourse of black sexual threat. I will return to the racialized politics embedded in this sexual threat, but for now let us focus on a chain of figurations, on how, for example, the performance rituals of the charivari mark its participation in the emerging formation of blackface minstrelsy in North America.¹¹⁴ Theorists of blackface minstrel shows consider the charivari as part of “the family tree of Western ritual theatricals” that gave birth to blackface performance (Cockrell 46; also see Lott 136-137). Dale Cockrell, in *Demons of Disorder*, underlines the Euro-American folk cultural roots in early development of blackface minstrelsy, and connects early blackface minstrelsy to the carnivalesque class hostility of charivari’s disruptive communal function.¹¹⁵

According to Cockrell, this connection allows the audience to laugh together at outlandish

¹¹⁴ For a detailed history of blackface minstrelsy see footnote 18 on page 35.

¹¹⁵ According to Eric Lott the minstrel types should “be placed at the intersection of slave culture and earlier blackface stage characters such as the harlequin of the commedia dell’arte, the clown of English pantomime and the clown of the American circus, the burlesque tramp, perhaps the ‘blackman’ of English folk drama. This intersection establishes the political and emotional range within which minstrel songs characteristically worked. The twin infusion of these antecedents in minstrel representations lends a highly uncertain status to an already ambiguous stage tradition” (22).

representations of social deviance. W.T. Lhamon's analysis of blackface entertainment as Atlantic popular culture is indicative of the forging transatlantic relation between the charivari and blackface minstrelsy. One might even see blackface minstrelsy as preserving the cultural practice of the charivari.

As gangs of the night, members of the charivari party employ several devices, factors, and props to disguise their identities from the village.¹¹⁶ They use the streets to shame, to critique, to ride, rail, tar and feather a bridegroom who "refuses to appear and grant their request" for penances for remarriage (152). According to Moodie, the particular charivari she is writing about happened around the summer of 1833. Also, according to minstrel theorists, the 1830s mark the pioneering stages of blackface minstrelsy in North America (Cockrell; Lhamon; Lott; Mahar; Roediger). Moreover, similar to the charivari practices where the party beat upon the door and fired guns "charged with pears against the door" of the married couple (Moodie 152), early minstrel shows were also performed in the streets outside theatre doors. Because the charivari and early minstrel shows share the public performance spaces of popular theatre, they are forms of "street" cultures or, to use E.P. Thompson's interpretation of the charivari, they function as forms of street theatre (478). Moreover, they mark rural and settler zones of

¹¹⁶ My use of the word "gang" comes from Mrs. O_'s description of the fellows: "all the idle young fellows in the neighbourhood meet together to charivari them." The fact of "all" of "them," the idle young fellows, meeting "together" makes it sound as if the whole village of youth ganged around not to neighbour but to charivari. "Of the night" recalls Bryan Palmer's insights in *Cultures of Darkness: Night Travels in the Histories of Transgression* (New York: New York University Press, 2000.), where he employs the metaphor of night to look at dissident or oppositional cultures and movements such as religious heretics, runaway slaves, prostitutes, revolutionaries, gangs, and jazz musicians, and others who live outside the defining mainstream culture and how these night people were shaped by and shaped the changes in capitalism. The difference between Palmer's groups and the charivari group is that they borrow the vestiges and accountments of dissent, but they are not outside mainstream culture. They are enforcing mainstream.

commerce, evidenced by the fact that early minstrel performers were often characterized as being in the “Negro business” (Wittke qtd in Roediger 119) and by the fact that members of the charivari party demanded penance from the bridegrooms. Blackening the self, Roediger points out, “*was* an accumulating capitalist behavior” and “did draw attention to the relationship between racial disguise and making money” (119, emphasis in original). With this in mind, the charivari party uses sounds and the night as masks to conceal not so much their activities as to conceal their identities. In attempts to pursue disguise, they use burnt cork or black paint to blacken their faces; horrible masks to re-order, as we saw with Richardson’s Desborough, knowledge about the anatomy and physiology of the face. All of these carnivalesque preoccupations, in particular, of the gang blackening their faces, and the comical features of grotesque caps on their heads, adorned with cocks’ feathers and bells, allow us to think of ways in which the practice of charivari informed and, perhaps, was even reformulated by the local version of the North American practice of blackface minstrelsy. In particular, Mrs. O_’s explanation of the charivari offers a glimpse into the cross-cultural borrowings in early performances of blackface minstrelsy in Upper Canada. Not simply because the racial logic of minstrel shows align neatly with the performance practice of the charivari party: that is, the use of blackface and minstrel masks to form a mob, “to form *in* a regular body.” Nor is it simply because blackening their faces permitted them to display ostentatious vulgarity in defiance of British gentility. Both of these arguments typify the racial discourse around blackness in the nineteenth-century, demonstrating how, through literary and cultural performances, blackness was embodied as contaminant, fugitive, superstitious, and

theatrical. All of these performative elements show that visibility is hyperbolized for those whose relationship to the public sphere is already suspect. My sense is that visibility is over-emphasized in such a way as to obscure the actual humanity of black people. But, in addition to how the theatrical structure of the charivari revels in the emerging power of blackface minstrelsy and vice-versa, a careful listener hears, in the musical dynamics of the discordant instruments, black and Irish musical exchange.

The fiddle, generally racialized as a Celtic instrument and a key instrument in African American music, marks a notable cross-cultural exchange, especially when used by a group of men wearing blackface. This exchange is not surprising for a number of reasons. First, simply consider the circulation, interchanges, and borrowings that characterize the black Atlantic as one explanation. And as an example, consider the enslaved African along with the Irish male workers who built the Erie Canal system that eventually linked the Hudson River in upstate New York and the Great Lakes system during the early 1820s. These workers shared both working and living/leisure spaces. In coming to terms with the exchanges within these spaces, along with the understanding that the movements across the Great Lakes influenced exchange across space, it is possible to imagine the use of the fiddle as a mode of communication between these two groups. Second, many of minstrelsy's well known stars, Dan Emmett, Stephen Foster, Joel Walker Sweeney, Dan Bryant, were all Irish American men (Lott 95; Toll 177). "The Irish elements of blackface, including the fact that minstrel characters were surely influenced by Irish low-comedy types from the British stage," Lott writes, "no doubt made possible the Irish ascendancy with the minstrel show, affording immigrants a means

of cultural representation from behind the mask.” For this reason, Lott has suggested, “They probably account as well for the ease with which blackface songs and skits incorporated Irish brogues and other ethnic dialects, with absolutely no sense of contradiction; blackface, bizarrely enough, was actually used to represent *all* ethnicities on the antebellum stage prior to the development of ethnic types” (95, emphasis in original). If the work of theatrical blackness was its relational quality, then, not only can we say blackness blurred the ethnic lines between various kinds of settlers, with the implication that performed blackness reshaped racial sensibilities, but also we can note that blackness was the medium used to blur, and, to this end, acknowledge the inescapably gendered work of blackness in situations of cross-cultural contact. As an example, turn to the use of the fiddle in Mrs. O_’s narration. Recall it is accompanied by an extramusical feature, a hundred different young fellows’ voices, all roaring, “Thirty! thirty! thirty!” (Moodie 153).¹¹⁷ Imagining this unique sound in relation to the minstrel instrumentations, one may attribute the different tones from these roaring voices to a discordant tuba, baritone, trombone, trumpet, and the cornet – that is, a brass band playing at top volume. Add to these instruments a variety of other instruments such as tin

¹¹⁷ Mrs. O__ narrates a charivari in which the young lads in the village were determined to make the old Mr. P__ pay for taking his third wife. “During the evening all the idle chaps in the town collected round the house, headed by a mad young bookseller, who had offered himself for their captain, and, in the usual forms, demanded a sight of the bride, and liquor to drink her health.” According to Mrs. O__ they were well “received by Mr. P__, who sent a friend down to them to bid them welcome, and to inquire on what terms they would consent to let him off, and disperse.” The captain “demanded sixty pounds.” ““That’s too much, my fine fellows!” Mr. P__ cried from the open window. ‘Say twenty-five, and I will send you down a cheque upon the bank of Montreal for the money.’” ““Thirty! thirty! thirty! old boy!’ *roared* a hundred voices. ‘Your wife’s worth that. Down with the cash, and will give you three cheers, and three times three for the bride, and leave you to sleep in peace. If you hang back, we will raise such a ‘larum about your ears that you shan’t know that your wife’s your own for a month to come.’” Mr. P__ paid and the boys “gave him the ‘Hip, hip, hip, hurrah!’ in fine style, and marched off to finish the night and spend the money at the tavern” (Moodie 153, emphasis added).

kettles, gunshots, dog barks, horns, and drums, and the cracked fiddle¹¹⁸ gains minstrel echoes, not just through blackface minstrelsy but also African American banjo and fiddle music. This is to say, because this charivari coincides with the early stages of blackface minstrelsy in North America, this gained echo is haunted by the banjo, the instrument played by enslaved black people in the south, the instrument that would become, along with the fiddle and others, iconic minstrel instruments, thus reflecting a wider system of exchange, one with a long history of colonial contact.

The sounds of the fiddle and its evocation of black Atlantic transformative artistic and musical encounters is not the only site in *Roughing It* where black-white interracial connections unfold. Mrs. O_'s discussion of charivari practices in the neighbourhood leads into her discussing the charivari of Tom Smith, "the runaway nigger from the state" and his marriage to an "Irish girl." She says,

"There was another affair that happened just before you came to the place, that occasioned no small talk in the neighbourhood; and well it might, for it was a most disgraceful piece of business, and attended with very serious consequences. Some of the charivari party had to fly, or they might have ended their days in the penitentiary.

"There was a runaway nigger from the States came to the village, and set up a barber's poll [sic], and settled among us. I am no friend to the blacks; but really Tom Smith was such a quiet, good-natured fellow, and so civil and obliging, that he soon got a good business. He was clever, too, and cleaned old clothes until they looked good as new. Well, after a time he persuaded a white girl to marry him. She was not a bad-looking Irishwoman, and I can't think what bewitched the creature to take him.

"Her marriage with the black man created a great sensation in the town. All the young fellows were indignant at his presumption and her folly, and they determined to give them the charivari in fine style, and punish them both for the insult they had put upon the place.

¹¹⁸ This image of the "cracked fiddled" might be a way for us to register a class dimension to the charivari-minstrel show. This is to suggest that these performances are either put on by those who cannot afford an unharmed fiddle, or by those who have several fiddles and can find an old broken one for an event like this.

“Some of the young gentlemen in the town joined in the frolic. They went so far as to enter the house, drag the poor nigger from his bed, and in spite of his shrieks for mercy, they hurried him out into the cold air—for it was winter—and almost naked as he was, rode him upon a rail, and so ill-treated him that he died under their hands.

“They left the body, when they found what had happened, and fled. The ringleaders escaped across the lake to the other side; and those who remained could not be sufficiently identified to bring them to trial. The affair was hushed up; but it gave great uneasiness to several respectable families whose sons were in the scrape.”

“Good heavens! [Moodie cries] are such things permitted in a Christian country? But scenes like these must be rare occurrence?”

“They are more common than you imagine.” (146-147)

I quote Mrs. O_'s narration of Tom Smith's charivari in its entirety for a number of reasons: first, to compel readers to bear abundant witness to an example of the forms of rural violence that, one might say, in the making of the colonial nation, was used to chase out communities of black people from the rural landscape in Canada; second, to emphasize that the sketch, as an example of textualized orature, dramatizes self-examination of the nation-making project and, through this methodology, masks the cultural work of that examination; third, to magnify the racial intensity and textual density of the charivari-minstrel event; fourth, to highlight how the series of migrations in the sketch situates the village on the US-Canadian borders in the early days of the Fugitive slave laws; and thereby, fifth, to expose the periphractic space of the village in Upper Canada as a transnational, racialized, composite space.¹¹⁹

Unquestionably, the treatment of this interracial couple comments on the ways in which race operated in this village, and, by extension, in the formation of Upper Canada,

¹¹⁹ From the outset it is worth noting that, in Mrs. O_'s account, “town” and “village” are used interchangeably, if not conflated, to refer to a rural socio-spatial site and its repressive structures. The culture of neighbourhood, of rurality, offers a vision of rural life where Tom Smith's manliness can be read as a rural form of black masculinity formed in a contested space of otherness, marginalization, violence and fear of diversity.

thereby Mrs. O_'s narrative offers a significant portal into rethinking the practice of cross-racial heterosexual intimacy in the cultural history of early Canada. I say rethinking because, on the one hand, this sketch of a black man and a (white) Irish bride illustrates a different cross-racial history from that to which early Canadian authors and their critics have typically devoted attention, relations between white settlers (whether English or French) and Indigenous peoples. On the other hand, Moodie's textual representation of Mrs. O_'s oral accounts of the practice of charivari in this village offer a particular point where we can observe the intersection of forces between American, British, Irish, and runaway slaves, all coming from many directions and distances in the Atlantic world to gather on Indigenous lands. For all these reasons, to exclusively situate this textual representation of murder as an example of Spivak's "epistemic violence" or as a senseless act of violence, and, therefore, as a "disgraceful piece of business" (Moodie 147), rather than what it also is, a *sensible* social ceremony, one in which the rituals of whiteness follow a narrative of dominance and violence to conjure an expanding space of control, is to neglect the culturally inherited narratives that permitted the hostile treatment of Tom Smith to occur in the first place.

Identifying Tom Smith as "a runaway nigger" (in other words, as a fugitive slave), who now works as a barber, bears on my discussion of Sambo as a slave not simply a servant.¹²⁰ It is well-documented through fugitive escape notices and fugitive slave narratives that runaway slaves provided domestic services as servants before desertion.

¹²⁰ Note how "nigger" is synonymous with "slave." So when Sambo is referred to and refers to himself as "a nigger," there is little doubt as to how contemporary readers would have interpreted his reference. Also note that although Tom Smith has "settled among us," the villagers, he is still referred to as a "runaway nigger" and not a "Canadian Yankee" as other settlers from the States are designated in the "Borrowing" sketch (75).

For this reason, the hunt for runaway slaves was an attempt to rescue previously supposed “faithful” servants. Unlike Richardson’s Sambo, who, marked as a faithful labourer, remains in the ranks of a servant, Tom Smith, a fugitive slave, and thus an unfaithful servant, strives to rebuild his life after running from enslavement. He “set[s] up a barber’s poll,” becomes an entrepreneur with “a good business,” thereby owning the material rewards of his labour. Fugitive, in this context, signifies an upward social mobility, not to mention the enslaved person’s unfaithful bond to his/her master, which, in 1830 or 1831,¹²¹ announces that the fugitive slave can become his/her own master, and not the fugitive “property” of the slave owner.¹²² And yet, similar to the structure of faithfulness, fugitiveness, attached to blackness, yokes affect (rebellion) in this context with Tom Smith’s description as “obliging,” which adds politeness to rebellion in the intimate slave economy of the Americas. Here lies a frontier exchange between Upper Canada and the American South, of how slavery was not easily contained in the American South and, as an example, of how the polite runaway slave’s labour was part of the labour force used in the making of Upper Canada.

¹²¹ I use these years because, according to the story of Tom Smith that Mrs. O__ tells Moodie, the event happened just before her arrival in 1832. Not knowing the duration of “just” I have surmised a likely one year span.

¹²² I understand the United States Congress passed two fugitive slave laws: the Fugitive Slave Acts of 1793 and 1850. Both of these acts defined runaway slaves as outlaws in rebellion against their masters and required state officials to return runaways. I also understand that as slavery was abolished in the Northern states, the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law was ineffective in governing the return of runaway slaves. Northern state began to acknowledge the constitutional right of those recaptured and, also, to refuse to cooperate with slave catchers. As a concession to the states in the South, “amendments” to the 1793 law was passed. This led to the passing of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, a harsher act which forbade local and state officials from interfering with recapture, allowed slave catchers to pursue and apprehend fugitive slaves anywhere within the US, even free states in the North, and made it possible for slave owners to reclaim “their” fugitive “properties” that had escaped North, forcing many local people to reinforce slavery by reporting fugitive slaves in their midst, or risk fines for not doing so (Clarke *Odyssey*; Drew; Hill D.; Walker; Winks).

We only need to ask where Tom Smith mastered his trade as a barber to understand my point. His skills as a barber were likely acquired as a result of the services he proffered to his master before running away. I am gesturing to skills of hair care, of him grooming his master by trimming his beard, cutting his hair. These activities were part of the daily, intimate services an enslaved black man often provided. Herman Melville's novella, *Benito Cereno*, offers a scene where, Babo, Don Benito's servant, shaves his master.

Here the servant, napkin on arm, made a motion as if waiting his master's good pleasure. Don Benito signified his readiness, when, seating him in the Malacca arm chair, and for the guest's convenience drawing opposite it one of the settees, the servant commenced operations by throwing back his master's collar and loosening his cravat.

