

# **SHOOTING THE MESSENGER: HISTORICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO THE MEDIATION OF MODERN ABORIGINALITY IN ONTARIO**

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## **Abstract / Résumé**

This paper focuses on the collective processes concerning the construction and transformation of Aboriginality and modernity that occur through Native media production in historically contextualizing the invention of *The Indian*, the first civil society.

L'auteure cherche à analyser les processus collectifs de la construction et de la transformation des concepts d'aboriginalité et de modernité dans la production des médias autochtones, en particulier en remettant dans son contexte historique l'invention de *l'Indien*, la première société civile.

*"When we have a Press of our own, we shall, perhaps, be able to plead our own cause."*

George Copway, 1847

*"The first step in self-government is taking control of the media, because...that's where all the power battles are, in the 21st Century. That's where the struggle is."*

Gary Farmer, 1996

## **Culturally Mediating Technologies**

Whatever the mode of narration, whether by smoke or hand signals, by word of mouth along the moccasin telegraph, through wampum exchanged in inter-cultural trade networks, by divining, dreaming or speaking to spirits in a shaking tent, Aboriginal peoples have long been engaged in processes of discursive mediation. Most recently, they have adapted the printing press and are innovating electronic technologies to meet the contemporary communication requirements of their communities. This paper<sup>1</sup> focuses on the collective processes concerning the construction and transformation of Aboriginality and modernity that occur through Native media production. It attends to the ways 19th and 20th Century Native peoples from several culturally diverse regions of Central and Western Canada have adapted technologies of representation to culturally mediate their visions of an Aboriginal civil society.

Contemporary academic approaches to Native communications generally stem from one of two broad philosophies of media. The first champions mass communicating as a macro-praxis and approaches Native media as a usually less than successful attempt to mimic the mainstream;<sup>2</sup> the other acknowledges the possibility of multiple non-derivative medias each with its own communications ideology and its own criterion for measuring value. Among the proponents of the first school of thought, there is a proclivity to view the media as operating everywhere extrinsically to society. On a global scale, therefore, "the" media represents simply the neutral means by which news and entertainment are transmitted. The second proposition, by contrast, demands that one approach the micro-discourses that diverse medias constitute as integral elements to community life — as discourses that are often *productive* of sociality. Gerald Wilkinson<sup>3</sup> suggests, for instance, that creating alternative Native medias may serve to undermine the hegemony of mainstream media forms. He writes:

With the white man's perfection of the media comes the perfection of colonialism. His desire for control of our institutions

in order to acquire our natural resources, and his desire to control our souls simply because we are different and pose a threat to him, will still be present. However, through efforts of our own, we can turn this around and make the media work for us. Technology is at the same time the handmaiden of colonialism and the promise of liberation (1974:30).

Globalization theorists have tended to assume that non-first-world peoples are incompetent to achieve emancipation by engaging global technologies such as television. Aboriginal television producers and consumers have typically been marked as the undiscerning recipients of a technological package in which the form of the received technology somehow determines the processes and products that are producible given that technology. By way of example, Jean Baudrillard (1981) and Marshal McLuhan (1974) assert that televisual technologies, by virtue of their form and operation, are inherently dominating because they induce a particular set of social relations. Similarly inclined, Harold Innis (1951) insists that the imposition of Western technologies, including television, on to hunter-gatherer societies alone was sufficient to cause the destruction of "traditional" ways of life. Both theories support the idea that the form of the technology itself is the operative agent of change.

Prior to being dismissed as a teleology of technological determinism, Marshall McLuhan's myth of the "global village" achieved a significant amount of critical acclaim. Theorists who subscribed to McLuhan's prediction of a world psychically connected though a common communications network paid little attention to local or ethnographic evidence to the contrary. Globalization theorists tend to conflate the idea of the global diffusion of communications *technology* with a global diffusion of communications *ideology* (Appadurai 1996, Williams 1977). It is predominantly the forms of this technology, namely the TV cameras, televisions, radio receivers, satellites, and so forth, which flow from numerous cores, to numerous other cores and peripheries. Scholars such as Innis (1950), McLuhan (1974), Ong (1982) and Meyrowitz (1985), however, assumed that set patterns in the social relations of both media production and consumption inadvertently accompanied these forms. Subsequent communications studies advance the idea of a global homogenization of media apparatuses, owing to the diffusion of the tools associated with the technology of communications (see Grosswiler 1998).

For a variety of reasons, there has been a general reluctance to address Indigenous communications technologies as one would other Aboriginal discursive formations.<sup>4</sup> One reason is that while they view hunting and gathering as "traditional" Aboriginal practices; there is a strong tradition among First World peoples to assume a proprietary

relationship to such technological feats as television production – particularly when the process is seen as indivisible from the product. Non-Natives tend to view electronic technology as a “gift” to Aboriginal peoples. There is little consideration of the fact that Aboriginal social relations condition unique methods for deploying the media, thereby constituting a re-invention of the radio, television, and film form. The trail of artifacts is indeed easily traceable, flowing from centre to margins. The specific modes or processes by which Aboriginal media production occurs, however, are not so easily understood from afar. On this point, Ulf Hannerz’s observations are instructive. He contends that the First World has probably been a part of the consciousness of Third World peoples much longer than the reverse:

If indeed there is often an idea that peripheral cultures come defenseless, unprepared to the encounter with metropolitan culture, that they are insufficiently organized and are taken by surprise, then this notion would frequently entail a measure of ignorance of the continuous historical development of center-periphery contacts (1997:109).

Following in the steps of James C. Scott (1985), Darnell points out that as a matter of necessity, members of minority groups are always much more motivated to understand their oppressors than the reverse (1993:12). This point is born out in the following example. In the 19th century, Ojibwe Methodist minister Peter Jones recounted a story of the first contact between the Anishinabek and Europeans (in Kohl 1860). According to Jones, upon hearing of the arrival of strangers to their territories, Ojibwe leaders held a council at which they decided to *seek out* the newcomers. After discovering the French traders who were encamped down the river, the Ojibwes initiated commercial relations, trading with them for metal axes and knives, guns, and other items which they quickly mastered and incorporated into their daily practices in ways which furthered their own goals (MacLeod 1992:11-13). Given this account of the active appropriation of European tools by Aboriginal peoples, the idea of a *recent*, or passive engagement of the periphery by the centre, therefore, might well be a consequence of the recentness of the First World’s awakening to global realities, as Hannerz has suggested.

In spite of Aboriginal accounts to the contrary, there is a tendency in academic accounts concerning Native media to locate the impetus for Native media development in outside forces. Some see government actions as precipitating Aboriginal media reactions.<sup>5</sup> Others presume that exogenous technological inventions were simply accommodated by non-critical Aboriginal recipients (Granzberg 1982; Granzberg, Steinbring and Hamer 1977). These writings generally begin with reactions to the *White*

*Paper* in 1969 or to some introduced technology and play up the recentness of Native peoples' engagement with electronic technologies, ignoring their historical involvement in wider projects of self-representation. It does seem to be the case, however, that Native media development occurred as a result of an event-driven process. Factors such as: church policies regarding Native clergy, the rise of Aboriginal agricultural production, the signing of treaties, the institutionalization of residential schooling, and the rise of Native political organizations have all borne significantly on the emergence of Aboriginal mass communications. There is sufficient evidence to suggest, however, that organized efforts to amplify Native voices through the newspaper medium, and thus to stage modernity, were initiated by Native peoples *themselves*, and began long before the 1960s.

Notwithstanding my own findings, notions of a non-differentiated worldwide trajectory of "progress"—a discursive residue of colonial times—continue to inflect current modernist<sup>6</sup> constructions of Native identity. The concept of a customary Native technological deficiency, for instance, enjoys a cogent contemporary existential reality. Portrayed as having arrived at the table relatively late in the process of technological progress, and as having failed to transcend their histories and localities, Indian mass mediators are often made to appear less than modern, or as insufficiently reflective or objective.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, highlighting the "modernity" of the Aboriginal mass media is also employed as a means of disauthenticating the distinctness of Native media products and practices. Images of "traditional" Indian cultures as bounded coherent wholes, as fields of shared meaning, as timeless signs of traditional periphery, and as the present incarnations of some unalterable transhistorical essence, appeal to modernist sensibilities which are by definition more comfortable with putative order. Contemporary Aboriginality, however, is defiantly heteroglossic and complex.

One of the consequences of modernist codifications is that "authentic Indians" are assumed to be naturally disinclined to live in cities, to speak English, to be filmed or recorded and are either disinterested or simply inept at creating images of, and recording, themselves and cultural others. Unswayed by the "vanishing cultures" thesis, other scholars assert that Aboriginal English, for example, far from being the less than competent rendition of the language and the mark of culture loss it is often assumed to be, generally requires significant cultural translation before it is understandable by the general public. Darnell, for instance, writes:

Lack of comprehension of the distinctiveness, both linguistic in the narrow sense, and sociolinguistic in the broader

one, of English spoken by First Nations peoples is at the root of much of the mutual solitudes of Native and white in Canada (1992:91).

The same might be said of Aboriginal presses, and Native radio and television. There is nothing intrinsically Euro-Canadian to these media, nor is there necessarily a transparency to the products produced through them. "Television," according to Lyons, "...will bend to fit the cultural circumstances in which it is received, even while it is creating those circumstances" (1990:425). Media practices, therefore, as well as newspapers, films, videos and radio ought to be viewed as *cultural* products, much the same as so-called "traditional" products and practices are.

Contemporary Aboriginal peoples generally perceive little controversy in "eating buffalo burgers and drinking cappuccinos (Flynn 1995), while proclaiming their traditionalism. And yet, within academia and without there remain those who are reluctant to acknowledge the complexity of contemporary Aboriginal peoples' circumstances.<sup>8</sup> There is a tendency to perceive contemporary Indian peoples as having voluntarily shed the trappings of their traditional antecedents in favour of the modern conveniences associated with the "white world."<sup>9</sup> Prior to recent revisions of our modernist concepts of culture, moreover, it was fairly easy to discount the important historical roles played by such agents of cultural translation or such mediative figures as Native priests, farmers and journalists. These individuals, however, are often charged by non-Native as well as some Aboriginal people, with having uncritically adopted mainstream practices and sensibilities, and with having dispensed with any capacity for "real Indianness."

The common propensity to essentialize cultural differences leads outsiders to apperceive Native cultures as relics of primitivism, lacking by nature the very capacities for complexity demanded of modernity. The tendency to essentialize media ideology, moreover, leads to the misrecognition of a "global village," which as Ien Ang rejoins, is simply the story of the re-making of the non-Western other, and nothing other than the idea of "the universal culmination of capitalist modernity" (1994:195).

In the realm of communications, essentialization—the notion that Native communities are relatively undifferentiated unchanging fields—often entails that Aboriginal media practices and products, for example, are assumed to involve community-wide participation, and to reflect abstract social processes or societal values. Failing to interrogate the specific circumstances of Native media production, moreover, often results with analytical attention being directed toward the artifacts or *tools*, rather than to the *strategies* of Native communication. It is crucial to appreciate that while they are created in particular social and historical,

or cultural contexts Aboriginal mass mediations are also informed by the attempts of positioned active *individuals* to make sense of the real-life situations in which they find themselves. Indeed, the absence of a singular Aboriginal televisual genre, or one conventionalized system of organization for Native production crews, suggests that Native communicators are capable of creating defiantly hybrid and idiosyncratic production processes and media products, often fusing selected features of local "tradition" with outside elements in unexpected ways.

Despite the multitude of forms these Aboriginal performances of modernity take mainstream media development continues to serve as the yardstick against which Aboriginal communicative "progress" is most often measured. Accounts of Native media development attend generally to the introduction of European technologies of inscription – to alphabetic and electronic literacy. The presence or absence of a European approved language and form of writing; of mechanized print instruments; and more recently, of electronic signal transmitters; have been the main criteria employed in the external assessment of Native communications capacities.

Evaluations of Aboriginal technological evolution commonly ignore evidence which suggests that throughout the nineteenth century, for example, individual Aboriginal mass mediators were actively at work orchestrating images of Indianness. They did so through agricultural exhibits and fairs; by selectively engaging mainstream presses and museums in projects of their own making; by creating Native presses and authoring books; and later, by fomenting and representing unique collective identities through Native political organizations, friendship centres, and communications societies (see Buddle 2001).

Failing to accept the complexity of Aboriginal identities prompts the proponents of essentialism to locate the solution to the "homogenization problem" in protection, isolation and other strategies associated with the rejection of "modern" technologies, and in technological cleansing.<sup>10</sup> For technological determinists, television, much like the motorized vehicle, the English language (and by extension store bought clothing and foods), levels or homogenizes everything and everyone it comes into contact with.<sup>11</sup> And, as Barbara Abou-EI-Haj submits:

The predicted scenarios, for a homogenized or corrupt global culture, look like contemporary and deceptively milder versions of their colonial predecessor, the quasi-scientific theory of vanishing races incapable of competing with European civilization, doomed to extinction, which justified efforts to assimilate or remove and finally to annihilate Indigenous peoples (1997:139).

Homogenization theories paint communications technology as a virtually inescapable force that propels hapless victims forward into an undifferentiated modernity. This inevitably results in massive subordination and in the production of standardized goods for a global market – conditions that are inherently destructive of local traditions. From this perspective, therefore, participation in mass mediation entails a whole scale annihilation of “otherness.”

From the vantage point of the centre—the site of the development of the hypothesis of homogenization—with a seemingly one-way flow of “technology” from core to periphery, Third and Fourth world cultures represent mere receptacles or “dumping sites” for First world programming products and practices (Hannerz 1997:107-8). Thus, despite the fact that Aboriginal television often involves strategies such as recasting the English language and re-directing “traditional” information corridors, homogenization theorists presuppose that such communications technologies operate simply as assimilative social formations, the effects of which Aboriginal peoples are powerless to resist.

Several anthropological studies offer a counterpoint to the globalization argument, suggesting that there is nothing inherently transformative in the technology. Feit (1973), Tanner (1979), Ridington (1982), Rushforth (1994) and Wenzel (1991), for example, have drawn attention to the idea of technology as embedded in such factors as hunting techniques and socio-cosmological articulations. Pointing to the “artifice,” rather than the “artifacts,” of Northern Cree and Dene hunting strategies, these studies suggest that we can no longer equate Cree and Dene hunting practices with those of non-Native sports hunters, for instance, for the simple fact that they employ the shotgun towards a similar end. Why, one might ask, should shooting a camera pose any less of a theoretical problem than the gun? Art historian John Tagg posits that the social processes associated with photography are not given in the technology, but constitute a “discursive formation” which has to be negotiated in and across other discursive fields. He writes:

A technology has no inherent value outside its mobilizations in specific discourses, practices, institutions and relations of power. Import and status have to be produced and effectively institutionalized and such institutionalizations do not describe a unified field or the working out of some essential causality. Even as they interlink in more or less extended chains, they are negotiated locally and discontinuously and are productive of value and meaning (1997:158-159).

Scholars subscribing to this view would insist that variables including social relations, historical and political circumstances and government

policies condition the way in which media as well as technologies such as the English language (Darnell 1993) will be used by Indigenous peoples and others. From this theoretical position, therefore, it is possible to imagine cultural diversity as *intensifying*, rather than diminishing, as a result of the globalization of communications. Appadurai (1996) underscores this idea when he characterizes mediascapes as arenas where different narratives intersect. We might therefore think of an Aboriginal mediascape as providing the context for Aboriginal versions of modern Indigenousness, to dialogically interact with official and global versions of both Aboriginality and modernity. Aboriginal media thus powerfully refutes the postmodernist assumption that a system of social control and power is inherent in mass media (Meadows 1995:206-7), and the idea that socio-cosmological conformity naturally accompanies English language diffusion.