There is something in the Negro which, in a peculiar way, fits him for avocations about one's person. Most Negroes are natural valets and hair-dressers; taking to the comb and brush congenially as to the castanets, and flourishing them apparently with almost equal satisfaction. There is, too, a smooth tact about them in this employment, with a marvelous, noiseless, gliding briskness, not ungraceful in its way, singularly pleasing to behold, and still more so to be the manipulated subject of. And above all is the great gift of good humour. Not the mere grin or laugh is here meant. Those were unsuitable. But a certain easy cheerfulness, harmonious in every glance and gesture; as though God had set the whole Negro to some pleasant tune. (74)

Babo, of course recalls Sambo and his affective attachment to his master. Babo's cheerfulness in his labour also recalls my discussion of Traill's cheerful settler who, possessing this affective disposition, becomes, following Traill's instructions for settlement's social and work ethics, the ideal settler for the colony. Based on this argument, Tom Smith, as the obliging good entrepreneur, can be read as a cheerful settler. Moreover, recall the intimate services that Richardson's Sambo provides Master Gerald. Recall how Sambo retired into his cabin and "busily occupied [himself] in drying his

master's wet dress, before a large blazing wood fire" (271) even though these very clothes were wet because his master had attempted to get them killed on the lake. Not only this, but also remember Sambo's refined appearance on the lake, of how the crew missed the difference between him and his master Gerald because they were attired in the same clothes. Hence, when Mrs. O_ comments on Tom Smith's appearance, he "cleaned old clothes until they looked good as new," characterizes him as a "quiet," "clever," "civil and obliging" good fellow, not only is she a voyeur of Tom Smith's body but also she is noting the refinements, the politeness that, in his former state of bonded slavery, marked the status of Tom Smith's master. Of course we cannot overlook the conscious work that Tom Smith puts into fashioning his image: he cleans old clothes *until* they look good as new. The "until" suggests a consciousness which suggests that Tom Smith's civility and polite dispositions are *learned strategies* in self-presentation. However, my point about Tom Smith is that, relocated and settled in Upper Canada, a place where, eventually, in 1850, Sir John Colborne, the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada emphasized, "no distinction [is] made on account of color," where the fugitive slave is supposedly entitled "to every privilege" "enjoyed by any of her majesty's subjects" (Brown qtd. in Drew 245), these strategies seem valuable assets for fashioning his masculine identity.¹²³ These strategies contribute to acculturate him into the British standards of civility in the village: for example, he is able to interact comfortably with the gentlemen in the village, maybe even entertain them, especially since, we learn from Melville's text, an ability to create an atmosphere where customers of all rank feel at home contributes to a barber's business

¹²³ As defence mechanisms, Tom's civil and obliging dispositions are a necessary minstrel mask which helps him gain acceptance in the village.

success.

I refer to Tom Smith's civility and obliging disposition as strategic not simply because Mrs. O_ describes him as a "runaway nigger," and I contextualize her words by reframing fugitive flight as a practice of black civility. I also do so because, as a barber, Tom Smith is a transient figure in the rural space of Upper Canada. Unlike a farmer, his labour implies he has the chance to pick up and go as he pleases. From this the fugitive barber is a kind of maroon figure. I summon the maroon figure for a few reasons. Etymologically, maroon, from the French *marron*, means wild or fugitive. The maroons were, initially, runaway slaves who exiled themselves in the mountains in many Caribbean regions to form new identities and communities. This resistance, of them infiltrating new spaces and searching for a new safe home raises at least two concerns: how they settled on Indigenous lands and displaced Indigenous peoples (for example the Arawaks in Jamaica) from those lands, on the one hand, and the degrees of visibility and invisibility that the maroons practiced, on the other. Further, similar to the Fugitive Slave Laws that tracked runaway niggers, there were campaigns to hunt maroons. In fact, for the maroons in Jamaica, trained dogs from Cuba were brought in to hunt them. Many were, subsequently, forcibly relocated into Nova Scotia and, ultimately, to Sierra Leone (Bilby; Courlander; Hill L.). Having identified some ways in which these different groups relate, the Underground Railroad stands in obvious relation to the maroon archive of flight, especially since Tom Smith is characterized as a "runaway nigger from the States." However, rather than situate Tom Smith only in the archive of the emerging Canadian nation, my interests in racial relationalities, which explains why I identify him as a

maroon figure, compels me to situate him within the movement of black people in the Americas and the archive of the black Atlantic, in both of which the Underground Railroad is a part. This frame relates the jungles of the West Indies and the bushes of Upper Canada (where both fugitive slaves settled). In so doing, we can allusively link Tom Smith's strategies to the tactics of Caribbean maroonage and, through this reconfiguration of the fugitive slave in the rural space in Upper Canada, connect the economies of his labour to the Caribbean plantation economies, and, as a result, foreground the complex relations that black flight into rural spaces had on that space historically. One difference I see between maroonage and Tom Smith's flight is that he hides out in a white village, whereas the Maroons fled precisely into rural spaces where whites would not venture. Although Tom Smith's flight is more like the Underground Railroad narrative than the Maroon one, I invoke this comparison to the Maroons as a way to imply "the runaway slave's flight to 'freedom' has no frontiers, unless they are those of the meta-archipelago" (Benitez-Rojo 254).

When in an earlier discussion of Tom Smith I brought into play Sambo, I did so as a way to highlight that both are dependent on white patronage: Sambo as Gerald's faithful servant and Tom Smith as the village's barber. Moreover, I invoke Sambo to foreground that both names are variants of a type of black masculine depiction. It is to say that the names stand in, to quote Frederic Jameson on typicality, "for something larger and more meaningful than themselves, than their own isolated individual destinies" (191). I register that in *Roughing It*, the name Tom Smith bears its own historical weight. On the one hand, just as "John Smith" is used as the name for the white every man, Tom Smith

becomes its black equivalent, the black every man. In some ways, Tom Smith's story is a cautionary tale for "runaway niggers" and other black settlers to know their place, literally and figuratively. If Moodie's overall text is a warning to prospective British settlers to avoid over-idealistic dreams of immigrating to Canada, maybe this part of the text is a warning to black settlers. On the other hand, the Tom figure resonates with the sentimental title character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published serially from 1851 to 1852. We have the theatrical currencies of Uncle Tom on the minstrel stage; then there are the literary influences such as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, and the various cinematic spinoffs. Tracking the influence Stowe's text had on the cultural formation of Canada West in his essay, "Uncle Tom and the Minstrels in Canada West," Stephen Johnson asks, "How did the residents of Canada West 'see' the collectively defined group known as 'fugitive slaves'?" Johnson acknowledges that there were various means by which "members of an audience in Canada West at this time [during the 1850s] read the 'blackness' of their new neighbours," and, as such, makes clear that he "outlines just two broad traditions: The Tom Show,¹²⁴ and the Minstrel Show" (56). Robin Winks adds to Johnson's argument when he writes, "[t]he hold *Uncle Tom's Cabin* took on the public imagination was secure and long-lasting – certainly longer in British North America than in the United States" (187). This longevity and popularity was not only because Josiah Hansen, author of *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada, As Narrated by Himself* (1849) lived in Canada West, and was believed to bear a "striking parallel" to Stowe's Uncle Tom

¹²⁴ The Tom Show, stage plays and musicals, gets its name from Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

(Winks 185-188), but also, as Johnson argues, the “Tom Shows” functioned as “great moral allegory” (57). Moreover, Uncle Tom’s character has been repeatedly staged as a “gentle, childlike, self-sacrificing, essentially *aesthetic* slave” (Lott 33), and Uncle Tom (or Tom Smith as every black man), to quote James Baldwin, is “robbed of his humanity and divested of his sex” (18). These moral allegories rehearse some of the racial contingencies upon which the inception and social contract of black people in early Canada was based.

Aside from the implications that Tom Smith’s name invokes, there is more beyond the stereotypes lodged in the name if we consider the name’s embodiment, the life that goes with that name. We know Tom Smith is a barber so, unlike Stowe’s Tom who is referred to by his kinship tie, Uncle, we might refer to him by his labour tie to the village and call him Barber Tom. As a service occupation, barbering is an intimate business. The barbershop is a masculine public space every male in the village eventually passes through. Add to the intimate operations of the work the fact that the barber is a black man, in a predominantly white village, and the space of this barber shop changes from simply being a black male space, as these spaces are presently described (see Walcott 51). Read as a space for and of cultural production with its own race relations, Tom Smith’s barber shop, similar to Stowe’s novel, suggests that the space is in and of itself a cross-racial space, a form of a stage, where many, if not all who enter, know their roles. Recasting the space of the barber shop as a cross-racial stage foregrounds the work of the fugitive barber in “the black-face lore cycle,” that Lhamon describes as a set of transgressive verbal and physical gestures projected onto black men and women in the

minstrel theatre, the good humour of Melville's Babo thus situating Tom Smith on the minstrel stage. Certainly, if the barber is an artist who transforms the appearance of his clientele, and if we know that the minstrel stage allowed for racial makeovers, then, the barbershop is a kind of minstrel stage. On this stage, Mrs. O_'s description of Tom Smith as "a quiet, good-natured fellow, and so civil and obliging, that he soon got a good business" indicates the racial stereotypes of the Tom figure and highlights the white prejudices that Tom Smith had to abide by and accommodate in order for his business to succeed.

Already a racialized space, because a black man manages its operation, Tom Smith's barber's shop becomes a cross-racial space and, as such, a transgressive social space.¹²⁵ Transgressive in the sense that the rituals in Barber Tom's services mark a racialized labour in interracial fraternal intimacy: imagine one of the village's gentleman sitting in Barber Tom's barber chair; the black hand of Barber Tom holding a razor to the neck of this gentleman's leaned-back head; with a firm but patient touch, watch Barber Tom, standing over and leaning forward to the head, glide his blade up and down the lank neck of a villager to remove hair, up the chin to clean cheeks, to shave the face;¹²⁶ also imagine him bending over to trim another gentlemen's beard, a farmer's sideburn,

¹²⁵ Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s notation that Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has become the "ur-text in the fictional depictions of Americans across the color lines" (xxvii) gains support from the fact that Tom works in the cross-racial space of the barber shop.

¹²⁶ In *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker hints at the temptation of violence through shaving when Celie imagines the following: "I watch him so close, I begin to feel a lightening in the head. Fore I know anything I'm standing hind his chair with his razor open" (122). Steven Spielberg picks up on this allusion in his film adaptation of the novel in 'The Shaving Scene,' where Celie rubs the razor, and prepares to shave the neck of her husband, Albert, the man who abuses her. Cinematically, Spielberg emphasizes Celie's temptation to slice Albert's throat by connecting this scene to two other scenes: one in Africa where Adam, Celie's nephew, is getting his face scarred by an African priest and by Shug Avery, Albert's mistress and Celie's friend/lover, upstairs in the same house as Celie, painting her fingernails deep red.

mustache; moreover, imagine him standing behind or in front of one of the young lads to cut hair off his head. The fact that he “got a good business” suggests his shop was popular, that the gentlemen in the village used his services. It also suggests that he did not cut or scratch any of his clients. In other words, there were no shaving “accidents.” In fact, one might even say, cutting hair allowed the runaway Barber access into the ways of the village through the conversations that occurred through the barber-client relationship. The psychotherapist Karl Menniger bases his analysis of contractual relationships on the barber-client relationship. To Menniger, the barber and client enter a professional contract. Here the client approaches the barber, cooperates in the process (i.e., sits in the barber’s chair, turns and tilts the head as instructed by the barber) and pays. The barber gives a good and safe haircut, as desired by the client, as far as possible (1958, 15-42). In light of these considerations, it is possible to read the barber as a healer, not only because Menniger’s contract situates the barber as an arm-chair therapist, but also because, in the Middle Ages, the terms barber and surgeon were synonymous. As Paul B. Newman points out in *Daily Life in the Middle Ages*, both the barber and the surgeon worked to bleed and/or cup patients, to cure or prevent illness and disease (255).¹²⁷ My point is that the barbershop has a history of functioning as a medical space, where the barber worked to cure ailments and safeguard the wellbeing of his clients, foregrounding the barber’s

¹²⁷ Bleeding a patient means just that, draining off some of their blood. “This practice,” according to Newman, “was based on the belief that the various signs of the zodiac governed specific parts of the human body and that the health of a patient was directly affected by the constellations.” Newman points out that “[o]ccasionally, leeches were used to suck out the blood but the most common technique was to simply have a surgeon, barber, or barber-surgeon slit the vein open with a small knife.” Continuing he writes, “[c]upping was an alternative technique for bleeding. In cupping, the surgeon did not apply leeches or cut open a vein. Instead, the surgeon, barber, or barber-surgeon made a number of small, shallow slashes in the patient’s flesh at the appropriate location and then pressed a little glass or metal cup over the scarified flesh” (255).

important cultural role in the village.

The point to the physical intimacy, the homoerotic overtones in the speculative sequence of activities I conjure up in Barber Tom's shop emphasize that there are intimate transgressions of racial and class divisions permitted in the village. This permitted intimacy between men is mediated through producer-consumer logic, where the black labourer remains dependent on white patronage. More to the point, economic success does not guarantee racial success. Although Tom Smith most likely knew members of the charivari party intimately, and had, I imagine, at various points had *the* power advantage over them, particularly with his razor at their throats,¹²⁸ nonetheless, the young lads and gentlemen in the village "killed him" (8), as Margaret Atwood has described the scene in her poem "Charivari." And this because they consider interracial marriage an indignation. It deviates from the strict moral code of racial conduct imposed on that space, and as a result, does not fit the forms of kinship rendered intelligible and liveable in the village. Through this act we learn Tom Smith does not figure as a producer of that code, evidenced by the fact that he is given the charivari in fine style for marrying an Irish/white woman.

There is more to Moodie's outburst, "Good heavens! are such things permitted in a Christian country?," than simply her shock to learn Tom Smith's murder was committed by "some of the young gentlemen in the town" and by "sons" of "several respectable families" in the neighbourhood. Moodie's question, at least, weighs in on two different

¹²⁸ A scene in Herman's *Benito Cereno* informs this reading, when the observing Captain Delano watches Babo shave Don Benito. The narrative remarks that he was unable to "resist the vagary that in the black he saw a headsman, and in the white a man at the block. But this was one of those antic conceits, appearing and vanishing in a breath, from which, perhaps, the best-regulated mind is not always free" (74).

fronts: its implication for the members of the charivari party and Tom Smith, on the one hand, and, on the other, the moral outrage that Mrs. O_ and Moodie demonstrate. On both fronts, the sketch decries the degeneracy perceived as threatening British manhood and, by extension, Upper Canada. In this capacity, the social standing of the sons of the elite (doctors, colonial administrators such as lawyers, judges, governors and military officers, etc) offers a way to note the capitalist system of the charivari, which, following Karl Marx, suggests the ruling class uses the law and criminal justice system to advance its economic and social purposes. Let us consider, as example, that “some of the charivari party had to fly, or they might have ended their days in the penitentiary,” and pause on the engendered flight in and out of the bush and their ironies. Though, undeniably, the underlying condition for escape differs, as metaphors of movement, the flight of the runaway Tom Smith and the flight of members of the charivari party share an impetus to escape: the former from sociocultural and legal bondage (slavery) the latter from legal justice (the penitentiary), situating their escapes as forms of hideaway. However, while Tom Smith ran from the United States to seek asylum in the bush in Upper Canada, the United States becomes the kind of place where members of the charivari party leave the bush to seek haven. Notably, neither of these two geographical places/spaces offers sanctuary, a space outside the law, for Tom Smith. Granted, he is not repatriated to his former owner, or physically re-enslaved in the bush, even when white settlers, Mrs. O_ and Mrs. D, respectively admit to be “no friend of the blacks” and refer to them as “children of the devil!” (154, 157).

As a way to mark the mobility privilege of whiteness, note the figure of the runaway slave recedes to make way for a different discourse of fugitive flight. To note this, turn to the mode and direction of both flights: Tom Smith “runs” *from* and members of the charivari party “fly” *to* the States. Based on one understanding in the *OED*, “to fly” means to “run away.” The concept of the runaway links equally the fugitive flight and Tom Smith’s, invoking the history of the United States, the Underground Railway system, and historical strategies of escape for enslaved blacks, and, in these invocations, implying a degree of invisibility. I argue, however, that because “numerous extradition requests” were made of the Upper Canadian government (Silverman 22), slave catchers knew too well the passage of the runaways, undermining the linguistic associations in both flights. This is to say the escape of the runaway slave was not typically a “fly-by-night” journey, and, by extension, the enslaved did not “depart hastily.” For example, as runaway slave Henry Atkinson points out in Benjamin Drew’s biographical collection of American fugitive slave accounts in Canada West, “[d]uring all these nine years, my mind was continually running upon this, -- how am I to get out of this bondage?” Continuing, he says, “I studied upon it long. I have lain awake more than half the night, many a time, studying on that one thing—should I ever be able to get clear” (qtd. in Drew 79). Moreover, as Jason H. Silverman notes, “the itinerant blacks had limited funds with which to travel, and thus were encouraged to terminate their journey as soon as safety was ensured” (22). And surely, in any case, unless a fly buzzes, who hears it fly? How vigilantly do we observe its flight?¹²⁹ These politics of visibility and invisibility show

¹²⁹ Perhaps it is worth noting that phobia which means “fear, horror, aversion,” comes from the Greek

why Mrs. O_'s explanation that, of the charivari party, "those who remained could not be sufficiently identified to bring them to trial" is a suspicious claim, especially if we note her repeated characterization of the charivari party: they were "made up of *all the* idle loafers," "*all the* idle chaps in the town," "*all the* young fellows," "lads in the village," (152, 153, 154, 153). The apparent inability to sufficiently identify all the idle young fellows in the village or "such ruffians," as Moodie identifies them (153, emphasis added), is not the result of an absolute, or objective, anonymity or the size of the village.¹³⁰ Nor is it a sociological fact; rather, this abandonment before the law, which confers whiteness, in Ross Chambers' terms, as "indivisible and singular" (145)¹³¹ not only endorses and reinforces the social attitude of the village (where at play is a subtle, ironic invocation of racist stereotyping: we could not identify these young white lads because, in blackface, they all looked alike), but also comes from the disinclination of the population to identify them, echoing Canadian literary and cultural critics' inclinations to avoid the difficult presence of racism in early Canada and in Moodie's text, specifically.

We also hear, in Moodie's question, the British civility that Colman argues informs white civility's racial project. That is to say, and here to re-quote a passage from

phobos "fear," which originates in "flight."