### **Undermining Native Authority**

Battles fought in the realm of discourse which aim to counter the effects of structural violence and to invest symbols with new meaning seldom garner the same attention as do enacted and armed contests over more tangible objects. Yet, as Nordstrom and Martin point out, violence in its ideational manifestation—as when it is either symbolic or embedded in the socioeconomic structure of society—is responsible for the destruction of far more lives, than is violence in its physical manifestation (1992:8). Native communities in Canada are no strangers to structural violence. The *Indian Act*, for instance, defines Indianness for Aboriginal peoples. Forced settlement interrupted intertribal trade patterns. Missionization and residential school education virtually destroyed kinship networks and Native literacies. Indian legislation prohibited Native ceremonials as well as forms of Indigenous economic exchange, political organization and media development. In addition to interfering with Native socio-cosmological and politico-economic structures and practices, each of these factors might be viewed as an affront to Aboriginal *communications systems*.

If we approach the structuring sets of relations which brought certain people together to the exclusion of others as *communicative*, rather than simply *relational*, the type of state-to-administrative subject relationship which threatened to replace inter-Aboriginal inter-connectivity during the colonial era takes on added significance. Though legislation flowed in one direction—as television, radio and other media texts seem to do—Native individuals did not allow the successive waves of new regulations to simply wash over them. It cannot be denied, however,

that government and missionary attempts to transform Native subjectivity by altering the nature of Aboriginal individuals' interaction with their social and physical environments would present significant challenges to cultural communication or transmission. Only much later did broadcast policy affect how Indian peoples related to, and communicated with, Native and non-Native people. In impeding and in some cases destroying communicative pathways, the Indian administration, missionaries and others who assumed authority over Indian matters, also succeeded in invalidating the value of the information carried along them. That forms of neo-traditionalism are possible today, however, suggests both that the devastation was less than total, and that Aboriginal peoples have strategically fashioned and re-fashioned tremendously resilient socio-cosmological beliefs and cultural practices.

Early Native political activists pursued a wide variety of strategies to counter efforts made by the state to render Aboriginal communication corridors receptive to colonial projects. Ojibwe cultural translators, George Copway, Peter E. Jones and Henry Bird Steinhauer, for instance, sought to indigenize both the English language and the print media, rather than merely succumbing to the hegemonic deployment of European languages and technologies. While Europeans possessed the means to define the terms of the discourse, Native peoples found ways to innovatively reconstruct these forms inventing novel hybridized idioms of expression in the process. In mastering and transforming European forms of communication, for instance, Ojibwe missionaries fashioned a distinctly Ojibwe English, ripe with the metaphors, allegories, and symbolism that characterized Ojibwe oration, which they used to convey information to an emergent audience of literate Native peoples. In transforming these hegemonic discursive formations, and applying them in novel ways toward the service of their people, Ojibwe writers defiantly made the print medium their own.

Native media producers including: Fred Loft, Andy Paull, Mike Mountain Horse, Edward Ahenakew, Joseph Dion and Eugene Steinhauer employed their skills as scribes to decode dominant mediations. They also sought to publicize preferred meanings based on their own experiential senses of reality, to combat enduring Eurocentric tropes, and to protest erroneous representations of Indigenous peoples in the media mainstream (see Buddle 2001). Their writings simultaneously contributed to a re-defining of local subjectivities and towards assertions of a collective Native nationality. Despite the diversity of *communicative tactics*, however, Native activists throughout colonial and contemporary times, have consistently focused on the same *fundamental issues*. Namely, these include: preserving Native sovereignty, self-determina-

tion and self-government; securing legal title to a Native land base; and inculcating skills that were deemed to be necessary to the protection of Native cultural and material resources.

In the mainstream Canadian presses of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, idioms of Native savagery and primitivism provided models against which settlers could measure their own civility and progress. Settlers were highly interested in ensuring that Native peoples remained in the social hierarchy, where their alleged innate deficiencies positioned them. Consequently, segments of the Euro-Canadian public have often openly, or with silent approval, sanctioned government policies that were designed to impede Native peoples' access to so-called "modern" technologies. Indian modernity proposed a direct threat to settler identity. Nineteenth century Indian policies that required Indian people to broadcast seed by hand, for instance, despite the availability of modern farming technologies (Carter 1990), are ideologically analogous to policies which have impeded Native peoples' access to technologies of mass mediation.<sup>12</sup>

Today, Indian people are often excluded from participation in the mainstream media and from developing their own independent mediascapes, for the reason that they are perceived as having failed to participate in the invention of the tools of communications technology. The enduring idea that Aboriginal peoples have not undergone the necessary progression through the steps of communicatory evolution to lay claim to what is viewed as an ostensibly modern, or white invention, is an example of this Eurocentric discursive residue. It was, however, government policies, rather than some allegedly innate Indian distaste for agriculture or "modern technology," that accounts for why 19<sup>th</sup> century agriculture failed to form the basis of a stable reserve economy. I will show below that it is as a direct result of government policies, moreover, that the development of a national Aboriginal media apparatus would take almost half a century longer to materialize than it might have.

## ***Petaubun*, Native Authors and the Threat of Enfranchisement**

In some cases, Native participation in the newspaper medium was *indirectly* inhibited by specific pieces of government legislation that were designed with other purposes in mind. In mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Ontario, the threat of involuntary enfranchisement successfully discouraged Native authors from taking on positions of responsibility in the newspaper industry. In 1861, for example, a recently ordained Methodist minister named Thomas Hurlburt began publishing *Petaubun*, an English and Ojibwe newspaper, in the Sarnia, Ontario area.<sup>13</sup> Hurlburt had looked to

the Cherokee, and consequently to the first ever Native newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix* (1828), as a prototype of, and for, Ojibwe advancement. He thought Native people in Ontario might derive similar “civilizing” benefits by establishing their own press. In the July 1862 issue, Hurlburt petitioned fellow missionaries to aid in circulating the publication and in collecting and forwarding subscriber fees. He also expressed his desire to turn over the publication of the paper to an “educated Indian.”

As a proponent of the old Missionary school, Hurlburt, although he was of European descent, spoke and wrote Ojibwe fluently. And, the mostly Ojibwe language paper received several letters of encouragement from Ojibwe readers (*Petaubun* July 1862). Despite a few positive responses to the paper, however, Hurlburt’s call for an educated successor went unanswered. In a later issue, Hurlburt reiterated his plea for donations and chastised Ojibwe readers for failing to become more involved in the paper’s production. He identified two Ojibwe ministers — Allen Salt and Peter Marksman — as competent to the task of taking over the paper (*Petaubun* August 1862). Hurlburt was unsuccessful in securing a replacement, however, and the paper was discontinued shortly thereafter. The unwillingness of school-educated Indian people to step forward and assume production of the paper was probably neither due to a deficit of competent Native candidates, nor to a lack of interest. It was more likely due to the threat that assuming such a position posed to a school educated Native person’s Aboriginal status, not to mention to the territorial sovereignty of ones band at large.

Only four years before the paper began production, the government passed the ‘*Act to encourage the gradual civilization of the Indians...*’ which paradoxically, both established, and provided a mechanism for eliminating, Indian status. Though internally contradictory, the Act conferred on bureaucrats, rather than Indian people themselves, the power to decipher and hence to author Indianness. This piece of legislation promoted full citizenship or enfranchisement. It was designed to legislate out of existence Native sovereignty and self-sufficiency, most notably self-determination, self-representation, self-management and self-government (see Smith 1987:239). The Act targeted those, moreover, who were mostly likely to realize these potentialities, namely, school-educated, alphabetically literate members of the Native population.

As legislation was the primary mechanism by which the government deprived Native leaders of their authority and Native peoples of their lands, languages and other resources, English literacy and print propagating capacities were crucial survival strategies in what had become a war waged with printed words. Although many Native leaders in 19<sup>th</sup>

Century Ontario had either attained these skills themselves or ensured that selected band members had, it is not surprising that these school-educated individuals did not step forward to assume the publication of journals such as *Petaubun*. At this time, advertising one's literary abilities would surely have invited unwanted attention from government administrators, who were eager to test the civilizing potential of the enfranchisement program.

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a group of Native intellectuals in Ontario had strategically allied with the Methodist church in order to appropriate selected skills. These aptitudes included, among others, fluency in the English language, alphabetic literacy and proficiency in farming – capacities with which they intended to defend their cultural, political and economic autonomy. Several Ojibwe men once ordained as Methodist ministers, quickly found their way into print. In addition to three books, George Copway wrote for various newspapers, including *The Christian Guardian* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Copway was the first of his cohort to have his writings widely circulated in white circles (Smith 1987). Although it was while he was based in New York, and after he had been expunged from the Methodist Church, he is the first Native person from Canada to produce a weekly newspaper - *Copway's American Indian* (Petronne 1990:45). Peter Jones, Peter Jacobs and others, published historical writings on the Ojibwe nation and their personal memoirs, and wrote regular articles for the *Christian Guardian* newspaper (Schmalz 1991, Smith 1987).

Lacking a publication of their own and geographically separated from their peers, Ojibwe Methodists who were desirous of some form of social support often relied on publications such as the *Christian Guardian* to converse with their distant colleagues. The *Guardian* was first published in York (Toronto), in 1829. The publication not only allowed missionaries in the field to keep abreast of current issues in the Methodist Church, but it facilitated their participation in ongoing church debates. Exchanges focused on the theme of Native "competency" however, were not always fueled by contesting theological ideologies, as is apparent in the Spring issues of 1843. Issues in March, April and May that year, nearly twenty years before the launch of *Petauban*, contain disparaging comments made by Thomas Hurlburt concerning both Ojibwe people in general and the quality of Ojibwe missionary, Peter Jones' hymnal translations in particular (*Christian Guardian* 15 March 1843, 12 April 1843). Hurlburt, who, according to Smith (1987:185) was jealous of the attention Jones received for his translation work, asserted that Jones' hymnal translations were vastly inferior to those translated by fellow Methodist minister James Evans, later co-inventor of the syllabic system.

In response, Jones wrote to the *Christian Guardian* defending the character of his people against the charges of “cannibalism,” “immorality” and “imbecility” attributed to them by Hurlburt. While a few influential members of the Canadian Methodist Church rose to Jones’ defense—he was after all, the first person ever, to produce a written form of the Ojibwe language—Hurlburt’s mean spiritedness took its toll on Jones and other Native missionaries. Ojibwe Methodist minister, George Henry, for instance, became so disillusioned with the Methodists’ in-fighting, that he eventually left the church, took a group of traditional Ojibwe dancers on a performance tour of Britain, and became a Catholic (Smith 1987:188). Non-Natives were becoming increasingly viewed not only by the Methodist institution, but by the vast majority of churches and other so-called “friends the Indian” associations, as the authorities on Native issues. This is evinced by the growth of Native theme newspapers throughout Ontario, which were edited and published by non-Native authors in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the concomitant decrease of Native authored publications. Henry Schoolcraft’s, *The Literary Voyageur*, and E.F. Wilson’s *The Pipe of Peace, Our Forest Children* and the *Canadian Indian* are examples of this phenomenon. Further west, ventriloquial feats were mediated through residential school publications, which were edited, or some would say censored, by the school staff.<sup>14</sup>

That members of the Ojibwe intelligentsia had demonstrated their mastery over the means of mass communication is evinced by their numerous publications in the first half of the century. However, a new generation of non-Native missionaries, with institutional support behind them managed to usurp the authority of the Native literati, taking over as the official voice of Indian country. This, in combination with increasingly restrictive government policies, conspired to diminish Native rights, and with them Native peoples’ capacity to author a meaningful world into being. Even today, that the writings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Ojibwe intelligentsia are still not counted among the early *Anthropological* (but not necessarily narrowly *Ethnographic*) accounts of Ojibwe life, indicates just how persistent the tendencies of Eurocentrism are in Canadian historical discourse.

### ***The Indian, the First Aboriginally Authored Native Newspaper in Canada***

Throughout Ontario, Native polities continued to resist the government’s first enfranchisement policies. The Southern Ojibwe chiefs were sufficiently dissatisfied with the *Indian Act* of 1876, for instance, to launch a public campaign in defense of their rights. Up until this point,

their participation in the mainstream political process had been limited to merely receiving legislation and transmitting it to their constituencies. Although they must have objected to the idea of non-Native government authority in total, they were constrained to respond to the imposition of legislation in a register of government choosing – for the most part, using the language of counter-government policy. Aside from discussing amongst themselves what might be done, appealing to the public was one of few possibilities available to them to make their voices heard.

The Grand General Council did not own a press, and therefore had no formal organ by means of which to disseminate its views. Dr. Peter E. Jones, however, the Council's Secretary Treasurer, published the council minutes in five consecutive issues of the weekly *Warton Echo* newspaper in June 1879 (Titley 1986:197), and in numerous issues of the *Pipe of Peace* journal<sup>15</sup> (Schmalz 1991:296). The government ignored the council's print media protest. And, with what could be described as studious indifference to the Grand Council's concerns, moved in the opposite direction adding, in 1880, an amendment to the *Indian Act* which stipulated that any Indian man with a university degree would be henceforth, automatically enfranchised, or deprived of Indian status (Schmalz 1991:198).

Although the mid - 19<sup>th</sup> century *Enfranchisement* and *Civilization* Acts represented a repudiation of the 1830 reserve policy which was implicitly premised on isolation, the government's approach to enfranchisement, and integration, was less than consistent. In fact, it was a segment of the very political system that had threatened to dissolve the reserves that would recognize in their preservation, a definite political advantage. In 1885, John A. MacDonald's then ruling Conservative party, introduced and passed a Bill to shift the responsibility for electoral matters in Dominion elections from the provincial, to the federal legislature (Montgomery 1965:14). The effect of the *Electoral Franchise Act* was to relax the enfranchisement rule for Indian men in Eastern Canada. The Act granted the vote to Native men who held sufficient property on reserve, without necessitating a loss of Indian status or requiring the partitioning of the reserve.

As the Secretary Treasurer for the Grand General Indian Council of Ontario, Dr. Peter E. Jones, who in 1874 became the New Credit Mississaugas' Head Chief, was both familiar with the dominant political and legal system, and skilled in employing its tools to oppose Indian department policies. No longer threatened with the abnegation of his Indian status, Jones began publishing and editing *The Indian*, the first Native controlled newspaper in Canada.<sup>16</sup> In endeavouring to serve as a messenger, Jones was in fact, revitalizing a time-honoured Mississauga

tradition. Smith, for example, submits that by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Credit River Mississaugas had become renowned for their abilities to transmit information. On one wampum belt, the symbol for the Mississauga band at the western end of Lake Ontario is an eagle perched on a pine tree at the Credit River (1987:21). According to Peter Jones Sr., the symbol represented the band's:

...*watching* and *swiftness* in carrying messages. The eagle was to watch all the council fires between the Six Nations and the Ojebways; and being far-sighted, he might, in the event of anything happening, communicate the tidings to the distant tribes (Jones 1861:121).<sup>17</sup>

The franchise provisions therefore merely removed one of the barriers to inter-community communication that former legislation had erected. Although it was not intended for this specific purpose, the *Franchise Act* enabled the former Credit River Mississaugas, now at their new residence in the Grand River territory, to engage in public exchanges of written information, without the fear of forcible enfranchisement.

With his publication, Jones aimed to arm the community with the information they required to successfully resist government attempts to break up the reserves. The paper was intended to serve as a forum, for instance, for an investigation and discussion of the meaning of recent Indian department legislation. While other Native theme papers at the time sought to integrate the Native population by fashioning an imagined community of Native Christendom; Jones insisted that raising political awareness provided greater empowering, elevating and unifying potential. If a sense of Native unity were to develop, he reasoned; it was toward occupying the parliament, not the pulpit, that Aboriginal energies ought to focus.