¹³⁰ When Moodie first visited, in 1832, "the then *town* of Hamilton," she reports, "it was a dull insignificant village, which might, I suppose, contain a population of 1200 or 1500" (319). I quote this passage to suggest that the bush in the Rice Lake district would have even less population, suggesting that it was very possible to have brought these sons from respectable families to trial if the courts had not been "idle" in their pursuits.

¹³¹ In "The Unexamined," Ross Chambers pointedly calls attention to the symbiotic process of whiteness. He asserts that whiteness has come to occupy a paradigmatic status, which is to say whiteness presumes an "in(di)visibility" that "ensures that whiteness is thought of, contrary to the evidence, as a uniform quality one either has or does not have, whereas the pluralization of the other produces non-whiteness as a multiplicity of different ways of being (of being non-white)." He points out that "whereas the other is *pluralized* in order to produce whiteness as indivisible and singular, the groups that compose this pluralized other are *homogenized* in this new relation, through what is called stereotyping" (145).

Coleman's *White Civility*, Moodie's outburst makes recourse to "the *temporal notion* of civilization as progress that was central to the idea of modernity and the colonial mission with the *moral-ethical concept* of a (relatively) peaceful order," and is desirous of "the orderly regulation between individual liberty and collective equality that has been fundamental to the politics of the modern nation state" (10). In other words, her outburst refers to the Christian moral order she assumes for the village and, in this moral code, we can comment on the principles that govern the religious and social life of the village: mainly, the political and religious freedom in the village, freedom that goes against the Christian duties that the British Empire instructs its colonies and plantations to follow. This suggestion is evident in the 1831 Royal Instructions to Sir Thomas John Cochrane, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Island of Newfoundland, instructions that were sent to "the governors of all the several colonies and plantations in America." The statute stipulated the following:

that they [governors] cause all laws already made against blasphemy, profaneness, adultery, fornication, polygamy, incest, profanation of the Lord's day, swearing, and drunkenness in the respective governments to be rigorously executed, and we, thinking it highly just that all persons who shall offend in any of the particulars aforesaid should be prosecuted and punished for their said offences, it is therefore our will and pleasure that you do take care of the due punishment of the aforementioned vices, and that you earnestly recommend that effectual laws be passed for the restraint and punishment of all such of the aforementioned vices against which no law as yet provided. And also you are to use your endeavours to render the laws in being more effectual, by providing that the punishment of the aforementioned vices, by presentment upon oath to be made to the temporal courts by the churchwardens of the several parishes, at proper times of the year to be appointed for the purpose; and for the further discouragement of vice and encouragement of virtue and good living; you are not to admit any persons to public trusts or employments in the islands under your government whose ill fame and conversation may occasion scandal. (Martin 95)

At least three observations deserve our attention: first, to invoke Marx's argument in "Population, Crime and Pauperism," "law itself cannot only punish the crime, but also create it" (*Poverty* 493). Second, the statute lobbies on moral grounds and, third, the moral order in the colony, believed to be indispensable to social order, is rooted in Christianity. With this in mind, when we link Moodie's outburst to the line in Atwood's poem, "Charivari," where she writes, "they killed him," we can hear Atwood remarking on the boys' disregard to the Christian moral code in the prohibition in the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." In his 1821 *Sketches of Upper Canada, Domestic, Local and Characteristic*, John Howison interprets the colony's "sudden emancipation from former restraint" by means of religion (146). He observes a departure from religion in the limited spaces for "conduct[ing] public worship" "regularly throughout the year" (142). In his assessment, this "deficiency" breeds a "moral degradation" in Upper Canada. He explains,

It is evident that this deficiency in the number of religious establishments must have a fatal effect upon the principles of the people, the majority of whom are truly in a state of most pitiable moral degradation, grossly conceiving, that they never do any thing profligate, vicious or dishonest, except when they infringe the laws of their country. (142)

According to Howison, when members of the Upper Canadian society go to church, when they "abstain from labour," they do so

more from habit than from principle. They spend the day in idleness and amusement, either strolling among the woods, and shooting game or wandering between their neighbours' houses. It may be said, that all this is not very criminal, and I will acquiesce partly in the remark; but, when we consider what a beneficent influence a due observance of the Sabbath has upon the minds and dispositions of the lower classes in particular, it will appear a matter of regret, that the fourth commandment [Keep the Sabbath Holy] should ever be neglected. [. . .]

“The Canadian peasantry,” he concludes, “feeling no religious restraint, are profligate, unamiable, and dishonest” (143). While Howison associates an absence of religious restraint with the Canadian peasantry, the respectability of members in Tom Smith’s charivari party, composed of gentlemen as well as sons from respected families, challenges this British sense of civility that identifies moral order and self-mastery, in addition to the exercise of restraint with the very highest grade of the Pan-‘British’ diasporic settlers. In the colonial-national space of the Americas, the charivari expresses different kinds of self-mastery: on the one hand, it allows the village to control and move beyond the control of its own desires, while, on the other, it does not oblige the village to abide by the King’s instructions, even though through its mandates, the village is encouraged to determine its internal harmony. This use of self-mastery, framed as a communal self-mastery, is guided by the fact that Moodie describes the charivari as Mrs O_’s “favourite subject” (153) and grounds it in Mrs. O_’s notation: “I assure you, Mrs. M_, that the charivari often deters old people from making disgraceful marriages, so that it is not wholly without its uses” (156). Surely, then, the degeneracy perceived as threatening British manhood reads as a manifestation of the muscular Christian figure, which, Coleman suggests, offered not only “a site where significant social ideologies were negotiated and contested,” but also “a very useful way to locate and trace the historical renewal of White, British, male norms in Canadian public life” (127).

In outlining this terrain of politics in Upper Canada, where legal norms punish social undesirables, where a central concern is the *moral legibility* of the colony, the account that the charivari party were “determined to give [Tom Smith and the (white)

Irish woman] the charivari in fine style, and punish them both for the insult they had put upon the place” marks insult, a constructed social event, as a state-supported injunction against interracial intimacy in marriage. If insult, according to Didier Eribon, “is a linguistic act—or a series of repeated linguistic acts—by which a particular place in the world is assigned to the person at whom the acts are directed” (17), then, positioning the village as subject to insult suggests that an interracial affliction in Tom Smith and the (white) Irish woman’s “I do-s” damage and humiliate the bush’s reputation as white. This exposure stigmatizes the village, highlighting what the village is to the extent that the interracial marriage makes the village become what it is. However, the public appearance is perceived as a public ridicule that must be publicly punished. And yet, responding to the perceived harm to the damaged reputation of the place further results in revealing the injuries that Tom Smith is exposed to in the village. Ironically then, not only does the force of this insult “make black bodies more accessible to white bodies” (West 122), but also through the touch of actual body contact, through the touch of public physical violence, the insult needing to be hushed up marks the village’s transformation into witnesses and participants as a result of their hushing up, and this mark, as part of a series of frontier exchanges, provides evidence of interracial violent intimacies in Upper Canada. As a result, the valuation of interracial intimacy as a public insult bears the force of interpellation, calling into being the perceived problem, the pathology of interracial marriage.

The visual power of the almost naked black man calls something else into being. Dragged from his bedroom and beaten outside his house in the cold midnight winter, Tom

Smith's murder has led critics to identify this scene in "The Charivari" sketch as a lynching scene.¹³² In following Mrs. O_'s description, of how "the affair [of Tom Smith's murder] was hushed up," critics like George Elliot Clarke have argued that "In Moodie's citation of this frontier '*Histoire d'O*', one sees, in embryonic form, the usual Canadian response to racial violence against so-called visible minorities, whether in Canada or in Somalia: pretend that we are not implicated" ("Raising" 73). Clarke names this "once-hushed-up torture-murder" a form of "Canadian lynching" ("Raising" 73f). While I agree with Clarke that this practice of hushing up pretends not to be deeply implicated in colonial structures that oppress black people, his naming is a misnomer, and I suggest this by following the *audiovisual* features in this sketch, by examining the expressive potentials in the elicited "shrieks" that Mrs. O_ tells us Tom Smith emits when the charivari party "went as far as to enter the house, drag the poor nigger from his bed." My suggestion is not a willful failure to address the racial violence in the crowd's behaviour. Rather, by readily dubbing this scene Canadian lynching, saying that it happened here too and leaving it there, we avoid examining the cultural work of the shriek in the village, in Upper Canada, and the shriek's association with a larger material and historical trauma in the black Atlantic.

¹³² The extent to which critics have commented on this charivari scene is to note that Moodie's text records a lynching scene. On the website *Canada in the Making*, the section on Post-Loyalist Settlement II (1830-1867), it says "Susanna Moodie recorded in *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) the lynching of a black man in Upper Canada." Aside from George Elliot Clarke, who makes a few comments in "Raising Raced and Erased Executions in African-Canadian Literature: Or, Unearthing Angelique," a chunk of it already quoted above, about the violence to Tom Smith, the prevailing tendency, understandably, has been to focus on Moodie, the settler and writer, as an abolitionist. This last point in particular works to reify her status as an abolitionist and her texts as saying more than they do. For this reason, here again we see how critics continually *avoid* talking about this section of Moodie's text, in other words they avoid engaging blackness in early Canadian literature, even when there is a dramatic presence.

To begin examining the contents of what might be embedded within Tom Smith's "shrieks for mercy," I ask, what historical traumas, for example, resound in his shrieks? If sound travels, which other communities of listeners, aside from the elicitors and the Irish bride who disappear as observer-witnesses to these sounds, who else heard (in the case of contemporary cultural critics, who hears) him?¹³³ If, based on textual evidence, we are to understand no one in the village heard the alarm in and/or of his sounds because the spaces in which the shrieks were emitted were intimate – emitted *in* the private bedroom *in* a house – are we to infer the theatre of the charivari, with its discordant music, drowned out his calls for help? These questions point out that the shrieks intersect within a complex structure of noise. First, it aligns the violence *in* the shrieks with the violence *of* the charivari, and this alignment of sounds highlights the sound of violence in sound-performance. In the context of the charivari-minstrel show, we note the sound-performance of white men in blackface covering over and displacing the sound of a black man, thus underlining the violence of blackface minstrelsy for black people. Second, if we read Tom Smith's direct experience with slavery as a threat to the village, and hear the shrieks that precede his death as the shrieks that slaves emitted under the lash, capturing the emotional thread that connected his life in the village, then his shrieks *must* be heard as an emphasis of a "radically unfinished" "mark[,] indelibly as the product of slavery" in Upper Canada (Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic* 105). Third, if, in relation to the context of the above argument, we consider his life as a runaway slave who, in Upper Canada, marries

¹³³ Walter Benjamin uses the phrase "the community of listeners" in "The Storyteller" as a way to, first, emphasize the storyteller exists in a dialectical relationship with the listeners, and, second, to mark the dialectics in the work of a storyteller: they draw on experience to tell a story and their narration turns that experience into those of the listeners.

interracially, and who, at the beginning of his married life, has a crowd of white men forcibly *enter* his house to end his life, then, these shrieks, surely, mark his powerlessness but importantly, and here to quote Cathy Caruth on trauma, the rhythms of his shrieks “provide the very link between cultures” (11), according us the ability to track a series of material, social, physiological, and political manifestations of racial trauma in his life situations in the village. As a result of all of this, the shrieks cannot be heard as an isolated event, for they evidence a core anxiety in the rural space of early Canada (anxieties over race, slavery, and collective violence). They dramatize Tom Smith’s bodily and vocal responses to these anxieties as racial trauma.

From the *Middle English Dictionary*, I understand a shriek as a wordless but arresting vocalization of emotion, which could include intense pain and/or terror. Under the terms and conditions of Tom Smith’s shrieks, they can be read as signifying speech performances in rituals of what Gilroy terms “black metacommunication in a cultural repertoire increasingly dominated by music, dance, and performance” (200). In fact, the shrieks of the “so ill-treated” Tom Smith, similar to the quiet of his good-natured disposition, produce a scene of wordlessness, of lamentation, with the implication that to unpack the narrative and political meanings of black expressions in this scene of subjection, and, by extension, in early Canada, requires alternate reading practices, one attuned to its terms and conditions. In lieu of Tom Smith’s own account, the textualized metaphor of this expressive mode offers an audio-vocal/visual portal where we hear and witness the shrieks as a metavoice that remakes the village as well as reopens the racial atrocities committed by the villagers. The shrieks are sonic-prints *on* the village. They

express something other than the physical bodily pain that Elaine Scarry rightly suggests “does not simply resist language but actively *destroys* it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned” (4, emphasis added).¹³⁴ Understanding the shrieks as actively destroying the resources of language might be, to quote Gilroy, “the condition of being in pain.” As Gilroy claims,

[b]eing in pain encompasses both a radical, personalized enregistration of time and a diachronic understanding of language whose most enduring effects are the games black people in all western cultures play with names and naming. It is what Wright struggled to describe when, in his lecture on Negro literature in the United States, he spoke of a “tradition of bitterness . . . so complex, [which] was to assume such a tight, organic form that most white people would think upon examining it, that most Negroes had embedded in their flesh and bones some peculiar propensity towards lamenting and complaining.” (*Black Atlantic* 203, punctuation in original).

With this in mind, my phrase *something other than* is not at all to dismiss Tom Smith’s bodily pain and resistance; how can I, when, first, “they drag the poor nigger from his bed,” underlining his resistance to move to the beats of the charivari party? Because members of the charivari party “hurried him out into the cold” after dragging him, presumably, from his bedroom since he is described as “almost naked,” or, to put this differently, because he is dragged into the larger, louder public, the word “drag” implies a delay to the collective desires of the charivari party. This delay suggests that Tom Smith’s bodily collision with those of the charivari members slows down their time of pleasure, which, in turn, might suggest his resistance in itself formed part of their pleasure, making

¹³⁴ I hear an echo of Scarry’s argument in Fanon’s assertion that “the Negro has one function: that of symbolizing the lower emotions, the baser inclinations, the dark side of the soul. In the collective unconscious of *homo occidentalis*, the Negro—or, if one prefers, the color black—symbolizes evil, sin, wretchedness, death, war, famine. All birds of prey are black” (*BSWM* 190-91).

white masochistic pleasures part of the concern for any political project on the subject of black resistances in the Americas. Also, the bodily encounter slows down the time to his eventual death. As his opposition slows down time, and in that pause (itself a place of creation) allowing us a space to think about what is being dragged, we become aware that the shrieks are part of a tradition of already-existing practices (like blackface minstrelsy), that actually time travels.¹³⁵ The pause also allows us to consider several public spaces, the periphractic space of the village, the colonial-legal space of British law in the imperial diaspora, and the historical-cultural space of French law inherited through New France. The first space, the periphractic village, is like an enclave somewhere between both private space (Tom Smith's bedroom) and public space (colonial law, symbolized by the threat of the "penitentiary"). In other words, his opposition exerts a drag on us; and his labour of dying, after having resisted, delaying his ultimate fate, employs us to animate the haunted periphractic spaces in Upper Canada as a way to attend to the risks that a black man who opted to love outside the logic of this village met.

I use the word love because Mrs. O_ tells us that he "persuaded a white girl to marry him." I read in her language of persuasion an act of courtship. With this in mind, and with the language of affair in the phrase, "the hushed-up affair," I am compelled to also consider this affair as the hushing up of a love lost affair. This line of thinking allows us to consider the unnamed bride and her trauma for witnessing the loss of a loved one in

¹³⁵ Given that Tom Smith is "almost naked" in this encounter, one cannot overlook the political performance of drag, with his skin surfacing as dress with intense codes of prejudice, shame, hate, denigration, attached to it, stirring up the audience's racial desires, and creating an uneasiness which Atwood's evaluative poem captures. The fifth to eighth stanzas are closed off in brackets as if to perform the restraint that the crowd lacked. This performance is also about creating uneasiness: "(Note: Never pretend this isn't / part of the soil too, teadrinkers, and inadvertent / victims and murderers, when we come this way / again in other forms, take care [. . .])" (13-16).

such a violent affair. As Gilroy points out about “love and loss stories” that “openly” “transmit details of the ordeal of slavery,” we *must* hear Tom Smith’s shrieks as a “narrative of love and loss,” and, in so doing, hear “other forms of yearning and mourning associated with histories of dispersal and exile and the remembrance of unspeakable terror” (201). To this end, the shrieks iterate his immovability, and evidenced by the resistance with which he moves, critique and haunt the whiteness of the village, thus supplying us the materials to build a politically discordant, contestable future for early Canadian literature. And, second, in lieu of and/or in addition to beating down a door, as is customary in a charivari, the party beat down Tom Smith. They “rode him upon a rail, and so ill-treated him that he died under their hands.” Riding and ill-treating him reasserts the disciplinary sanctions that motivated many fugitive slaves like him to escape. John Holmes, a fugitive slave in Canada West, draws attention to these old disciplinary prerogatives: “The young master – this one I ran from – used to say, ‘a man must be whipped, else he wouldn’t know he was a *nigger*’” (qtd. in Drew 165, emphasis original). Similar to the whipping, punishing Tom Smith for “the insult” he “had put upon the place” is less a reminder that he is a black man. It seems to me that a key audience for this reminder is white femininity: the white men assert that no other women had better follow the Irish woman’s taboo behaviour, which, in turn, reminds us of white masculine power and cultural privilege, and the assumptions (among whites there) that the rural is a periphractic space.