In creating a newspaper, over which he held complete editorial control, Jones created a discursive world of Indian making – a world of possibilities in which a hierarchy of a particular type of Indian interest prevailed. To readers, he offered an example of Indian self-assessment – an alternative to the prevailing government assessments – which was itself a subversive act. A March issue, for example, reports on the items two bands would submit to the upcoming Colonial Exhibition. The Oneidas entered a self-acting railroad switch and a perpetual motion machine invented by William Doxtater. The residents of the Christian Islands sent “fine specimens of hay work...bead work, baskets, axe helves, war clubs, autograph albums in birch bark, etc....” (31 March 1886: 64-5). Regarding the inaugural Indian exhibition at Cowichan, B.C., *The Indian* reports that in addition to livestock, cereal and root crop exhibits, “...to mark the progress of civilization exhibits were made of native hand-writing in the

English language...." (8 December 1886:233).

In analogous fashion, *The Indian* featured articles and correspondences written by "educated" reserve residents, the minutes of Indian councils, letters from Native school children, editorial articles in Ojibwe and Mohawk, and reports on the status of reserve agricultural projects. Each entry, moreover, was mediated under the competent editorship of a local Native leader. Jones explained that his motivations for producing the paper were "to promote the welfare of a large community, which, until now, has not had the advantage of a medium of their own through which they could be heard" (30 December 1885:1). *The Indian*, therefore, as a cultural product, represented a textual equivalent to the Indian exhibit. Just as the fairs publicized what were generally under-appreciated forms of Native knowledge and cultivation, *The Indian* was a forum designed to amplify the otherwise unheeded articulations of Aboriginal authority. Experimental in its approach, *The Indian*, as well as the examples it provided, offered a model of and for what Native ingenuity, competency and self-styled progress might entail. The Indian represented a new strategy of, or technology for, negotiating modern Indian selfhood.

Jones had a unique vision for *The Indian*. It was promoted as the only newspaper devoted entirely to the "interests of the Aborigines of North America, and especially to the Indians of Canada." The paper was to be published bi-monthly until the growth in subscriptions justified producing a weekly issue. It would furnish international<sup>18</sup> and reserve news, the latter by securing articles from resident Native reporters and correspondences from reserve residents. The Editor promised to include thorough discussions of legislation respecting Indian people, reports of the Grand General Indian Council, other meetings of Native polities, and Ojibwe and Mohawk language editorials. Statistics concerning financial and other Indian band conditions, biographical sketches of noteworthy Native historical figures, and archaeological and historical reports were to be furnished by Indian agents and missionaries, literary men, social scientists, and members of local historical societies respectively. Practical concerns such as agricultural, hunting, fishing and gaming techniques were to be discussed from the point of view of Native farmers and hunters. Finally, market reports on fish, furs and game as well as explanations of game laws and discussions of treaty rights were to be provided whenever applicable (30 December 1885).

In an editorial note, Jones points out that many of the Native theme newspapers at the time were devoted to Indian peoples' religious interests. Jones, however, was more interested in Native peoples' temporal welfare, with the newly won franchise as well as with "laws respecting Indians, their rights to lands, their position in respect to treaties, and

their financial standing with the Government...." (1886:54). Unlike many of his contemporaries, Jones did not view the Dominion government as an entirely alien entity. His father, a Methodist Missionary and a social and political activist, had laboured to bring about change from within the Methodist institution. Similarly, Peter E. Jones was dedicated to the idea that penetrating the mainstream political sphere was a necessary step toward the realization of a truly operative system of Native self-government.

Jones also adopted a hybrid form of spirituality. His unwillingness to fully commit to one religion, including traditionalism, is consistent with Ojibwe political strategy throughout 19<sup>th</sup> century Ontario. Jones calculated the benefits to be derived from affiliating with each denomination. The government tended to regard the Canadian Church of England with favour owing to its mandate to promote the cause of British loyalty; meanwhile the American-oriented Methodists were often viewed as 'advocates of republicanism' (Schmalz 1991:159). And, when it came to appointing Indian Department personnel, the majority of which were patronage positions, with few exceptions, Anglican Tories alone were selected (Schmalz 1991:165). Pragmatism dictated, therefore, Dr. Peter Edmund Jones, who had political aspirations of his own, adopt even if temporarily, an outward Anglicanism, which he did, while maintaining selected features of traditional Ojibwe spirituality.

Among other issues, *The Indian* covered the first election in which Native men were permitted to vote. At the 1886 Oneida election, Jones served as the deputy returning officer. Frederic Loft of Six Nations was appointed scrutineer by the Liberal Candidate for whom he had campaigned. Shortly after the Liberal Administration came into power the Native electorate, who had for the most part supported the Conservatives, were punished for what was alleged to have been an "unintelligent" use of the vote. Indian voting privileges were repealed. Aside from World War veterans, Native peoples in Eastern Canada were effectively excluded from participating in the Canadian political system from 1896 to 1960.

Jones did not have the authority to use band funds to subsidize the paper. In response to a critic who accused him of appropriating band funds for this very purpose, Jones offered a detailed accounting of the band's expenditures (17 February 1886:30). He seems to have relied mostly on advertising and subscription money to produce the publication, which was printed at his own publishing company in Hagersville. With a subscription price of \$1.50 per year, *The Indian* began with an initial circulation of five thousand copies. By the sixth issue, the circulation base widened to include Europe. Nine months after its first issue,

*The Indian's* circulation had tripled.<sup>19</sup> The December 29<sup>th</sup> issue was to be the last edition of *The Indian*. That the paper was able to last as long as it did without using band funds, or relying on institutional support, as did other papers, is truly remarkable.

Although *The Indian* met with an untimely fate; during its brief production, the paper was able to provide several possibilities regarding what path a collective, forward movement of Native peoples might take as well as providing an image of antiquity, which was central to the idea of an Indian nation. Articles for instance, on the ancient "Mound Builders," on pre-historic "Indian relics," and on the common practice of substituting European for Native place names, challenged the state sanctioned, or "official" re-writing of history. It was by means of such historical revisionism and by asserting their discrepant localism, that Euro-Canadians, whose home was ostensibly "the state of civility," sought to establish themselves as natives and Indian people as comparative *late-comers*. By transforming or civilizing the social terrain, Europeans made themselves "at home." Although literally Indigenous to the region, Native peoples, according to Europeans at least, were neophytes in the symbolic space of civility. Jones contested the very terms of the debate by shifting the discourse toward a discussion of natural or physical, as opposed to socio-moral, remains and by re-situating the starting point for a story of origins on North American soil rather than in the so-called "Old" country.

Unlike the government directed course, to which Native communities were unwillingly subjected; *The Indian* represented a model of and for an Aboriginally inspired and activated form of social agency. The paper provided the context for a debate in which Indian peoples deliberated among themselves as to the interpretation of tradition, and as to the meaning Native community progress ought to assume and the direction it should follow. And, it would be by re-invigorating and revising these discursive strategies, that succeeding Native intermediaries would be able to imagine and mobilize their own plans for a unified nation of politically engaged and culturally competent Native persons.

## **Frederick Ogilvie Loft, Publicizing Dissent in the Mainstream Presses**

Frederic Ogilvie Loft, a Mohawk from Six Nations, was one of the few Native people at this time to gain employment at a mainstream Canadian press. In 1885, a year before *The Indian* began publication, he took a position as the Tuscarora correspondent for the *Brantford Expositor* (Petron 1990:99). He wrote about local Six Nations community

matters. On 9 February 1885, he reported on such events as horse racing, the formation of debating and literary societies and an Order of Foresters, recitals of the Kanyengeh choir, church tea meetings and the activities of the Forest Bailiffs, who protected reserve timber stocks from white wood smugglers. The year Loft was employed at the paper was a turbulent one for Indian-white relations. From March on that year, the paper's prime focus was on the Riel uprising in the Northwest.