Alongside referring to “the hushed-up affair” as “Canadian lynching,” I examine what is embedded in the hush. To do so I recall Mrs. O_’s account of how the village

dealt with Tom Smith's death: "The affair was hushed up; but, it gave great uneasiness to several respectable families whose sons were in the scrape." While, from this statement, it is ambiguous to say for sure who desired the affair to be hushed up, whether it was the respected families or members of the village, one way of accounting for a "who" is to note the significance of the *but* in Mrs. O_'s report. As a coordinating conjunction that presents a contrast, Mrs. O_'s *but* positions the hushing up as a communal act in refashioning its public appearance and reputation, pinpointing the rhetoric of hushing up as a performative and social (hence collective) project of civility, one of the village's most effective ways to manipulate its newcomers to concede to its practice of dissimulation that makes the torture and murder of Tom Smith a hushed up memory. Also, the linguistic implications of "hushed up" have a lot to teach us about the project of civility in Upper Canada. As a phrasal verb "hushed up," in its past tense, implies to keep something from being told, in other words, to make secret. In its present tense, *hush up*, connotes to stop talk. If we break the compound structure of this phrase, in its infinitive form, *to hush* means to stop making a noise, to become silent. As an interjection or imperative *hush* commands or demands: be quiet. And, as a past indicative, the verb *hushed* indicates to make silent or quiet, to make lull, to pacify, even to tranquilize. More than *hush*'s semantic denotation, there is also *hush*'s aural connotation. The consonant, /sh/ makes a sound that, in phonetics, is called the "be quiet" sound, which can signify a quiet lament (of an assured voice) suppressing a scream, a shriek, heard as *ssh*.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ I find it particularly interesting that the /sh/ sound is a stream of air (fricative voiceless) sound, easily produced if you round your lips and keep your air stream smooth and steady. More particularly interesting is the fact that shriek also has the /sh/ sound. And most particularly interesting is how in shriek the /sh/

This grammatical and sonal exercise is an attempt to highlight how the act of hushing the memory of the misdeed parallels the directions of the will of the misdeed: the desire to hush a life and its interracial desires. Mrs. O_'s rhetoric of hush, we see, knots the act of quieting with one of violence, foregrounding the virtues in hushing as an active cultural commitment to *produce* concealment, deception, pacification, restraint, secrecy, and silence around scandalous and/or unpleasant *subjects*. The dissimulation of hushing up, then, governs public manners, evidenced by the respectable families' uneasiness, and by Mrs. O_'s detection of this strain; in turn, the resulting strain demonstrates the disciplinary functions of this practice on members of the village. And yet, their uneasiness, the anxiety that is matched, first, to their desire to protect their sons from "end[ing] their days in the penitentiary" (154), and, second, to their will to suppress the identities and whereabouts of their sons, must be read as a produced dissimulation. Under the conditions that these families act out their will, with their escaped sons and their sons' actions forming the object of their uneasiness, I maintain we cannot understand dissimulate *simply* in a Baudrillardian sense of dissimulation, which, to paraphrase him, implies a real presence beneath a disguise, but rather in the sense forcefully advanced by Francis Bacon in his essay "Of Simulation and Dissimulation." There, he concludes by remarking, "The best composition and temperature, is to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; *dissimulation in seasonable use*; and a power to feign, if there be no remedy" (29, emphasis added). With this in mind, the families' uneasiness marks a dissimulation in seasonable use, which points out the strategic and situational use of will

sound is in the initial position of the word and in hush at the final position. This observation notes how, even through language, Tom Smith's shrieks for mercy are hushed.

to organize and/or compose the civic will of the village. That none of these respected families testifies to the law about the affair highlights a political dimension in hushing up the affair: how the civic will of the village avoids addressing matters before government through public protocols such as a “trial,” which, apart from the justice that is denied to the public and the unnamed wife of Tom Smith,¹³⁷ also denies Upper Canada the labour that the boys would have been put to provide in Kingston penitentiary. It is with these elements of dissimulation and avoidance in mind that I suggest the protective qualities on which the affair’s hushed-up commitments depend express an embryonic form of Canadian politeness. In other words, hushing-up the trauma of this racial violence is a linguistic and literal performance of politeness.

When I suggest the boys deny the colony their labour when they escape to avoid trial, I am using the economics of their avoidance as a move to gesture toward ways different registers of economics are rooted in and/or are tied to practices of politeness. We observe this economic practice in Moodie’s desires to assert her right to privacy in her new home. On her first night in the bush, while unpacking and setting up her home, a neighbour’s daughter, Emily, unannounced, pushes open her door. Though annoyed by Emily’s rude intrusion, Moodie writes, “I left off arranging the furniture of a bed that had been just put up in a corner, to meet my unexpected, and at that moment, not very welcome guest” (70). Nonetheless, she still receives Emily’s impolite interruption with a polite pretense, “Pray take a seat” (ibid). This performance of propriety not only invokes

¹³⁷ Atwood raises an important point in the last stanza of “Charivari.” The stanza comments that the charivari party was “pretending to each other / it was a joke, until / they killed him. I don’t know / what happened to the white bride” (6-9). While Atwood overlooks the bride’s Irishness and racializes her white, it is worth noting her exit from the narrative frame.

a different sense of property ownership, a domestic economy of intimacy and privacy but also exposes that, against the background of settlement instructions, politeness plays an instrumental role in the civilizing work of nation building: how, for example, polite and impolite settlers are merely tolerated settlers. Moodie tolerates Emily's intrusion, but presumably Emily's family tolerates the Moodies' buying the property they were squatting on and eventually displacing them. Then there is the First Nations' tolerance of settler-invaders – squatting, as the framework in this sketch, highlights that polite settlers are themselves not very welcome guests on this land. I wonder, however, what price do some settlers pay for dwelling on this land? I invoke the bloody image of Tom Smith, beaten to death, his body left on the cold winter, bloodstained ground, and ask, is his blood payment for his settlement debts for claiming a home on First Nations land?¹³⁸ If so, would members of the charivari party be the village's debt collectors? As these questions suggest, if we read Tom Smith's blood as settling his "debts" for settling here, his killing gains a sacrificial significance. The sacrificial function of Tom Smith's murder is not simply a sacrifice of the covenant of intimacy purchased through barbering; also, and here to quote from Oscar Salemink's *Colonial Subjects: Essays on the Practical History of Anthropology*, it "expresses the idea of a life being offered either as a propitiatory gift to God or else as a scapegoat in substitution for the life of an individual

¹³⁸ There is a massive irony in this image. As I pointed out in Chapter Two, black people were denied entry into Upper Canada based on the rationale that if they migrated here they would not survive the cold winters. As we can see, it turns out it was not the weather but the people of the colony who were keen to prohibit their survival. This reading is reminiscent of the Burnt River sequence in Dionne Brand's *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*: in this rural setting she writes, "I have been living out here in the bush for two years now. This place fills me with a sense of dread but also mystery. *I fear the people more than the elements, which are themselves brutal*" (143, emphasis added).

needing expiation for a sin or a group needing communion to affirm social solidarity” (74). With this in mind, Tom Smith’s blood racially synchronizes the whiteness of American, European, and Yankeeified British settlers: from the Irish to the British and Yankee settler to contract a pact of whiteness in Upper Canada. And this pact is formed by participation, witnessing and intimidation (the (white) Irish woman does not tell who committed the murder either).

Ironically, the right to privacy publicizes the violent displacements in politeness’ economics, and, as a tool for nation building, it offers an alternate narrative to the masculine precept to that project. What I did not say about Emily’s visit is that she had come with an offer, a decanter for “them strangers,” as she refers to the arrival of the Moodies, “to put their whiskey in” (71). Given the borrowing customs in the colony, this “act of disinterested generosity” (71) turned out to be what Moodie calls a “swindling expedition” (74). The following day Emily returns and, knowing full well Moodie will have no use for the decanter, remarks, “I guess you won’t return it empty; that would be mean, father says. He wants it filled with whisky” (73). Moodie regards this exchange and subsequent ones as “extortion” (ibid). She refers to this method of borrowing as “old pranks,” as “dishonest,” and believes it to be a “most convenient one to unprincipled people” (74). In other words, the relational economy in rural Upper Canada was not, for her, a civil exchange. It was hypocritical civility. Reflecting on this rural barter economy, she says I was “disgusted with [that] hypocrisy” (78). What work does Moodie’s disgust do? Jenny Davidson offers one possible answer in *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen*. As her subtitle suggests about the

eighteenth century, Davidson argues that hypocrisy came to be accepted as a useful tool for promoting polite, civilized society. This promotion not only fostered a power relation akin to my discussion of faithfulness, a relation of dependency and domination, but also, through this attachment, Davidson highlights the hypocritical means of politeness and moral manners. With Moodie feeling “exile[d] from civilized life” (231), her disgust marks a struggle for politeness and, in making this disgust known, marks her attempt to teach British civility to her neighbours as a way to elevate the social status of the village.

Moreover, if we return to “The Charivari” sketch, we cannot overlook the gendered medium of Moodie’s and Mrs. O_’s conversation. On the night when she hears about the charivari, Moodie informs us that “Mrs. O_ tapped at the door, and although generally a most unwelcome visitor, from her gossiping, mischievous propensities, I gladly let her in” (151). As we can see, on the one hand, Moodie considers gossip an inferior form of sociality. She considers that gossip, as a poor form of art, leads, to quote from the *OED*, to “trivial talk often involving personal or sensational rumours.” Moreover, as an activity that occupies time, this pastime breeds triviality and idleness, and, as I say in reference to her sister Traill in my previous chapter, idleness is not a desirable trait for settlement. The constant reference to members of the charivari party as “idle” indicates idleness’s violent consequences. Also, she is aware of the relational quality that the gossip exchange allows, and, wanting to maintain a sense of moral superiority, generally turns away gossipers. On the other hand, she is aware of the gossip as a local historian and, in her desire for a history of the charivari is glad to welcome Mrs. O_. If we keep in mind what can be gained in the virtue of politeness, then

we should note how Mrs. O_'s responses to Moodie's questions about the charivari turn into material gains. For, is it not Mrs. O_'s account that leads Moodie to produce this sketch, this literary commodity? In this sense, politeness, to borrow a phrase from Moodie, marks a "debt of gratitude" (78). Due to Moodie's request, the interaction that ensues between Mrs. O_ and Moodie reproduces a power dynamic at the roots of politeness. Simply call to mind Mrs. O_'s response to Moodie's question: "she replied, laughing" (151) at Moodie for not knowing the charivari after her "nine months" stay in Canada, mocking her 'British' sense of superiority with "why, I thought you knew everything!" (152), highlighting a feeling of dominance, which, in turn, marks Moodie's dependence on her to fill her decanter with gossip. However, if we read this sketch as Moodie's response to Mrs. O_'s response then we can read Moodie's politeness (her welcoming Mrs. O_) as leading to her economic gains (her literary fame). Notable is the fact that what permits the hushed up to be narrated is a request. More notable is the fact that the death of a black man is archived by a transaction between two women, American and British. Rather than the competing diasporas that I outline above, gossip creates a condition for relations among diasporic groups. There are other (ethical and political) conditions in their transactions. While, for example, Mrs. O_'s narration of the hushed up story can be read as a kind of private witnessing (because it unfolds between two people in the confines of the "homeplace," with its "yearnings," to invoke bell hooks [41]), in the disappearance of the key witness to this trauma, Moodie's re-narration can be read as performing a rhetorical kind of public witnessing, not so much to release the suppressed story's traumatic force but to protest the "infringement upon the natural rights of" Tom

Smith. Accordingly, it might be time for critics of early Canadian literature to avoid avoiding gossiping about blackness in early Canada in their work, and note that, in both acts of witnessing, trauma can leave behind records.

Also, at this early stage, Canadian politeness resides in the dynamism of violence towards racialized subjects, whether epistemically or bodily inflicted. At its best, politeness and its violence are decoys for repressed desires; and these desires manifest, at its worst, as sadistic desires, repressing desiring bodies: they homogenize and terrorize (through physical torture) racial and other marginalized bodies as a way for them to conform to the civil terms in defining a colonial and imperial identity. In this vein, hushing up the affair is a racially configured practice transcoded into the apparatus of Canadian politeness, which is to say it is employed to reify the terms of racial expression, marking its racist exclusions and subjugation. In the case of Tom Smith's murder, we need to think of the politics of this hushing-up as part of the village's racial investment to legitimate Negrophobia and to reinforce and reproduce the homogeneity of whiteness. This process of reproduction and reinforcement is solidly grounded in the rural feeling of the village. Remember, "Her marriage with the black man created a great sensation in the town. All the young fellows were indignant at his presumption and her folly, and they determined to give them the charivari in fine style, and punish them both for the insult they had put upon the place." Similarly, the "affair," according to the language Mrs. O_ uses to describe the killing of Tom Smith, "occasioned no small talk in the neighbourhood; and well it might, for it was a most disgraceful piece of business." Two notable features in both events are that Mrs. O_ foregrounds a social response and this

assumed response of the social body is framed in an affective register. Framed as a communal affect, the rural feeling of disgrace is the result of a series of sensations. This series, which unfolds as a circuit, is notable: the sensation of the interracial marriage is met by the sensation of the charivari, which produces a sensation, the killing of Tom Smith. This sensational event occasions the sensation (of talk) in the village and another (“some of the charivari party had to fly, or they might have ended their days in the penitentiary”) and another (Mrs. Moodie’s charivari sketch). And then, there is my attempt to interject, with my own sensational speculative account of the barbershop, in the reproduction of racial privilege that the white supremacy (and silencing) of these sensations works to accomplish.

In light of the operational features of sensation in this village, where the boundary between reason and folly is (at one and the same time) the most obvious and the most subtle, the crowd of young lads characterizing the (Irish) white woman’s decision to marry a black man as an *act* of folly frames her decision as *out of line* with Upper Canadian gendered discourse of reason and orderly public behaviour – that is, the hushed up project of white civility. Folly, therefore, is not a simple case of making erroneous predictions based on false or incomplete information; as a word that marks behaviour, particularly in this context of sexual behaviour, folly marks a dissenting behaviour, a will to escape the repressed regimes of white civility, thus foregrounding a delightful disruptive potential of female sexuality and civility’s need to control and contain those unruly bodies. What is interesting about this characterization of her folly as willful is that it notes Irish marginalization and precarity in the institution of Upper Canadian

whiteness. It reveals that whiteness, in this village, is held in place, and hence in the colony, by a relation to its negation, the not the same, not white. As Foucault points out in *Madness and Civilization*, folly is not far away from reason nor is it its exact opposite, but in fact is mixed within it, enabling reason's intelligibility and power. He writes, "In learned literature, too, Madness and Folly was at work at the very heart of reason and truth. It is Folly which embarks all men without distinction on its insane ship and binds them to the vocation of a common odyssey" (14).

The common odyssey of reason and folly is, for example, overlooked in the Grosse Isle sketch, where Irish people are described as "incarnate devils, singing, drinking, dancing, shouting and cutting antics that would surprise the leader of a circus. They have no shame—are under no restraint—nobody knows them here, and they think they can speak and act as they please" (26). Describing these Irish refugee peasants as "a sad set," the sergeant who gives Moodie and her husband the tour goes on to say, "we could, perhaps, manage the men; but the women, sir! –the women! Oh, sir!" (27). Here, in these descriptions, we note the Orientalist taxonomies used to frame Irish people as a threat to the colony's security, health, and economy, a threat to the colony's whiteness and refinement. Racial descriptions such as "devil" and "circus," which invokes the discourse of animality (recalling Moodie's description of the Irishman as a "goat"), were also terms used to describe black people, marking a relation between how both were imagined. On the racial identification of Irish people, David Roediger writes, "some suggested that the Irish were part of a separate caste or a 'dark' race, possibly originally African" (133). As Noel Ignatiev reminds us in *How the Irish Became White*, Irish people

were not, to invoke Chambers' discourse, part of the indivisible group, particularly because whiteness, in nineteenth century America, was coded with religion and ethnicity. Roediger points out that, in the popular culture of this early period in America, "the Irishman" was considered "a 'nigger,' inside out" (133).¹³⁹ In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau marked the racially ambiguous status of Irish people by classifying them as a racially distinct group (Roediger 133). One might think, given this taint of carnal appetite, this history of transgression, it would be condoned that an Irish woman would allow herself to be persuaded into marriage by a black man, who, as a member of "the African race" is, according to Mrs. D__, an American neighbour of Moodie, one of "the children of the devil! God never condescended to make a nigger" (157).¹⁴⁰ But no, similitude simulation, Irish similarities to blackness, when the question concerns crossing the colour line, is expected to be mere performance. Pay attention to the racial slippages in Mrs. O_'s description of the affair: "Well, after a time he persuaded a *white girl* to marry him.

¹³⁹ This consideration is related to Irish slavery in the Americas, which offers the claim that slave-owners bred female Irish slaves with male African slaves to produce a mulatto slave population. See *White Cargo: The Forgotten History of Britain's White Slaves in America* by Don Jordan and Michael Walsh. My point is to indicate that there may have been existing relationships between these oppressed communities.

¹⁴⁰ Keep in mind Mrs. D is "a very respectable old lady, who resided in a handsome frame-house on the main road" of the village (156). On visiting Moodie, she observes Moodie did not dine with her Irish "servant-girl." She asks, "You don't eat with your helps? Is not that something like pride?" "It is custom," Moodie replies, "we were not used to do so at home" (156). Here lies the refraction of diaspora, of how British class hierarchy is being roughed in the new home. The conversation shifts to the women discussing household affairs. In the course of this, Moodie brings up the business she did with the black farmer Mollineaux. "'That man lived with us several years,' [Mrs. D] said; 'he was an excellent servant, and D paid him his wages in land. The farm that he now occupies formed a part of our U.E. grant. But, for all his good conduct, I never could abide him, for being a *black*'" (157, emphasis in original). Notice that Mrs. D__ used the word "help" to describe the Irish servant-girl and "servant" to describe a *black*, who goes on to say, "if the devil did not make them, they are descended from Cain" (157). My point is to simply underline, as I did in Chapter One on Richardson, that when the term servant is used to describe the labour of black people, that labour, whether paid or not, is referring to slave labour. It is worth noting that when Moodie throws Mrs. D's question back at her, she responds, "Good God! Do you think that I would sit down at the same table with a nigger? My helps would leave the house if I dared to put such an affront upon them. Sit down with a dirty black indeed!" (157).

She was not a bad-looking *Irishwoman*, and I can't think what bewitched the creature to take him." The material substance in the semantic shift from "a white girl" to an "Irishwoman" might hold a periphrastic dimension to the racial discourse of Irishness in North America. We can appreciate the alchemy of race if we break the "white girl" and "Irishwoman" into their constituents: white when described as a girl, *but* Irish when a woman. The semantic relation in the differentiating criterion for girl vs. woman marks the distance between youth and maturity, and this gender maturity highlights a racial retreat. In other words, if the Irish woman was not considered potentially white, her marriage to Tom Smith would not have been an insult, and there would have been no reason to protect her whiteness. The protection suggests that her Irishness was not an automatic sign of pollution. Rather, her pollution must have to do with her susceptibility to miscegenation. It might be possible to suggest that through migration and especially in Upper Canada, with a strong desire to enable the formation of a pan-'British' diaspora, the shift in Mrs. O_'s racial discourse does not simply highlight how the Irish became white, but also allows meditation on how the Irish got their whiteness back. The price for redeeming her whiteness is her disappearance from Mrs. O_'s story: she does not confess the names of the village ruffians and respectable gentlemen who killed her husband, suggesting that an entry into whiteness and respectability is disavowal and silence.¹⁴¹ On the one hand, in "getting it back," the visible whiteness of the Irish woman's body haunts whiteness from within, framing whiteness as a miscegenated construct. On the other, it

¹⁴¹ Perhaps this is what Ignatiev means when he suggests that in becoming white, the Irish could "*sell themselves piecemeal* instead of being sold for life, and later they could compete for jobs in all spheres instead of being confined to certain work" (2, emphasis added).

marks a re-arrival and re-semanticization, a way of getting whiteness back in line, away from degeneration, from blackness. And yet, it is the literal and physical proximity of Tom Smith, his blackness that informs and gives Irishness its white embodiment.¹⁴² Within the project of reproducing the homogeneity of whiteness lies the fear of miscegenation.

Correspondingly, we need to keep at the back of our mind that during the nineteenth century, medical discourses were “resemanticizing” (Pratt 31) the black body as a “disease,” and, viewed as a diseased body, it became “a pollutant,” a “source of infection” (Comaroff 230). A driving ideological force behind this view of the black body as pollutant connects black bodies to moral transgression. The ability to name and determine the boundaries and role of Tom Smith in Moodie’s neighbourhood is tantamount to the ability to get rid of the comparison-marking boundary of his life. As a result of this racial historical discourse around black bodies, one starting as late as the seventeenth century and filtering through the consciousness of the settlers in Upper Canada as Tom Smith lay under white hands, I imagine something else lay in this crowd’s consciousness: the myth of the black man’s physical and sexual prowess. Since the imagined sexual prowess of Tom Smith implies potential interracial children, killing him controls and manages the threat of these potential interracial children, who, by their mere

¹⁴² In other words, to quote Fanon, “The Negro is comparison. There is the first truth. He is comparison: that is, he is constantly preoccupied with self-evaluation and with the ego-ideal. Wherever he comes into contact with someone else, the question of value, of merit, arises” (*BSWM* 211). Here lies the lived experience of the black man. How his neurosis is not simply individually inflected but also, and this is important, a social symptom.

potential, produce a threat to the periphractic space of the village.¹⁴³ To put an end to the moral dilemma of miscegenation, dilemmas raised by religious indoctrination, in which the biblical story of Ham is used as an example of that moral degradation, hushing Tom Smith becomes the preferred solution to miscegenation. In many ways, then, the “great sensation” that resulted in the charivari’s “fine style” is tantamount to an intimately enforced and local anti-miscegenation law. Particularly so if we remember that the charivari is a queer custom passed down from France. I want to invoke another queer custom passed down from France and suggest that when the boys “determine to give them the charivari in fine style,” the *fine* harks back to the fines in Louis XIV’s edict of prohibitions, known as *Code Noir or Edict Regarding the Government and the Administration of the French Islands of America, and the Discipline and the Commerce of Blacks and Slaves in the Said Countries*. They break the prohibition of the Ten Commandments but enact the prohibitions in Code Noir, of which there were two: the first was the Code Noir of 1685 and the second 1724. The 1685 code outlines sixty articles that, on the basis of deprivations and exclusions, were used to manage the lives of black people in the colonies. The 1724 code was a revised version of 1685, except that it applied to the new colony of Louisiana and it forbade intermarriage. “The status of slaves

¹⁴³ In the chapter “‘Polluting the Body Politic’: Race and Urban Location” from his book *Racist Culture*, David Theo Goldberg defines a “periphractic space” as that which “implies dislocation, displacement, and division” and this space, he points out, is “the primary mode by which the space of racial marginality has been articulated and reproduced” (188). Goldberg uses the idea of periphractic spaces to emphasize the role that the intersections between race and class play in its creation and maintenance. Although Goldberg’s site of analysis is the urban and mine is the rural, his insights are useful in this early period in Upper Canada because the periphractic directness, definiteness and possessiveness mobilized to marginalize the racialized other depended on the cumulated inscription of meaning attributed to the space. And as this scene demonstrates, the rural space of the village is demarked by physical and ideological boundaries, one where whiteness can negotiate and, as a result, secure the most advantageous physical space.

in New France,” Robin Winks points out, “was regulated by the Code Noir of 1685, which though never proclaimed in the colony appears to have been used as customary law” (6-7). I read as customary law in this village article six of the revised code of 1724, which says “We forbid our white subjects of either sex to contract marriage with blacks, *under threat of punishment and fines*; and forbid all clerics, priests, or missionaries, lay or ordained, and even ships’ chaplains, to marry them” (emphasis added). This reading suggests that the racially-motivated social policy (the indignation) used to ban *sexual relations* across the colour line demonstrates the thoroughness and purposefulness with which the village monitored its “subjects” in an attempt to maintain a white-based purity, power, and privilege. In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault redefines biopolitics from the racial state’s ability to harness numerous and diverse technologies into a single technology of power to regulate and subjugate *subjects* to a politics of “society” where the *state of power* intervenes in events, where there is a “set of actions on possible actions” (“The Subject and Power” 341). Foucault’s thinking on biopower offers a framework to understand the legal, racial and sexual codes of the periphractic space of the village. If this village, following Goldberg, is part of the racial state, in the sense that they exclude in order to construct homogeneity, “heterogeneity in denial,” then we can take this Negrophobia as its aim to regulate black men’s bodies, making anti-miscegenation sentiment a racialising technology that inscribes value on certain bodies, a political instrument deployed to maintain the village’s homogeneity and manage growing differences.

What is distinctly (and specifically) biopolitical about the anti-miscegenation law instituted in this rural space is the sheer pervasiveness, intensity, and ideological coherence within a system of racial dominance long marked by segregation, marked not only by how the young lads “form in a regular body” but also how their families and the village hushed up the affair by not identifying them for trial. The cohesive quality highlights the village’s strategic coordination and determination of *reifying and rendering real* a distorted discourse of interracial marriage as an insult, suggesting blackness and Irishness as “pollutants,” maintaining the rural space as “pure” and “white.” These ideologies, consequently, render restrictive regulations, such as the indignation of the village, “rational.” Indeed, insofar as the concept of insult as contamination prevailed, the indignation of the town becomes a mobilized force to manage heterogeneity. What I need to emphasize here is the *site* of this management—always the body (and as this charivari attests). Sexual liaisons across racial lines become public grievance to be righted by any-and-every white person with a white-based imagination. Thus the periphractic space of the settler village in Upper Canada becomes the biopolitical crucible where diasporic anxieties, colonial law, and diverse communities formulate the coming codes for citizenship (sexual, racial and others) in the emerging colonial nation. In other words, the not-yet-citizens of the village have a local agency in setting the terms of what will emerge as “common law” based on common tradition and practices.

Clearly, interracial marriage, expressed in classed, gendered, racialized, and sexualized terms as an insult, becomes a code with which a white pan-British social elite enforces the “facts” of their superiority over a black man. Undeniably, given the

patriarchal context of Upper Canada, and the young lads' patriarchal heritage, the lads interfere because their "indignant" feelings perceived Tom Smith to have challenged, and therefore they need to reinforce, what Patricia Hill Collins identifies as a "mark of hegemonic White masculinity": "its ability to restrict the sexual partners available to Black men. African American men were forbidden to engage in sexual relations with all White women, let alone marry them" (*Black Sexual Politics* 262). And yet, rather than simply read the gendered racial violence on Tom Smith as black emasculation, a habitual reading lauded by Fanon and others like Robert Staples, readings that black feminists scholars such as Collins, bell hooks, Michelle Wallace and others argue overlook the subordination of black women,¹⁴⁴ I bear in mind Hortense Spillers' provocative argument that "the African-American male not so much from sight as from *mimetic* view as a partner in the prevailing social fiction of the Father's name, the Father's law" (80). Indeed, Tom Smith is removed (not) so much from sight as from mimetic view. His identification is rooted in his skin, his epidermis. According to Jacques Lacan, there are two types of identification: imaginary and symbolic. For him, imaginary identification is mimetic and occurs in a dual relation with another. It is one thing, to invoke Fanon, for Tom Smith to be seen to be black "in relation to the white man" (*BSWM* 110) and something else, in the parameters of that relation, to be seen to be taking up the position of the white man. Hence removal from mimetic view highlights black male alienation from the dual patriarchal function of fatherhood (authority of name and law). Therefore, in his shrieks for mercy, we witness his limited authority in the social fiction of the

¹⁴⁴ See Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*; Robert Staples' *Black Masculinity*; Collins' *Black Feminist Thought*; hooks *We Real Cool*; Wallace's *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*.

Father, and the dragging before his death shows his supplicant role as a potential black father, highlighting that black men were not only removed from paternal rights and filial ties but also, in the context of the sexual politics we witness in this village, excluded from interracial fraternal solidarity. The point I wish to draw attention to regarding this much-discussed quotation from Spillers that reconfigures and re-imagines the figure of black manhood is the way in which black masculinity is organized around gendered, legal, and sexualized factors, foregrounding its conjoined structure. For example, while Tom Smith's murder marks the extreme risks for a black man, a runaway slave who knowingly chooses to act against masculinity's "prevailing fiction" of law, one that has removed him from the "mimesis" of interracial familial relations in North America, the important point is that he enters this field. This enactment of will, his presumption-cum-persuasion, risks disidentifying with the norms of the village, destabilizing the normative values that made everyone there feel safe and secure. This destabilization recalls my discussion of black masculinity in the black Atlantic (in Chapter One) as a conjoined form of masculinity. Because conjoined masculinity is co-constitutive of the different branches of diasporas in the black Atlantic, in this village, it illuminates the disturbing work lodged in this form of black masculinity. Here, we come to understand that conjoined masculinity (is received) as an oppositional form of masculinity. Oppositional in the sense that, while independent, it functions as a result of its co-dependency and co-existence, whether antagonistically or harmoniously, and this interaction disturbs the normalizing discourses of male domination.¹⁴⁵ The rural colonial context of the violence, particularly of the composed

¹⁴⁵ This disturbance is similar to Homi Bhabha's call "not to deny or disavow masculinity, but to disturb its

shrieks, refracts the codes of black masculinity in *Roughing It* through what Fanon identifies as “a series of aberrations of affect” (*BSWM* 10). These aberrations include abjection, black sexual phobia, itself a form of Negrophobia, castration, pathology and degeneracy.

It would be remiss to pass on the chance to highlight the fact that it is because Moodie does what Tom Smith’s wife does not do (bear witness to his murder) that his shrieks can echo and call us to consider our interrelatedness across racial lines and across time. Such an interconnection is put to the foreground when, in learning about the cultural and political practice of the charivari, she expresses “feeling a truly British indignation at such a lawless infringement upon *the natural rights of man*” (152, emphasis added). If we link the “lawless infringement upon the natural rights of man” to the beating death of Tom Smith, then, we hear, in Moodie’s claim, her overall politics in narrating Tom Smith’s murder and the charivari. In other words, while I depart from Clarke’s desire to frame *Roughing It* as a displaced slave narrative, I read Moodie’s work in “The Charivari” sketch in line with abolitionist literature and in keeping with what has been assessed as her abolitionist politics. In fact, I go as far as to suggest that when critics reduce the sketch merely to a form of Canadian lynching, their assertions become silencing techniques, which, in turn, leads them to rehash not just the story of Tom Smith’s murder but also the condition of slavery in Upper Canada, because it allows them to avoid delving into the nuances of the clashes that Moodie grappled with in the

manifest destiny – to draw attention to it as a prosthetic reality – a ‘prefixing’ of the rules of gender and sexuality; an appendix or addition, that willy-nilly, supplements and suspends a ‘lack-in-being’” (“Are You Man” 57).

periphractic space of the village. Framing her work in this way is significant because, as critics of early Canadian literature, we have not adequately approached her work within the tradition of abolitionist literature.

Another effect of Tom Smith's shrieks is that they vocalize aberrations that affect black masculinity, evidenced, for example, in how the shrieks evoke the realities of a different physicality of black masculinity: one where an excess of affect and psyche seeps out of Tom Smith's body into the bedroom, into the neighbourhood, into the bodies of the members of the charivari party, into his disappeared (Irish) white wife, into ours as readers, suggesting the disruptive potential that black sounds produce. With all these echoes in mind, the musical exchanges of the black Atlantic, the minstrelsy background of the charivari, Clarke's idea that this sketch is an example of Canadian lynching, Tom Smith's dying under Upper Canadian hands is more than a figure of speech. It articulates the cultural and gendered hierarchies in which beating him down to death provided the means for defining and securing the continuity of white male privilege. It also allows us to view the hand of the law "not in terms of a legitimacy to be established," as Michel Foucault pointed out in "Two Lectures," "but in terms of the subjugation that it instigates" (96). As a result, his death creates a rupture in the fabric of the village, in early Canadian literature, reverberating a chain of shrieks within the Americas and across time in the black Atlantic: he unhushes the shrieks of slaves, the shrieks of the charivari fiddle, the shrieks in the villagers' silence, which, in turn, allows me to listen to how, as a 'British' diasporic text, the aesthetics and politics of *Roughing It* reveals erratic, even rough, racial formations in Upper Canada.

A Lack of Public Memory: A Public Memory of Lack

As the chapters in *Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows* demonstrate, the difficult presence of blackness in these early Upper Canadian texts narrates the difficult history of blackness in the Americas and, by extension, the black Atlantic. The cross-Atlantic borrowings allow us insights into the frontier exchanges that are embedded in the literary and cultural textbooks and archives of early Canada. In fact, these textbooks and archives highlight that “story-writing becomes history-writing” (Minh-ha 120). And as my readings of the archive reveal, there is a particular “truth” in storytelling that mere repetition of historical fact cannot bring to light. According to Trinh Minh-ha, what is required for truth is the insight of the creative imagination. She writes, “Poetry, Aristotle said, is truer than history. Storytelling as literature (narrative poetry) must then be truer than history. If we rely on history to tell us what happened at a specific time and place we can rely on the story to tell us not only what might have happened, but also what is happening at an unspecified time and place” (120). While this dissertation suggests we read to listen carefully, I wonder still what are the implications of the history of Canadian literary avoidance for the politics of the Canadian imaginary and present day society? How does the avoidance of black presence shape fiction and fact today? How has the act of remembering to forget blackness in Canadian (literary) history shaped the canon and its critics? While working on Chapter Two, I learned the itinerary of avoidance leads to unavoidable encounters.

In the summer of 2008, sitting in the archives at the Hamilton Public Library, slowly sifting through the folders I had requested on textile companies in Canada West

during 1830 to 1860, I happened upon a folder that was unbearably out of place.¹⁴⁶ The archivist had mistakenly brought me a folder containing newspaper clippings of KKK demonstrations in the vicinity at a later period, from the 1920s to 1950s. This archive of images – newspaper clippings of Klansmen marching through Hamilton’s James Street North on horses:

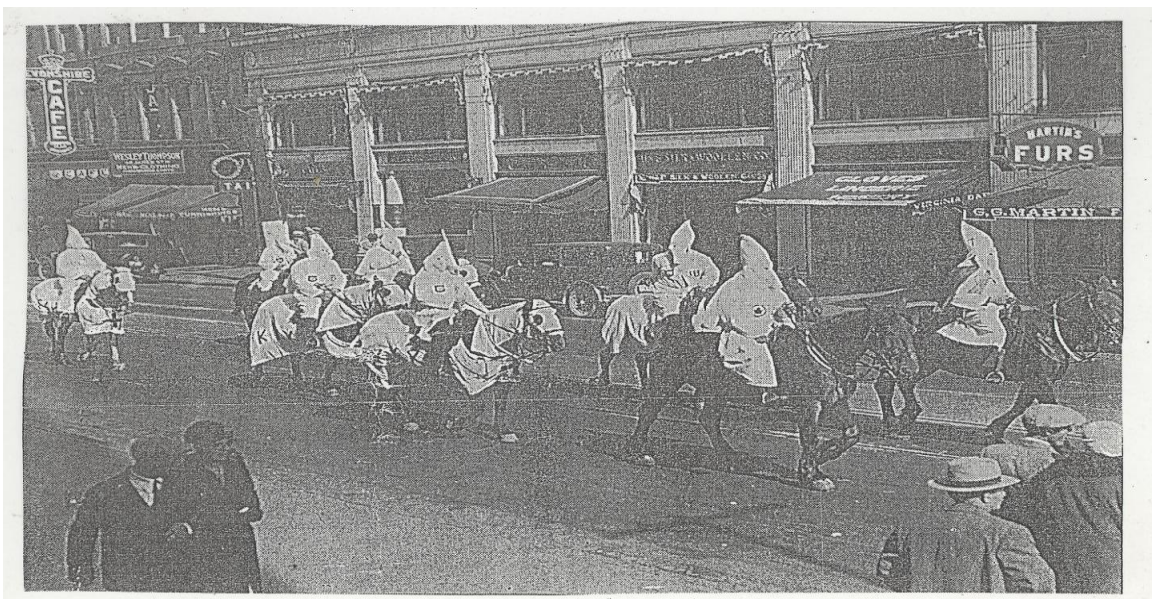


Figure 1: Members of the Ku Klux Klan marching South on James Street past the Lister Building, sometime about 1930. Hamilton Public Library Special Collection

again, on foot, marching through Hamilton’s King Street West:

¹⁴⁶ Please keep in mind that I was finished with the conclusion when news unfolded of the former police officer, Mr. Crowley, who, at a Halloween costume party organized by the Royal Canadian Legion in Campbellford, Ontario, dressed up in a “Ku Klux Klan outfit, trailing a noose-necked man in blackface” and “won first prize” at the party (Reinhart). In addition to the jarring correspondence between my essay and this current event, it is worth noting Mr. Crowley’s understanding of the event. He says, my outfit “wasn’t meant to be anything racist. I apologize if I offended anybody.” According to the reporter, Mr. Crowley goes on to describe “the practice of Klan lynchings of black people” as a practice “gone for years and years and years...,” a practice that he believes “is so past-tense.” Also worth noting is the descriptions of this event by Tad Seaborn, a black former resident of Campbellford who now lives in Toronto. He describes the incident as “some rural, institutionalized ignorance, lack of education and life experience outside the local culture bubble” (Reinhart). My point is to remind us to bear in mind that the dynamics of blackface minstrelsy and the work of the KKK are not events of the past; they continue to function as central organizing forces in the racial politics of Ontario.