While fighting abroad in the First World War, Loft met Native soldiers from across the country and was able to gain a sense of the common predicament faced by Native peoples on a national scale. Upon returning to Canada, Loft was determined to create a medium by which to make Native voices heard. In 1918, he resolved to organize the "League of Indians of Canada." The first meeting was held at Six Nations that year. The League adopted its constitution, and elected Loft as President at a second meeting, held in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario the following year (Sluman and Goodwill 1982:131). Western bands soon joined the League, and subsequent meetings were held in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta (Cuthand 1978:38). Edward Ahenakew, who later became the League's President for Saskatchewan, delivered a speech to a women's auxiliary missionary meeting, which was printed by the Battleford press. He spoke to the motivations behind the organization's development:

The Indian feels that he has proven that he has done a man's work and he will never again be content to stand aside, giving no voice to matters that affect him. The spirit of unrest has taken hold of him, has stirred up in him desires that he never felt before. He chafes under the circumstances that render him dumb before the public; from the Atlantic to the Pacific a feeling of brotherhood and the need of union has arisen among all the scattered Indian people. Tribes far removed from each other, unknown to each other and uninterested in each other now correspond and exchange opinions (address delivered 16 June 1920, cited in Petrone 1983:150).

Loft plied his skills as a former newspaperman to mobilize support for the organization. His familiarity with, and mastery of, the public relations apparatus enabled him not only to widely publicize League meetings, but to disseminate the organization's mandate via the mainstream press network. Having campaigned for a Liberal Candidate during the first election to include an Indian electorate, and having worked for a Liberal paper in the past, Loft had established connections in the Liberal press network, which he now used to strategic advantage. Liberal papers such as, *The Toronto Star Weekly*, *The Toronto Sunday World*

and *The Edmonton Journal* praised Loft's efforts, and publicized Loft's cause from coast to coast. Several Conservative papers also added his words to their columns. *The Regina Leader* for instance, quoted Loft as saying if anything is responsible for the backwardness of the Indian today, it is the domineering, dictating, vetoing method of the Indian Department" (11 September 1920). Loft's strategy of contesting Indian Department authority by employing the papers to mediate an Indian discourse on Native issues was carefully calculated.

The newspapers often served as the settlers' sole source of information on Native peoples' circumstances. For years, the Indian Department had been not only justifying its existence, but propagandizing its achievements by publishing its annual reports in the newspapers. The annual reports were the Department's "principle vehicle for disseminating the statistics of progress" (Titley 1986:91). Speaking on behalf, or as the voice, of the Native population through mainstream channels, Loft sought to repatriate from the Indian Department, authority over Indian representations – to claim jurisdiction over the right to speak about Native realities for Native polities. The necessity of Native self-expression lay at the very core of the League's mandate.

In addition to mediating League messages by means of a sympathetic mainstream press, Loft drafted his own circular (dated 26 November 1919) which he disseminated via band channels. Loft's circulars, and his successful use of the mainstream presses caused "considerable unrest" among Indian peoples as well as bad publicity for the government (Kulchinsky 1988). The circulars had the effect to inspire "insubordination" among the Indian masses. They worked to directly contravene acceptance, among this second generation of reserve residents, of the mentality of acquiescence to authority that was intended to flow from settlement. Loft inscribed then circulated narratives of dissent to inspire or awaken political consciousness and to provide a powerful incitement to action. As such, he enjoined "movement," by encouraging a transcending of the boundaries of authority that the state had laboriously erected to circumscribe the expression of Indian collective identities. To some extent, the constraints placed on Native peoples' capacities for physical mobility influenced Loft's strategy of deploying letters, circulars and newspaper columns, which were capable of circumventing barriers to communication that Indian individuals, physically, could not.

It was Loft's unwillingness to concede authority to the Indian department, however, that most annoyed Duncan Campbell Scott, who tended to treat Loft's alleged transgressions as a personal affront. In an effort to curtail the power of his public campaign and to discredit him in the eyes of fellow Indian peoples, therefore, Scott attempted to forcibly

enfranchise Loft. By 1920, Scott had introduced Bill 14, amending the *Indian Act* to permit department officials to enfranchise Native individuals without their consent (Tennet 1990:100). Although Duncan Campbell Scott failed to have Loft enfranchised, he continued to attack Loft's credibility by insisting that requesting membership fees was exploitative, and that Loft was an opportunist.

In 1927, owing to Scott's urging, section 141 was added to the *Indian Act* which made it illegal to solicit funds from Native bands or individuals (Kulchyski 1988:111) or from outside sources (Dickason 1997:298) without the express permission of the Indian Department. The original clause appeared by way of an amendment in the 1924 *Indian Act*, and had initially been designed to prohibit Native people from using band funds for land claim actions without the Department's consent. The effect of this legislation was to effectively prohibit the use of subscriber funding not only for the pursuit of land claims and for Native political organizing, but also for *Native media development*. The legislation applied to *any* person, who raised funds from registered Indians for expenditures such as research or travel expenses, postage or printing supplies—all essential to newspaper production—if any connection could be drawn by the Indian Department between these expenditures and the possibility of pursuing a legal claim. Tennant submits that section 141 was not restricted to land claims. He writes, "except with the minister's approval, no chief or band council could now use funds contributed by band members to pursue claims of the everyday sort that might arise against persons harming band property, persons doing business with the band, or the department itself" (1990:258,fn62). Therefore, the legislation did not legally ban political organizing, as Ponting and Gibbins (1980) have suggested, nor did it outlaw creating newspapers as such. Instead, it criminalized the collection of subscription fees from or for Native peoples—the only means of carrying out these activities—for virtually any purpose the Indian Department could link with legal claims related activities.

That discretionary power to veto requests to collect subscriber funding was vested in a body that had very little to gain, and much to lose by approving Native media development, meant that the phrase "for the prosecution of any claim" was open to wide interpretation. The department, for instance, was not likely to approve fund raising for projects or activities which would either cause further embarrassment for itself, or bring about its own demise, whether or not they were directly related to the pursuit of legal claims. The direct effect of this legislation, therefore, was not to criminalize, but to discourage the development of self-supporting, politically and religiously independent forums for free Native

expression.

With section 141, the Indian Department vociferously reiterated its exclusive right to produce and validate knowledge about Indian people and to control the mediation of Indian identities. It was not simply from mediating their own cultural expressions that Indian persons were prohibited, but from accessing the documentary evidence compiled about them by others (see Tennant 1990:102). When Native farmers proved to be competitive with settlers, legislation was adopted to deprive bands of farm machinery and to curtail Native agricultural productivity. Similarly, Indian administration inspired legislation, combined with other officially erected roadblocks, functioned to undermine not only the authority, but the very existence of Native political organizations and other forums for Native self-representation, when their influence challenged that of the Indian Department to direct reserve affairs.

By the time of the World Wars Native English literacy had grown substantially, syllabic literacy had been widely diffused, and instruction in print technologies was available at several residential schools. Printing presses were to be found in all major towns and perhaps most importantly, Native peoples had expressed a desire for a Native controlled organ with which to combat, as Ahenakew put it, "the circumstances that render [Indian people] dumb before the public" (1995:84). Despite all this, no independent Native newspapers were created.

Throughout this time, moreover, League members were not only deprived of an organ with which to express their views to the public, but were prohibited both from exchanging information with each other and from accessing the very information that would have enabled them to counteract these silencing measures. The Indian Department channeled all information through Indian Agents and refused to deal with League leaders directly.

In addition to impeding the flow of information between Native polities, maintaining centralized control over reserve affairs in Ottawa required agents in the field to ensure a steady supply of intelligence from, rather than to, the reserves.<sup>20</sup> The tight control the Indian Department maintained over information effectively prohibited the League from achieving its ultimate goal of establishing itself as the official intermediary between Native people and the state. Like *The Indian*, the League's influence would diminish proportionately with the decline in its founder's involvement. After 1931, Loft withdrew from League activities, having been threatened with the charge of fraud for an earlier attempt he had made to raise travel funds to take the matter of game law restrictions to the Privy Council in England (Sluman and Goodwill 1982:138).