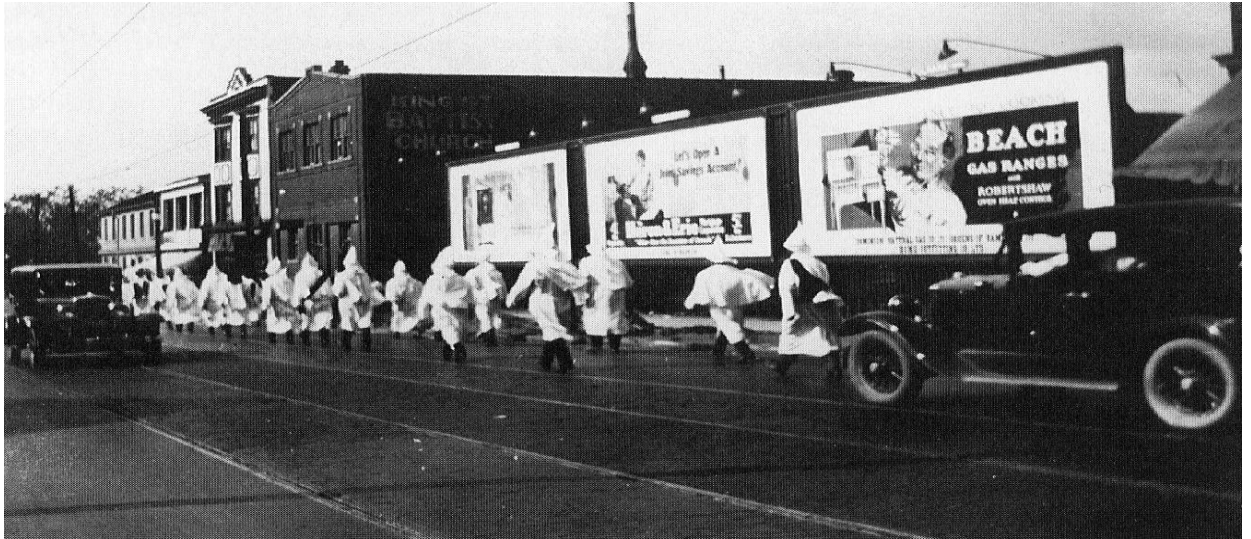


Figure 2: Members of the Ku Klux Klan marching West on King Street West, sometime about 1930. Hamilton Public Library Special Collection.

a gathering of 200-plus Hamiltonians watching a cross burn on the Mountain:

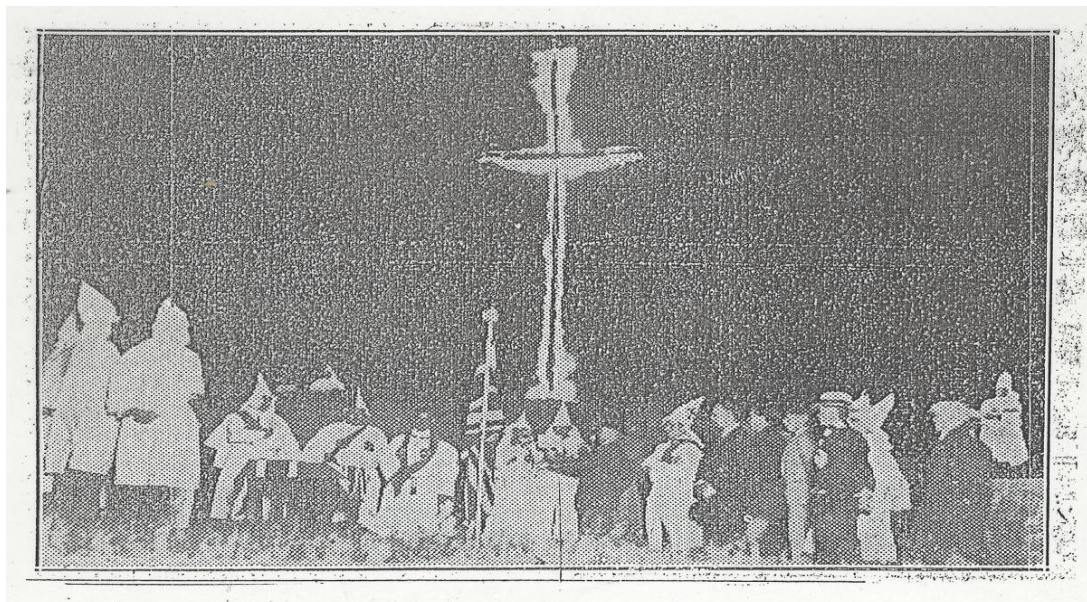


Figure 3: Ku Klux Klan burn fiery cross on the Mountain in Hamilton. Hamilton Public Library Special Collection

and a record of newspaper clippings with headings such as “KKK may be wooing high school students”—shocked me out of my daze. My skin jumped. I flexed my spine to sit upright. Gathering myself, I wore a smile to press down any discomfort.

This experience of “archival jolt” (Bishop 36) was a reminder of the importance of remaining awake to serendipity, to chance associations in research. What archival logic would catalogue textile companies and the KKK together? What was this unwanted fortune, this “terrible gift” (Simon 187) bestowed to me in this arbitrary way? But if the jolt was to become what Ted Bishop calls “a portal to knowledge and . . . an assurance that [one has] connected with something real” (Bishop 36), it seemed to me it would also require me to consider my own shock and discomfort, and hence the availability of the affective, of *feeling*, as another such “portal to knowledge.” As I held a Xerox copy of the images with my sweaty palms, I felt anxious, energized; my mind spun in different directions; I wondered how to move beyond this mixture of shock-disgust-voyeuristic pleasure. What should I do with my bodily sensations, these affective entanglements, and how could they become the basis for theorizing out from “accident,” from apparent “exception,” toward an exploration of the wider “structure of feeling” that this KKK activity may have been part of?

Williams describes the structure of feelings as the “affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feelings against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity” (Williams 132). As a way of conclusion, I relate my encounter with these archival images to my dissertation research and read it as evidence of the racial trans-

actions across the Americas, and I suggest that critics of early Canadian literatures and cultures are not the only ones who avoid the difficult presences of blackness. My reactions in the archive suggest we cannot assign early Canada as the only period when the difficult presences of blackness in Canada are avoided: the hermetic seal of avoidance of black presence also has a hold on the present. I take these traces of KKK activity in Southern Ontario as repositories of the past and attempt to move across what has been constituted as a negative space, a public memory of relative absence or lack, in order to gesture at how a history of anti-black feeling in Southern Ontario might need to proceed. I do not claim to be illuminating negative space; the archive does not yield a coherent body of “evidence” for this history of affect. I will continue to draw connections against the grain of pedagogies of public memory, those which distance Ontario from such excessive performances of hatred and denigration, and against the grain of disciplined knowledges that determine legitimate comparisons and relationalities. So not every stage of my argument is ratified by the archive and the memory that it makes available through its evidence. I move through a public memory of lack by examining materials around its edges which do not so much overturn the truth of this memory as point to some of the means by which this truth has been produced and maintained. Drawing connections in this concluding chapter between the documented KKK demonstrations and other ritual theatricals of racial abuse in Ontario history, including the performances of the Loyal Orange Lodge (commonly referred to as the Orange Order), and the tradition of blackface minstrelsy at two elite educational institutions post-Confederation, I recast feeling as a portal to knowledge, as a different order of archival truth claims, and examine what that

means in terms of documentation, linkages, by looking at traces, testimonies, of different kinds around the edges of this negative space of public memory. Here lies the paradox in this conclusion. On the one hand, I have the accident of the file coming to me in the archive and this leads me down a path of working with other archival documents, part of a positive history of documentation. On the other hand, I have to follow the lead of something quite other, something that is not necessarily available in this positive, material form: and that is affect. It seems, then, that I am doing a history of feeling, which is also a history of how a negative space/public memory of lack in Upper Canada, Canada West, Ontario came to be constructed.

Because historians claim the KKK “lacked success” in this region, my appeal to connect the Orange Order, the KKK, and blackface minstrelsy is a way to argue that the racial feelings generated by these disparate groups and cultural practices co-produce and co-shape each other in the Americas. How does a history of an organization come to be narrated as a history of lack? By engaging this question, I work to think through “the power/knowledge nexus” that, as Godard argues in an essay “about realigning geopolitical identities,” “cut[s] and mark[s] the boundaries of inside and outside” (“Deterritorializing” 171, 161, 171). My central argument is that these disparate groups and practices manifest deployments of racial sensation and affect, and that it is these feelings that tie the KKK, the Orange Order, and blackface minstrelsy together in a common (micropolitical) strategy of power or organization of power relations in and beyond Ontario.

A useful way to begin, then, is to outline the transnational reach of my three objects of analysis. In sight and sound, as Chapters One and Three demonstrate, minstrelsy forms part of the culture industry of the transatlantic imaginary; the Orange Order has been described as spreading through the British Empire; and the KKK has been described as an “Invisible Empire.” In addition to the global mobility and sociality of these cultural groups and practices, they also circulate (uncomfortable) emotions, and the emotional work that they collectively shape and produce can be read, following Sara Ahmed’s work on emotion as economy, as a form of capital (*Emotions* 45). As raw materials (capital), these racial feelings circulate to integrate the Americas. Here, I explore the negative affect of anti-black feelings in relation to these cultural practices; that is to say, to invoke Tom Smith’s shrieks, I explore blackness within the sites of “negative” affective economies, sites where the racial fantasy and racial hatred, and their resulting violence are performed. I do so because I have come to understand, working on *Hidden Signs, Haunting Shadows*, that racial “feeling calls attention to a real social experience and a certain kind of historical truth” (Ngai 5); that, indeed, black cultural knowledge in early Canada is stored in a variety of cultural expressions and forms: in names like Sambo and Tom Smith, in words like *faithful* and *hushed-up*, in discordant sounds like those of the charivari and Tom Smith’s shrieks, and things like fine white cotton stockings; that the very representational formulas that degenerate blackness or render it invisible or unintelligible, that avoid black historicity, yield black history.

Historian Alan Bartley draws attention to a prevalent short sightedness in KKK scholarship in Canada, which has neglected to examine Ontario’s chapter of the Klan. He

begins by asking why the Klan became a political force in Saskatchewan but not in Ontario and offers this hypothesis: “the robust Imperial, British and Orange culture of 1920s Ontario was a barrier to political action the Klan could not overcome” (157). According to Bartley, the Orange Order and its sensibility took the place of the KKK in Ontario, or the kind of sentiment mobilized by the Orange Order might otherwise have found expression in the form of KKK rituals. In other words, the local political conditions in Ontario stood in the way of the Klan. In a passing hint in a footnote, Bartley writes that both Martin Robin and Julian Sher, in their important studies of the formation of the KKK in Canada, fail to “examine in any depth the reasons for the Klan’s lack of success in Ontario” (170f).¹⁴⁷ I take up Bartley’s phrase, “the Klan’s lack of success in Ontario,” as a worthwhile provocation for at least two reasons. First, given the Klan’s campaign of intimidation towards racialized groups, the language of lack not only flattens out its fascistic history, but it also blocks reflection on and investigation of the material evidence of the Klan’s success. Second, the language of lack is symptomatic of the hegemonic explanatory formulas of concealment, omission, and derision, the strategies of avoidance, that continue to consign blackness in Canada to a field of oblivion. Because this expression of lack is located within the hegemonic common sense of what Antonio Gramsci terms “the national popular,” it submerges and tidies away the perplexities of

¹⁴⁷ His footnote brings to mind H el ene Cixous’ comment on footnotation as “a typographical metaphor of repression which is always too near but nevertheless negligible” (537). The salience of race, which is overlooked by Bartley’s measure of political action, forms part of this repression. I maintain that what is “too near but nevertheless negligible” is the success of white racism in wiping clean the historical-cultural slate upon which this work of lack is written, and through this gesture creating its own social space by avoiding the racial feelings that make up or organize Ontario. In this context, one can argue, lack is “colour-blind.”

racial terror out of the provincial and national popular, and, for this reason, produces an attitude and a history of black lack, of black absence, as the three chapters in this dissertation have demonstrated, and relatedly of the absence of anti-black feeling. But, in this conclusion, I am more interested in the history of black presence in Ontario and in the history of derision, of feeling, and therefore as *part of* black history, *part of* what sketches the contours of black existence in Canada historically.

Notwithstanding the local insights that Bartley's situated readings offer, regarding the joint grip of the Conservative Party and the Orange Order on the political and social life of Ontario, understanding that restraint is a respectable, culturally valued emotional state, one which is in accordance with the greater sense of order of Ontario society, allows us to engage the KKK documentations, the Orange Order and blackface minstrelsy as infrastructures of anti-black feelings in Ontario, and to highlight them as civilizing processes marked by emotional restraint. The privileging of such restraint is a crucial move within the system of distinction, one that allows for Ontario decorum and civility (explaining the avoidance of a history of showy, embarrassing racism like that in Saskatchewan, or the charivari sketch in Moodie's *Roughing It*, or the Southern US, the story goes—and this comes out of strategic comparisons). And, while my feelings in the archive and the archival documentations all go against the controlling perception of Ontario civility, restraint is also linked, through inversion, to another thread in my dissertation and that is the theatricality, ritual, performative nature of my object of analysis: KKK rituals, Orangemen's regular sponsorship of parades, and minstrelsy as a stage tradition.

Telling in Bartley's assertion of lack is a tension between the "knowledge [that] is produced" in the body of his essay and "what escapes in the unfolding" of his argument (Cixous 527). The articulation of the Klan's lack of success in Ontario, through a "narrative of analogy," "re- cover[s]" the racial abuse and hatred of Ontario's past (Godard, "Deterritorializing" 163). The sequence in Bartley's analogy, the one concerning the Orange Order explaining the Klan's failure to succeed, undermines the (con)sequences in that failure. The language of lack conceals, even contains, the violence of the Klan's mere presence, that is to say, it explains away the affective aspects of what might be called an aesthetic politics of race. If we adopt a materialist reading and assert that, similar to the "fine white cotton stockings" in Traill's manual, the white cotton of the KKK's hoods bear stains of racial labour and atrocity, and, as Paul Gilroy suggests about the glamour of fascism, that as visual markers of communication (commercializing intimidation and anti-black feelings) they articulate a form of "'aestheticization' and 'theatricalization' of politics" (*Against Race* 150), then, what aesthetic perceptions might emerge when we invite hermeneutic attention to the racial feelings elicited by the swastikas, the white cotton hoods, and the burnt cork? The public practices of the theatrical shows, the Klan marches and Orange parades? How do these iconographies and forms of theatricality of race secure the links between aesthetic and anti-black feelings? The key point I want to make is that the KKK, Orange Order, and blackface minstrelsy are all part of a public performance history in Ontario; they have to do with different kinds of public space, demarcating it, staking claim to it for white Ontarians. As a result, the apparent "lack of success" of a particular group, the KKK, measured in quantitative

terms by historians like Bartley, come up against a different kind of evidence, the traces of these public practices that shaped spaces, identities, territories of belonging, entitlement, fear.

This idiom of lack argues along two official and legitimate pathways of comparison that must be critically examined: on the one hand, morally superior Canada versus a United States contaminated by racist violence and, on the other, racial division, wherein civilized, restrained Ontario stands out against a redneck “West.” This celebration, at once mediated by the binary of Canada with the United States, *and*, in the context of this conclusion, Ontario with Saskatchewan, is, following Eva Mackey, “[t]he constant attempt to construct an authentic, differentiated, and bounded identity [that] has been central to the project of Canadian nation-building, and is often shaped through comparison with, and demonisation of, the United States” (145). According to Mackey, this is a “kind of ‘strategic essentialism’ based upon particular images of Canada as victim” (12). Though she is accurate in saying that the “[t]he construction of Canada as a gendered body, victimized by external and more powerful others, creates a fiction of a homogenous and unified body, an image that elides the way the Canadian nation can victimize internal ‘others’ on the basis of race, culture, gender or class” (12), Bartley’s argument, which is shaped through comparison, an asymmetry between Ontario and Saskatchewan KKK chapters, introduces the long tradition of regionalist resentment within Canada, which is as powerful a fiction as is national homogeneity. The imagining of this lack gains support from the way Ontario, as part of its provincial attraction,¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ The following is how the online website of Ontario Tourism describes Ontario: “This area also figured

marks the “Underground Railway” as a sign of its abolitionist past, its morally superior past, framing Ontario as a place to seek refuge.¹⁴⁹

On Ontario’s lack, Martin Robin writes, “[f]or the most part, Ontario Klansmen restricted themselves to practicing queer rituals, burning an occasional cross, staging an odd meeting in odd dress, and spreading, through the spoken and written word, the gospel of white, Protestant, gentile, Canada” (13). On the surface, the attribution of restraint to Ontario Klansmen supports Bartley’s argument “that Klan organizers were up against leading members of the Ontario legal and police establishment” (162). However, Robin’s adjectives, “queer,” “odd,” which recalls Mrs. O_’s description of the charivari in the 1830s, and signifies in its repetition that the strange and exceptional, i.e. rare, did not happen here, is also saying the KKK did spread its “gospel,” whereas Bartley has said the KKK was not “successful” in doing so. Here lies the contradiction in Robin’s statement. He seems to begin by emphasizing “restricted,” “odd,” uncommon, rituals but his statement ends by suggesting a wide dispersal (even if not a wide dispersal, because there

prominently in the heroic story of the ‘Underground Railroad’. Beginning in the 1820s, after the War of 1812 and before the American Civil War, thousands of refugee slaves made their way to this area seeking safety and a new life. Following ‘The Road That Led To Freedom’ will lead you to many historical sites in this area that commemorate this important period in North American history.”

¹⁴⁹ In an article on the Media Centre section of the website of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), a national tourism organization that, “in collaboration with the tourism industry, the governments of Canada, the provinces and the territories,” is dedicated to promoting the Canadian tourism industry by “marketing” Canada as a desirable travel destination as well as providing accurate information to the industry, Cathy Stapells writes,

“Underground Railroad communities exist throughout southern Ontario, extending from Windsor to Toronto and north from Fort Erie to Owen Sound, Thornbury and Barrie. Visitors can explore this dramatic aspect of Canada’s past at 29 sites around the province, seven of which lie along Niagara’s Freedom Trail in the Niagara/St. Catharines area.”

I highlight the above quotation not to impugn CTC for generating an aura of tourism cachet around Ontario through an association with the Underground Railway, but to raise the structural relationship between the fastest-growing international industry of tourism, its commemorative language, and the work of recuperating history in Ontario.

is that phrase “restricted to”). If they were so odd, why did they have the capacity to spread the gospel? Is Robin laying the emphasis on the fact that the spreading happened through the spoken and written word rather than the rituals? He seems to emphasize the oddness and excess of the KKK rituals, and one might argue that his language here performs the Ontarian ‘restraint’ that he is describing.

While the bizarre rituals of the Klan are in a sense a parody of blackness (as “tribal,” “primitive,” Big Other), distance between Ontario and Saskatchewan is used to mark difference at the same time that it is used as a marker of lack. Consequently, the over-there workings of the Klan are also used to determine what constitutes success here. To put it simply, lack of success becomes the work of numbers, a quantitative historical analysis, as suggested by Bartley’s question at the end of his essay: “what was there in the Klan’s political agenda which was not already within reach of the Tory-Orange axis? In truth very little” (170). Bartley seems to be suggesting that if the Orange Order was a “barrier” to KKK “success,” it is because of their similar values—that is why they were competitors, why it was one or the other that would “succeed.” For Bartley, the Orange culture took hold more than the KKK not because the values were different but because the expressive style was. Orange culture in Ontario, he writes, “offered something the Klan could not – legitimacy.” Continuing, “the Lodge was a bastion of respectability in 1920s Ontario. The KKK was not, and it offered no prospects of ever coming close. The whiff of criminality associated with the Klan ensured that it would run afoul to the established order and prevailing prejudices” (158). Bartley notes that the Orange Order

did not need the Klan to institutionalize xenophobia, anti-black, and anti-Catholic sentiments.

Aside from Bartley assuming a certain affective code in Ontario that is different from Saskatchewan, also notice that lack is created in parallel to other narratives (the Orange Order's success). And yet, what is at work in this discourse of lack is the political desire and power that the Klan attempts to harness, namely, white supremacy and one of its main constitutional principles, anti-black feeling. From this perspective, what is overlooked, or, to use Cixous' words, what is negligible in the argument of "lack," by which failure is attributed to the Klan's political actions in Ontario, is an avoidance, a produced forgetfulness of the fact that the Klan is itself a political system, one that publicly exercises terror (fig.2).

Critical attempts to reason away how local politics affected the Klan's supposed "lack of success" in Ontario underscore questions of methodology. It is also noteworthy that Saskatchewan is *the* selected province to which Ontario is compared because, again and again, the diverse academic disciplines conducting scholarship on the KKK in Canada depict Saskatchewan (in the 1920s) as the place where the Klan reached the height of its influence (Backhouse; Bartley; Robin; Sher; Walker). Why, on the question of the Klan, does one engage in an inter-provincial comparison when the KKK is an empire committed to extending its invisible filaments beyond the borders of law and order? And what else do we learn from this comparison? In contrast to the inter-provincial comparative history of Bartley and other critics, a more revealing comparison might require attention to the incorporation (i.e., affiliations, location-inclusions, and

inscriptions) of Klan culture and domination into the North American quadrant of the Americas. Other kinds of comparisons can include an examination of how Klansmen moved with the western frontiers of North America, first primarily across the United States and eventually into the western plains of Canada. This means that while examining the transnational dynamics that enable KKK migration and the national forces that militate against it, Ontario's chapter of the Klan illuminates the transregional formations across the Americas.

Stamped in a second edition of the *Kloran: Knights of the Ku Klux Klan*, the KKK's handbook, a revealing apologetic/justificatory note (dated March 1st 1928) shows how the over-determined difference that Bartley's comparative logic engenders overlooks the Klan's unmappable *ripple effect/affect*. The note, signed by the "Imperial Wizard" in Regina, Saskatchewan, reads:

To Exalted Cyclops and all Klansmen: –

This is the Official Kloran of the Invisible Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. To avoid delay these books were ordered from Toronto from the same printer who had the order for the Klan in the East. The order as originally given did not domicile headquarters of the Klan and the name was not to be printed but when the proof was checked this was put in and when we purchased the books we did not know of said change. (6)

This note highlights an economic exchange across provinces *from* Toronto, Ontario, *to* Regina, Saskatchewan, and affirms the inseparability of ideology and politics in economics (the Klan chapters of "the East," i.e. Southern Ontario, all use the same Toronto Printer). The exchange, given its direction, is as much a trade, commodity exchange as a political one. The Klan in Toronto, at the very least, succeeds, politically and economically, in printing these books, acting as the Canadian source for the

dissemination of KKK ideology. Fulfilling an “order” not only marks an ability to succeed, but also suggests that the Klan in Ontario played a role (however in/significant) in Saskatchewan’s success.¹⁵⁰ The point is that relational logic serves as an effective approach to seek nuanced methods not only to foreground the Klan chapters in Ontario, with their distinctive regional patterns, and as part of overlapping social movements in the Americas, but also to note that the printer, as a powerful engine for disseminating Klan ideas, served as a colonial administrator, a vital link to the world, spreading the ideological, political, and administrative purpose of the Invisible Empire. I liken the printer to a colonial administrator to emphasize that each seeded and sold an image of the empire as, in the case of the KKK, “Not for self but for others” (*Kloran* 46), and achieved this by exercising control over the circulation of people and ideas. Hence to say that imagining the Klan in Ontario is connected to other geopolitical spaces in the broader Americas is to think of Ontario as one province in a hemispheric imaginary. In other words, I seek to position Ontario with its racial feelings as a concern and a participant in the shared affective exchange *with/in* the Americas.

To appreciate this move to include Ontario in hemispheric conversations, and to position it as a province of transcontinental proportion, it might help to turn to the very organization that Bartley and other critics say blocked the Klan’s success in Ontario, the Orange Order. Given that the Orange Order spread along with the British Empire (as a way to legitimize its political integrity), the social history of Orange culture insists on its transnational character (Akenson; Bartley; Houston and Smyth; Jenkins; Kaufmann;

¹⁵⁰ It might be interesting to examine to what extent Toronto’s version of the *Kloran* influenced the rituals and dogma of Regina’s KKK chapters.

Wilson). In fact, taking stock of this insistent collaboration, the mobility and settlement of Orange culture in Ontario underscores processes of encounters, competition and solidarity, together with the circulation of emotions and ideas. As it circulates through the Atlantic world, the Orange culture of some Irish (Ulster Scots) immigrants exports into Ontario the ideology of conservatism and anti-Catholic sentiments at the same time as it focuses on creating a pro-British and pro-Empire Protestant association or institution. This is to say that the circulation of Orange culture through the colonies makes the Orange Order a diaspora that is as concerned with religion and politics as it is with embedding racial fear in the spaces it impacts.

Pierre Bourdieu's influential work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), his sociological account of aesthetics, is helpful in articulating the Orange Order's capacity for affecting the racial feelings in Ontario. I note that a disarticulation of the Orange Order and the negative racial feelings it effected in Ontario establishes a system of "distinction" between the elite cultural field of the Order and non-elitist cultural organizations such as the KKK, giving weight to the claim that class distinction provides an alibi that Ontario was too refined to be a terrain for the KKK. Of course the social capital of Ontario as a significant station of the Underground Railway encourages many to see Ontario as different from other provinces and to distinguish the Order from the KKK. However, the aesthetics of the parades that each group mobilized questions this strategy of distinction and points to their relational cultural capital. The KKK and the Orange Order rituals are, in both cases, performative rituals that intimidate, provoke, and stake claims to space, to ownership of space. Their public, theatrical aspect

is a really good way of insisting on their *indistinctness*. As popular public events, the parades animate a field of social relations and become occasions for inclusivity. They rarely fail to attract a crowd and to stir in that crowd a host of emotions (see fig. 1). However, where they allow for play-acting and masked performance, where the large gatherings offer an effective façade of cohesion thus augmenting, anonymously, the power of the collective, where one can overturn or do without many sanctioned behaviours, the Orange parade (with its Protestant background) and Klan marches are occasions for legitimizing white exclusivity. In this relational logic of exclusion, of mutually supporting and operating within the same fields of affect, of ripple affects, the KKK and the Order operate with a divisive force, threatening the lives of Catholics, French, and racialized people. Understanding that this extralegal activity forms part of Orange memory in Ontario is also to understand that the Orange Order operated in an extra-legal space, one that afforded it the authority to impose its own kind of morality and bring its own kind of order to unconnected events.

Racial hatred was not limited to lower-class street parades orchestrated by the Orange Order, but went on in the halls of the most elite, exclusive institutions, like St Andrew's College and Upper Canada College (UCC), where the upper-class sent their sons to be properly trained to take on leadership roles in society. And just as the Orange Order was a transnational institution, so was minstrel performance. Some of these undertones may perhaps be located in the historical reality of blackface minstrel performances at St. Andrew's and UCC, "the school [that] serves as a powerful beacon of the Canadian Establishment" (FitzGerald xvii). Both St. Andrew's College and UCC are

sites that work to expand the cultural references for the anti-black feelings that are etched in the cultural space of Ontario. In its October 1889 issue, *The College Times*, UCC's yearbook, ran an editorial gladly endorsing "a letter from one of the old boys" who was protesting the cancellation¹⁵¹ of its annual minstrel show, the entertainment that "has taken place for such a number of years that its origin cannot be traced," and that has provided "so many pleasure associations." The OLD BOY urges that "with a little restraint it could still be made into a really first class entertainment, and in every respect worthy of the name of the U.C.C. Minstrels" (12). The editorial note that accompanied the letter cries: "It seems too bad that we cannot have some enjoyment at Christmas" (11). What is involved in this publicly performative citing of a cherished, even fetishized past is not only an anxious process of linking enjoyment and identity to justify the complicity of a ritualized memory but also a governing logic of entertainment on which to link minstrel performance to the wider terrain of anti-black feeling in Ontario. In one way, the valuation used to bolster the appeal for its continuation hinges on a kind of unknowability – "its origins cannot be traced" – suggesting that the nostalgic tone, masked as an "ingrained habituation" (Weber 25), reaches beyond habituation to reproduce an unequal field of social relations. I contend that the OLD BOY's suggestion to promote "restraint" in the face of impending racial conflicts not only supports a climate of anti-black sentiments, but also drives us to note how whites are marked by it, how they enjoy through it.

¹⁵¹ At this stage in my research I have no idea why the show was cancelled other than guess from the editorials that there must have been protests from the neighbouring black communities.

In the December 1889 issue, a second editorial, from another OLD BOY denouncing the cancellation of UCC's annual minstrel show, appeared under the headline "The Merry Minstrels." He writes, "[i]t seems too bad that so many of the old customs have been abolished. This goes to show that the old spirit of the College, that College which has built up such a reputation for herself, appears to be dying out. Old boys will remember," he goes on to write, "the minstrels, in which every boy felt himself interested *with a longing desire to hear the jokes upon the other boys*" (20, emphasis added). Worth noting here is how displacement, disguise, permits the unsayable, permits transgressive speech. And the enjoyment of intimacy between the boys is linked through this citation, this mask of otherness. Later he remembers,

After the minstrels we all retired with the feeling that we had [spent] a most enjoyable evening. Now, what have the present pupils to look forward to on that evening? Nothing! I hear that some objection was made to some parts of last year's minstrels. Could not the parts to which objection is made at the rehearsals be omitted? I think that with proper management the minstrels could be made into a very fine entertainment and would again be looked forward to with as much pleasure by the present pupils as they were by the boys in my time. (OLD BOY, 20)

Recall Stephen Johnson's argument from chapter one, that "without question, [the] minstrel show was the entertainment of choice in North America from the 1840s through the 1870s" (58). Given the popularity of minstrelsy in this quadrant of the Americas, of the desires and feelings of spectators at nineteenth-century minstrel shows, Eric Lott astutely notes that this theatrical form "captured an antebellum structure of racial feeling" (6). In Canada West, Patrick O'Neill notes performances of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at Toronto's Royal Lyceum in 1853, 1854, 1856 and 1860 (qtd. in Johnson 56). As a result, minstrelsy "increasingly routinized white familiarity with black culture" (Lott 48), and it

is these experiences of minstrel pleasure and identification that, I believe, motivate the OLD BOYS to bother to write. But, from what affectations do they fear the prohibition will distance “the [new] boys”? As I concern myself with the role the minstrel shows played in the socialization of these BOYS, especially in how they got their enjoyment, I also concern myself with the racial entitlement that reinforces *and* preserves a commodified blackness, not to mention a white racial consciousness. While the editors and the OLD BOYS avoid (disavow) responsibility for the racialized representations that caricature blackness by minimizing the cultural work of the objectionable parts, and while it is worth noting again that we do not actually know what was objectionable, these boys, at the same time, depend on such representations for their personal enjoyment, suggesting the minstrel show is not so different from the KKK march and the Orange parade. The avoidance opens space for an escape from responsibility, situating the letters as protesting more than mere denials. In fact, what each of the OLD BOYS sees as a denial of enjoyment portrays a series of attachments to the object of enjoyment (blackface minstrel shows), illuminating a link between transnational commodity and Ontario as a place of white masculine subject formation. The cultural practice of blackface minstrelsy is part of the social relations that support the formation of this intersubjective identity.

In a 1907 cartoon illustration for the *College Times*, we experience how race organizes visual pleasure in the form of a blackfaced/minstrelized cartoon:

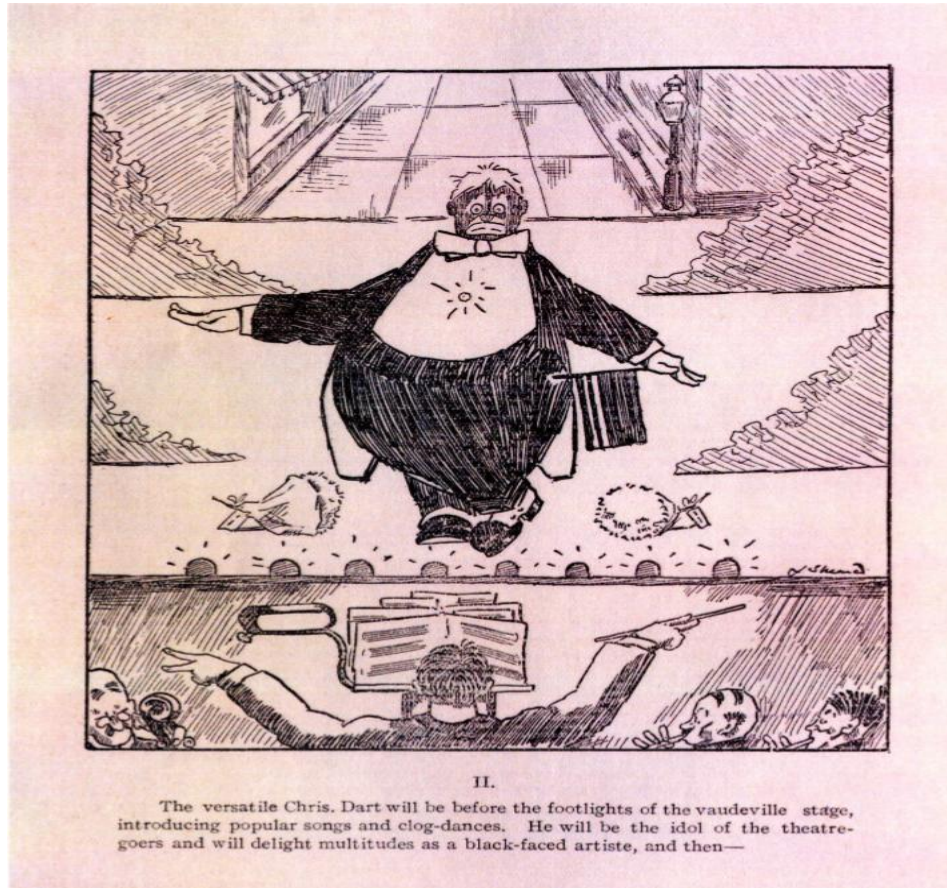


Figure 4: Upper Canada College Archives College Times Easter 1907

Taking the illustration to be advertising a show at the college, we can see it as an advertisement for/a promise of a certain kind of affect, of intimacy. Moreover, as advertisement, this illustration serves to create an aura of desirability around the minstrel show, the product. And, of course, the illustration is itself a commodity that, in this instance, enhances forms of social exchange. Therefore, presented to be looked at, dressed in black jacket, black pants, white long-sleeved shirt and an oversized necktie, the blackfaced cartoon is experienced through a mediation of structures of representation, including the *structure* of the orchestra, of entertainment, of advertisement, of audience, of visual art, of culture. I emphasize the word *structure* by way of indicating the breadth

of services provided by the allegorical representations of the cartoon. The visual rhetoric of the minstrelized cartoon, with its ability to condense and compress black culture into a fetishized commodity, instantiates the genre of the cartoon as an aid and medium for caricature and, as a result, draws our attention to the minstrelized cartoon as a *mise en abym*. A visual medium for caricaturing (cartoon) is used to represent a caricatured culture (blackface minstrelsy). This mirroring or doubling underlines the pivotal role that the illustrated caricature played in normalizing the putting on of “race,” as in the blackening of the face, that we come to observe being forcefully protected by the OLD BOYS in their letters. Therefore the cessation of the UCC minstrel shows disrupts the normalization of blackface minstrelsy, and the OLD BOYS’ protests grounds their identity formation in an intimate, long-term relationship with minstrel shows. At UCC, blackface minstrelsy seems to have provided a justification for transgressive speech acts, for a lifting of decorum and restraint that seem to have been deemed to have gone too far.