The exceptional literary contributions of Dr. Jones and Loft which

were achieved outside the missionary complex, signaled that the era of the Indian missionary as medium had ended. Native leaders correctly perceived that the new battlefield had shifted from the religious to the political realm. According to Kulchyski, however, the specific strategy of deploying structured non-violent opposition to the Canadian State that Loft and others before him employed would become the primary organizing principle for Native activism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (1988:96).<sup>21</sup>

Scholars have portrayed Loft's League as representing a clear break with previous political ideologies, such as those espoused by the Grand General Indian Council (Titley 1986), or as an unprecedented or revolutionary and reactive strategy to particular Indian Department legislation. In many respects, however, Loft's political discourse is clearly reminiscent of the critical assessments made by Native activists, particularly those of the Ojibwe literati, who had preceded him. Loft called for the "absolute control" by Native people over their lands, improved access to education for Native youth, the protection of Native rights, improved conditions on reserves, and for renewed efforts in agriculture. In so doing, he reiterated sentiments that had been vociferously expressed by Peter Jones *et al* in Ontario and Henry Bird Steinhauer further west. By expressing discontent with Indian legislation, moreover, Loft, like his forerunners, called attention to the processes by which the Indian department constructed "official knowledge," and concomitantly "subjugated" Native ways of knowing.<sup>22</sup>

Although the League was successful in attracting defections from the Grand General Indian Council, of which Peter E. Jones was a member, several of the goals Loft identifies bear a striking resemblance to those earlier proposed by Jones in the pages of *The Indian*. Jones' peculiar vision of Native modernity, for instance, finds expression in Loft's plea for "a great national policy of progress and advancement to lift ourselves up by our own effort to better conditions, morally, socially, politically and industrially" (circular 26 November 1919). Loft also recycled the idea of returning to band councils the power to represent Indian communities in dealings with the government. Finally, the Grand General Council turned to the mainstream presses to print its council meetings after direct entreaties to the government proved fruitless. So did Loft use newspapers as a tool for narrowing the gap between dominant representations of Native peoples and Native self-representations when he could not make his voice heard in parliament. Aside from its nationalist scope therefore, the League ought to be apprehended as a mechanism for recasting the notions of Native sovereignty that had been transmitted from one generation of Native activists to another. While the strategies, particularly of alliance, have historically varied among Ab-

original mediators, the issues inspiring political action have remained remarkable consistent, even in present times. Current National Chief for the AFN, Matthew Coon Come, for example, addresses ongoing Aboriginal opposition to the *First Nations Governance Act*<sup>23</sup> as follows. He asserts:

People, we are all united in a common cause. Whether you participated in the consultations or boycotted the process, we made our decisions for the same reason: we were all trying to advance our interests and protect our rights. That's not division, that's democracy (*Windspeaker* June 2002:3).

## **Native Political Presses: The Modern Era of Native Newspaper Development**

Native participation in the Second World War effort awakened public interest in Native affairs to an unprecedented degree. A global consciousness regarding the inviolability of basic human rights had begun to coalesce finding expression in the rise of the "welfare state" and in the creation of the United Nations. Concomitantly, there grew an acceptance by the liberal democracies of the inevitability of decolonization and of the reality of insoluble cultural differences. These factors precipitated new approaches to cultural relations.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia (NBBC) was an Aboriginal organization with a clear mandate to mediate between Aboriginal peoples, the government and the non-Aboriginal public. One of the political organization's founders, Andrew Paull, was highly successful in accessing the upper echelons of parliament, and was considered by the press to be a newsworthy figure who consistently provided good copy. Journalists portrayed him as an intelligent, industrious and Westernized individual. It was an image that corresponded with their prescriptions for the ideal path of Aboriginal progress.

Paull's coverage in the BC papers was consistent with mainstream attitudes toward Native peoples in general – for the most part the non-Native press tended to dismiss Aboriginal ways as anachronistic, assuming Western Euro-Canadianness was synonymous with modernity. Vancouver's *North Shore Press* (4 October 1946), for instance, described Paull as the very model of Aboriginal progress: "He is the personification of his own burning belief that his people are perfectly capable of adapting themselves to modern ways of living" (cited in Patterson 1962:182). Paull managed his public image deftly, using this "positive" press to nurture interest in cultural mediations or socio-communicatory

forums of Native making, such as the Native American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB).

Paull employed NAIB, an organization accountable to Aboriginal peoples' interests, to amplify his own views as to possible futures for Native education, economic development and land claims in British Columbia, and to press for his own visions of justice for Indian peoples on a Canada-wide scale. Eventually, Paull published his own newspapers: *The Thunderbird* (1949-55) and *The Totem Speaks* (1953), both of which were supported financially by the Roman Catholic Church (Patterson 1962:223). In the mid-1940s', the NBBC, NAIB, the Saskatchewan and Alberta Indian Associations, and church and citizens groups were advocating for a Royal Commission into the administration of Indian Affairs and conditions on Indian reserves. An independent Royal Commission was not convened. However, in response to the organizations' petitions, MacKenzie King's Liberal government did appoint a joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons to revise the *Indian Act*.<sup>24</sup> For the first time in Canadian history, it appeared as though Native people might actually be involved in the process of formulating Indian legislation.

Several months after the hearings began, the British Columbia based newspaper, *The Native Voice* (1946-1969) would emerge. Although the paper was touted as "the official organ of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia Inc." and membership in the NBBC included an automatic subscription; it was originally owned and operated by a white woman, Maisie Hurley (Tennant 1990:119). However, the Editor, Assistant-editor and Directors were all Aboriginal people as were the principle contributors to the paper. They were generally members of the NBBC and other Native political groups based in the province. Jack Beynon, a Tsimshian man from Port Simpson served as Editor (LaViolette 1962:156). By 1948, Ruth Smith had taken over his editorial duties, making her one of the first Native women ever to occupy such an office (Harrington 1948:22).

Like its father organization the NBBC, *The Native Voice* relied for its existence on subscriber fees. The government suppressed neither forum for Native expression however, despite that section 141 of the *Indian Act* might have been mobilized to prohibit fund raising activities. The Indian Department must have resigned itself to the futility of silencing BC Aboriginal organizations at this time, owing partly to the impending hearings, at which members of the NBBC and the producers of *The Native Voice*, were scheduled to appear.<sup>25</sup>

The revised *Indian Act* of 1951 guaranteed amongst other provisions that Native people would no longer be enfranchised without their consent and that Native women could vote in band elections. The Act also

eliminated prohibitions on pursuing land claims, collecting subscriber funding, potlatching and sun dancing (Dickason 1997:305). In the years leading up to, and immediately following the passing of the legislation, Native political organizations had begun to proliferate. NAIB, for example, spurred several regional chapters – one in Saskatchewan (1944) led by John Tootoosis; and another in Manitoba (1946), led by Edward Thompson (Whiteside 1973:32). The Union of Ontario Indians, which had formed in 1949 to replace the Grand General Council, was also affiliated with NAIB. The Saskatchewan NAIB chapter would eventually merge with three other Saskatchewan political organizations to form Union of Saskatchewan Indians (Whiteside 1973:18).

Warry suggests that Native political organizations evolved as extensions of the state and are structured in such a way as to make them responsive to federal or provincial authorities (1998:57). If this is the case, then newspaper development certainly represented one means by which these organizations might achieve a sense of accountability among their constituents.<sup>26</sup> With the regulations forbidding the collection of subscriber fees now relaxed, newspaper development appeared imminent. Many Native political leaders at the time were conscious of the pressing need for social reconstruction, and felt improved communication was required to bring this about.

Although the organizational infrastructure was now present to produce and disseminate official political organs, what impeded newspaper development and longevity at this time was the lack of funding and of training for such undertakings. By the end of the War, reserve economies had been reduced or *underdeveloped* to such an extent in many areas, that were funding from outside sources not provided for activities such as travel to organizational meetings, politicizing would have been virtually impossible. Appeals to the federal government for funding to support the development of Native communications at this time were refused. Though Native individuals and organizations were largely unable to communicate regularly with the public through their own independent presses, they began to infiltrate the public sphere in other ways.