In the cartoon, the audience’s encounter with minstrel spectacle also foregrounds their encounter with blackness as caricatured otherness, as associated with the promise of pleasure, of transgressive humour. Appearing still on the stage, with legs crossed, arms outstretched with fingers in white gloves, the blackfaced minstrel in the cartoon has a facial expression (widened eyes, downcast smile), an animation which, according to the write-up for the show, will “delight multitudes,” including “theatre-goers.” In the visual animation of the illustration, graphically signified by the sounds that the laughing audience makes, delight articulates a physical pleasure with bodily manifestation. This manifestation, the animation of the audiences’ laughing-heads, suggests minstrel sounds

(and the sounds that the audience make) matter.¹⁵² So, far from being merely a visual encounter of caricatured blackness, the very soundings of popular minstrel songs activate and organize the psychic formations and drives of Ontario.

In 1920, K.B. Carson, a student of St. Andrew's College, invited his Uncle Josh, "a middle-aged, married-man and a church elder," to his school's first staged minstrel show. After the show, Uncle Josh, according to Carson's report in the *St. Andrew's College Review*, opined the following review: "The show's fine except there were too darn many niggers in it; the song 'Buy Low' should put the kibosh on the H.C.L., nobody could 'Buy High' after that" (21). For Carson's contemporary audience, the phrase "H.C.L." (high cost of living) carried meanings within the context of the Great War. That Uncle Josh draws on economic language to critique the show bears highlighting. Carson writes, "Uncle thought the minstrels were bricklayers with their white trousers, and even when I enlightened him, persisted in saying out loud to my great confusion, 'Well, they ought to be bricklayers anyways'" (20-1). Here Uncle implies that the minstrel show is a degrading spectacle that will affect taste, a crucial point since St. Andrew's College is an engine of class distinction and the enjoyment of 'low' minstrelsy risks diminishing this class distinction, i.e. the ability to withstand a 'high cost of living.' It also thereby reduces class to a matter of buying power when the implication is that it should be about more

¹⁵² It is possible to consider the signified laughter as tears. In other words, the distance between pleasure and pain in the minstrel performance is entangled, recalling Bataille's shattering laughter which, he suggests, exceeds dialectical opposition. I am motivated along this line of thought because of how the cartoon denies us the facial markers of the audience. That we only see the back of their heads but yet we are expected to infer enjoyment and delight (through the emoticon utilized) suggests we acknowledge the degree to which to laugh is sometimes to be caught in both pleasant and unpleasant emotion.

solid sources of distinction, like good breeding. Notwithstanding, Uncle Josh, we learn from Carson, was “pleased and bestowed a dime upon [him] all at once” (21).

Given that the boys in St. Andrew’s College Literary Society were, as far as I have been able to ascertain, all white, Uncle Josh’s articulations of excess, “there were too darn many niggers in the show,” expresses a desire to escape the simulation of blackness. Here, the excess of black people is rather their very emptiness on stage. That is to say, the presence in the form of mimicry is also a statement about the impossibility of their real presence. And is it not the case that the mimicry, which distances, at the same time, acknowledges a proximity that has to be managed? In fact, the UCC OLD BOY claims that “with proper management the minstrels could be made into a very fine entertainment”—as if the problem is not one of racism but of mis-management. He is not willing to sacrifice the minstrel show precisely because it enables the white management of race relations in Ontario, but it appears that the management techniques need fine-tuning. This moment of inversion, the presencing of absence, withdraws from the events of the present, from a group of white boys denigrating black culture and people, to enter a field of discourse that has long monitored black migration into Canada, as far back as the black Loyalists and the fugitive slaves who fled from south of the border, particularly in growing numbers after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Uncle Josh’s reading of emptiness as excess, then, needs to be thought together with Upper Canadian Chief Justice Sir John Beverly Robinson’s 1837 fear, “that Canada might become a refuge for criminal blacks” if fugitive slaves are not surrendered on legal grounds, and his belief, “there were already too many Negroes in Canada” (qtd. in Reinders 76). (How

ironic that this later on, in the twentieth-century, becomes the basis for cosmopolitan Ontario's self-promotion in terms of its "heritage of tolerance?") In addition to the repetitive anti-black tone held in common across generations, these quite similar expressions of white fear hauntingly bring to the fore a pattern of reducing racial proximity to a panic over space. While some may contend that the space of the nation and that of minstrel shows are quite different, I suggest we remove the protective capsule around each production to register how, as sites of culture, both narrate and calculate the place and space of blackness.

As a means of bringing the connection between these two realms into focus, let me turn again to the blackfaced cartoon. The cartoonist, J. (Joseph) Sheard, was a student at Upper Canada College from 1903 – 1907. According to the records, the *Roll of Pupils of Upper Canada College*, Joseph Sheard lived at the same address as another UCC alumni (1869 – 1870), Charles Sheard. Given the years each attended UCC, it is probable that Joseph Sheard, the cartoonist, was the son of Charles Sheard, the Orangeman. It is worth noting Charles Sheard was also the son of another Joseph Sheard, the man who served as Mayor of Toronto in 1871 and 1872. My genealogical tracings here use the object of the blackfaced cartoon to connect family ties and rely on kinship linkages to construct a relationship between the Orange Order and blackface minstrelsy. My interest is not to judge Charles Sheard's participation in the Orange Order. Rather, my point is first of all to underline the transnational flows in this geography of relations and, in so doing, to connect anti-black sentiment with both the Orange Order and the political establishment of Ontario.

Moreover, Joseph Sheard's illustration points to the affective and physical effort it takes to collapse distance, borders, limits, including bodies, between the audience and the commodity of minstrelsy. In this collapse lies a problem of excess requiring elimination not address. The economies of reproduction, whereby "too darn many niggers" is continually re-articulated, function to regiment a house of memory (Ontario) that seeks to maintain itself by disposing of an excess that no longer has a place, and this is a response to the immanent pressures of the material world. A common concern that all of these groups seem so invested in is panic over space. The Orange Order is interested in policing neighbourhoods – separating Catholics and Protestants – in the same way that the Klan would seek to determine racial division of living space. This poetics of control is, in a sociological reality, what Michel Foucault, in tracing a genealogy of racism as an instrument of management for the state, characterizes as the biopolitical organization of space.

In this dissertation and my analysis in the conclusion so far, I have refused the illusion of discursive separability that works to structure disciplinary narratives. I have refused because the disciplined comparisons of Ontario versus the West, Upper Canada versus the United Kingdom, Canada versus the United States provide alibis, habits of comparison which have to do with nationalist history, central Canadian memory, the idea of multicultural Canada emerging out of a history of tolerance. I maintain that discursive regimes, on their own, create epistemological gaps, thus it is important for those of us concerned with articulating the perplexities of life through modalities of race to rethink the connections between knowing and not knowing and, in rethinking this relation, to ask

not only *what* we know about the racial violence in Ontario's past, but also *how* we have come to know this past.¹⁵³ These simple questions treat the past as problematic sites of query – problematic in the literal sense of the word: “that a state of affairs is possible rather than actual or necessarily so” (*OED*). This definition of problematic insists that the past is not a knowable and/or even a known quantity in itself. Rather, what we know and what we do not know are both regimes of knowing, explaining the importance of examining the conditions that make both possible.

Exactly how much political force the Klan exerted on the daily texture of social life in Ontario is, of course, a difficult empirical question. Therefore, to mark this force as “a failure or lack” overlooks the vulnerabilities to which we are differently subject. As an example, I turn to a living memory narrated by a black man in Dionne Brand and Krisantha Sri Bhaggiyadatta's *Rivers Have Sources* (1986), a book that archives, through oral narratives, the “random and institutional” ways in which racial oppression, as always present, always threatening, shapes a “culture of everyday” racism that pervades the daily lives of racialized people in Canada (3, 8):

We did not live that close together, we still lived separately. Blacks always lived separately. It was safer that way, you could disappear. If you had a community you could not disappear. We were always scared of the Ku Klux Klan. There was organized racist activity at the time. You had Orangemen, Masons, all of them.

But they did not really need the Klan in those days. There was racism in the streets. It was just there. When we went to school we went through back streets and empty houses to get there and back. We did not go onto the main drag. We used to play in the rain. They would call us crazy. But it was safe in the rain, nobody else was out in the street. (151-52)

¹⁵³ For more on how ignorance is central to our structures of knowing, particularly as they pertain to discourses of race, to ways we are taught how to know and what to know, see Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana's edited collection, *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*.

To be sure, the official absence of Jim Crow laws in Ontario in the 1920s, 30s, 40s and 50s¹⁵⁴ did not mean black people were not *kept in their place*, nor did it mean they were ignorant of the segregating and surveillance practices and institutions that governed their lives. In fact, from living under these governing practices, with their rituals of social control, of learning to avoid passing through visible zones of public spaces, of having to walk through *back streets* and *empty houses* in order to get to school and back, this particular respondent, born in 1918 in Toronto, is attuned to the sociospatial dynamic at the heart of racial difference and, as a result, tunes us in on his everyday insecurities and the regimes of fear that shaped his life and the lives of many other black people around him.

Although the respondent's claim that "the Klan in those days [was] not really needed" sounds similar to Bartley noting the parallel values and principles of the Orange order and the KKK, I maintain it is a different statement from Bartley's, that the Klan was not successful because the fact that "there was racism in the streets" flags the emotionally charged space of the street for black people in the 1920s. This racist climate was a result of a synthesis of political forces, including "the Ku Klux Klan, the Orangemen, Masons, all of them" (to which I would add practices of blackface minstrelsy). My sense in this context is that the suturing of different political forces embedded the main drag with racial fear, in turn, patterning the scale of mobility through space for black bodies. This fear, as a mobilizing force, must then be acknowledged as a way of knowing and being in the physical space of the street. In fact, the geographical space of Ontario must be

¹⁵⁴ Because the black male respondent was born in 1918 in Toronto, I am assuming the description of the Klan, Orangemen, Mason, etc. applies for the 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s.

recognized as being made with racial fear, driving me to maintain that the fear felt by black people on the “main drag” is connected to Tom Smith’s shrieks and to the street as the parade ground for Orangemen and the KKK, and is thus irreducible to one political force.

It might be interesting to note a difference between Bartley’s statement and the black respondent’s, even where it seems they are making a similar observation about the Orange order providing the fearful enforcement function in Ontario. Both locate this terrorizing affect in the precincts of a broadly legitimated and respected Ontario institution, and, acknowledging a parallel between these institutions, insist that these racist principles (and their affects) were institutionalized in broadly accepted and admired and influential social organizations in Ontario. And yet, I have focused on the emotional geography of the street to demonstrate that the Klan was a political force and, as a result, to indicate how and why Bartley’s assertion that “the Loyal Orange Lodge in Ontario’s political culture was a major impediment to the growth of the Klan as a political force” (168) might be understood in another way. A difference worth noting in Bartley’s and the black respondent’s account of the relationship between the Klan and the Orange Order is how Bartley characterizes the relations as one of competition while the black respondent experienced them as working together. How, then, does this lived and remembered experience of fear amount to lack? I take cultural presence of the fear engendered by the KKK as further evidence of success. In this light, the language of lack is further understood as a language of racial silence, as white silence, silences made. Because Bartley’s statement is ambiguous it is possible for a “Canadian reader” who believes in a

history of Klan absence in Ontario to read this as a positive affirmation of the racial history of the province. Also, the continued established place of Orange order in Ontario is not positioned in par with the Klan – whereas the black respondent statement is less ambiguous in the parallel it draws between these institutions. This ambiguity can be strategic, reifying a public memory of lack as a doing, even a feeling ignored, not accounted for, making a public memory of lack a learned ignorance. What the autobiographical accounts of articulations between the Orange Order and the KKK by Brand and Sri Bhaggiyadatta's respondent allow is a moment of public visibility, of learning about lives and accounts that are otherwise avoided, inaccessible in the historical record.

Using the Orange Lodge and the Tory government of the 1920s as comparative referent points works as a strategy of official nationalist narratives – to set Ontario apart from the work of hate and to suggest that that work is always brought into the province, not of the province. It reasserts and lends support to the national discourse of relegating black histories as happening elsewhere (Walcott 35). These comparing referents, therefore, overshadow the Klan's achievements by marking off its associations and, as a result, flattening out a set of intervening and cross-cutting points of reference. It is in this light that the Klan's political agenda alone cannot determine its lack of success nor mark its failure to succeed. As such, the political system of white supremacy is crucial, in particular the capacity to exercise dominance over others on the basis of difference, whether racial or religious. If we return to Bartley's contention that we should "not overstate the presence and impact of the Klan in Ontario," what grounds of inquiry does

his warning steer us away from or to? Instead of being concerned with any overstatement, especially since overstatement gets us back to the calculus of quantity, positivist history, it might be time to think in more nuanced ways about that presence, and ask not only what political actions it achieved but also contend with the emotions that its presence elicited and, thereby, circulated.

By now it is fair to take us back to the archive, to remind us of the fact that the file came to me by accident, and the fact that it takes these accidents of archival research to get beyond the self-congratulatory kind of comparative history (official memory), to the kind of disruptive linkages I draw. So “accident” has some kind of relation to accessing affect and the history of affect. It gets us to feel where we really live. A public memory of lack is a form of avoidance. It averts our analytical gaze from recognizing the work that practices of anti-black feeling left behind. In addition to the affectively charged spaces, it leaves behind a cultural and discursive space of absence, of forgetfulness, of structural silence. One simply needs to recall the ways in which the critical work on the foundational textbooks I take up (not to mention the field of early Canadian literature as a whole) elide the difficult presence of blackness to understand the reach of this avoidance. A public memory of lack becomes a malleable cultural and spatial container in which to actively etch the racial and social violence in the re-making of Ontario. In other words, it leaves behind a lack of public memory. The paradox of lack is its memorializing apparatus. The phrase “a public memory of lack” works to highlight itself as a mechanism, a manager of memory. At the same time, it calls attention to the technocratic endeavour produced in the name of lack and the links between avoidance, oblivion and

commemoration. There is a way in which commemorative naming practices that aim to “correct” earlier mistakes *have* the effect of erasing historical identities through repetition, creating what I term a structural avoidance,¹⁵⁵ where the social order and memory correspond at the level of the provincial discourse, and obliterate other histories, in the name of a common course toward a national name. Therefore memorializing lack by positioning the Klan, this invisible empire, as a failed empire, is an attempt to cohere public memory around Ontario’s conservatism at the time, with its regressive attitude and policies towards race, and, through this work of coherence, mediate the provincial inscription of its origin story.

Keeping in mind the role that this violent narrative plays in the civic memory, what happens to memories marginal to popular culture, excluded from the valued, usable past of the nation or, in this case, of the province? Turning again to the archival folder, you will remember that it is the Klansmen, the horses, and the white people who are archived. What is not represented is the *black* fear, the *black* anger, and the *black* resistance. Is there not an almost affective violence of history that remains to be accounted for and engaged with in the experience of the black Torontonians? Of Richardson’s Sambo? Moodie’s Tom Smith? Or, for that matter, does not my affective experience allow us to speak – as it were – to the lack, the avoidance, or to make the avoidance, the lack speak to us? I want to end by suggesting that there is a remnant of the lack that is actually materially present in the affective currencies in the experience of many black Canadians – in my experience. In other words, it is less a question of the lack

¹⁵⁵ I am working with what anthropologist Evans-Pritchard terms “structural amnesia.”

of success and more one concerning a lack of the lack of awareness of the affective make-up of this supposed lack. In some sense, my visceral reaction in the archive was a way of accessing this lack, this avoidance. Perhaps, my present-day feelings are somehow filling in the gap – *signifying the archive* – representing the unrepresented.

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