Despite the lack of journalistic and print training, several Native newspapers began publication at this time. Some of these were community based forums such as: the Ottawa based Indian and Inuit Affairs Program's *Indian News/Nouvelles Indiennes* (1954-82); the Ottawa area's, *The Thunderbird* (1963-?); Kahnawake's *Kahnawake News* (1964-75?); Port Aurther Ontario's, *The Lightbulb* (1967); and Thunder Bay's *Kenomadiwin News* (1968-72). In the late 1940's or early 50's, Ernie Benedict of the Akwesasne Mohawk reserve, began publishing a community mimeograph called, *Raweras* (which means the Thunderers) from

a former chicken coop in his back yard.<sup>27</sup> Others, such as: *Indian Time* (1950-59), published by the Pan-American Indian League, Vancouver; *Indian Outlook* (1960-63), by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians; *Indian Brotherhood News* (1961-?), in Kamloops BC by the National Indian Brotherhood<sup>28</sup> operated as organs for the newly forming political organizations.

During the 1960s in addition to political organizations, Native communications societies and cultural organizations formed with amazing rapidity despite their lack of financial resources. Friendship centres were developed in earnest, and a spate of conferences and workshops focusing on topics such as Native education and urbanization were organized to provide forums for discussion and interaction with the wider public. The centres were established not merely to provide a refuge for Native peoples in the midst of their transition to urban living, but to communicate to non-Native residents the idea that urban Indian peoples need not necessarily choose between being Aboriginal and joining the larger society. In indigenizing city spaces, urban activists sought to construct a collective identity concerning Native modernity, and to build a sense of solidarity and indeed, a community, that was derived neither solely from mainstream nor from Aboriginal models.

The Urban Indian Association of Manitoba formed in 1958 and the first Friendship Centre was established in Winnipeg in 1959. Members of the Toronto Native community opened the Canadian Indian Centre (now the Native Canadian Centre) soon after in 1963. Both institutions produced newsletters – Winnipeg's *The Prairie Call* and Toronto's *Beaver Tales*. The latter was later incorporated into the 1968 publication, the *Toronto Native Times* or (TNT).<sup>29</sup>

In the 1960's, communal cohesion itself, was not a prior condition among Native urbanites, who generally hailed from a vast diversity of regions, cultures and colonial experiences. Rather, it was a discursive formation awaiting evocation, and one moreover, that would have to be continually reconstructed if it were to retain any kind of vibrancy. Friendship centres provided a safe context for the working out of the specific forms Native cultural competency might take by heterogeneous groups of Aboriginal peoples, in a variety of urban environments. According to Robert Fox, Director of the Canadian Indian Centre of Toronto for instance, "Everything every Indian in the city does is contemporary Indian culture" (*The Calumet*, 31 October 1968). Indian peoples did not view urban Aboriginal culture, therefore, as necessarily uniform. Rather, as Sarris suggests, "the individuals who make and remake the culture are complex and different; they make and remake culture as they [consciously and unconsciously] negotiate and mediate a range of cultural and inter-

cultural phenomena in a variety of ways to fashion a sense of identity and self" (1993:179).

Given the religious, cultural and linguistic diversity of the urban Aboriginal population, Friendship Centre Boards used media, such as newsletters, to discursively link what might otherwise have remained a fragmented population. Serving in the creation of novel communication corridors, as did Native newspapers and political organizations, Friendship centres provided a particular direction to Aboriginal collective activities. As such, the centres became highly constructive vehicles for producing a sense of Native solidarity. This was generally achieved by appealing to discourse, as opposed to biology or shared territory, and by mobilizing adherence to a common construction of a strategically essentialized Indianness (as opposed to more localized cultural identities).<sup>30</sup>

Newspapers and newsletters, which served both as tools of cultural mediation as well as social artifacts or cultural products, like the centres and organizations, were arenas wherein the gap between the dominant perceptions of Indianness and the self-perceptions of Indian people could be negotiated. The centres, the newspapers and the political organizations, all instruments of cultural mediation, provided Native peoples with vehicles to assert the idea that they were quite capable of innovating lifestyles without exclusive recourse to white values. Gradually, a sense of community was developing in urban areas between Aboriginal residents who participated together in social and political events, and informed themselves with common sources of information. Whether gathered around a brass band or a traditional Drum, and learning from an English language newspaper or a council fire gathering, it was this emergent sense of unity, however, rather than the tools that brought it about that was significant. As each new form of social agency represented a syncretically inscribed Aboriginal invention, each in its own way simultaneously inscribed Aboriginality and hybridity.

### **The Union of Ontario Indian's Calumet<sup>31</sup>**

In 1968, the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI) began to employ *The Calumet* as its official organ. In the first issue, the UOI's aims and objectives are outlined as follows:

1. To determine and express common needs and concerns of Indians in Ontario.
2. To maintain and secure fulfillment of all Indian treaties and treaty rights.
3. To preserve the history and native culture of Indians.
4. To protect all Indians against abuse and injustice (30 September 1968).

In 1968, as part of Pierre Trudeau's experiments with "participatory democracy," the government sought to consult Native people about possible *Indian Act* amendments, and mailed out booklets ironically entitled "*Choosing A Path*" to every status Indian household, band council and Aboriginal organization in the country. The booklets posed questions as to how the *Indian Act* should be amended, and set the terms of reference for the public consultations that were to follow. Numerous Native newspapers immediately sprung up with the principle aim, it would appear, to document the "consultation" process. *The Calumet* was one of them.<sup>32</sup>

*The Calumet's* first issue reports on the consultations in southern and northern Ontario held in August that year (30 September 1968). While several differences of opinion are evident between the southern and northern participants,<sup>33</sup> all agreed that the government's time limits for the meeting schedule were utterly insufficient for a proper consideration or discussion of the issues. In the North where Cree and Ojibwe language translators were employed to translate the proceedings, participants complained about the incomprehensibility of the language employed in the legislation itself (30 September 1968). The March issue reports on subsequent consultations held in Toronto in January 1969.

During these meetings Native leaders attempted to shift the terms of reference away from the questions posed in the *Choosing a Path* booklet, toward a discussion of Treaty Rights. At the final consultation meeting in April 1969, Native participants requested that more time and funds be allocated to research treaty rights and that further meetings ought to be held before any decisions were made with regard to the *Indian Act* (31 May 1969). *The Calumet's* February issue for 1970, contains extracts from policy briefs provided by the National Indian Brotherhood, the Union of New Brunswick Indians, the Manitoba Brotherhood, Native women's organizations and the Anglican Church which unanimously rejected the government's new policy.<sup>34</sup> *MacLean's Magazine* referred to this strategy as an effective "surprise tactic" from the "new" breed of "shrewd" and "able" Aboriginal leaders (Tennant July 1969:1). UOI's submission to the government insisted that "no further steps be taken until the Treaty, Aboriginal and Residual rights of the Indian peoples have been clearly defined to our satisfaction" (*Calumet* February 1970).

In several important respects, the publication differs from BC's *Native Voice*, launched some twenty years earlier. The *Native Voice* championed the pursuit of *civil* rights for Indian peoples, which was the prime preoccupation of the BC Native Brotherhood. *The Calumet* was also employed as a tool for bringing about *civil* rights, but also, and perhaps more importantly, *Native* rights. This was the central concern of the North

American Indian Brotherhood and other national organizations at the time.

The first issue of the *Calumet*<sup>35</sup> included the caption "...supported and approved by the Executive of the Union of Ontario Indians." By 1970, the paper carried the inscription "compiled and edited in Toronto for Indians by Indians...[representing the] views of the Indian people of Ontario." The UOI itself was touted, moreover, as an "all Indian" organization. The general tone of the paper had begun to reflect the more radical identity politics of the emergent Native nationalism, in which Native independence and exclusivity—both boundary defining activities—played critical roles.

While the *Native Voice* staff often looked to international models to bolster their claims, the *Calumet* remained focused on the inner workings of the principle institutions governing Native affairs in Canada. Instead of other developing countries, The *Calumet*, for instance, pointed to successful development projects in other provinces to challenge the Ontario government's inattention to local Aboriginal affairs. In 1965, the Aboriginal residents in the Kenora Ontario region staged a march to call attention to the lack of jobs, to racial discrimination and other social problems. The march was publicized nationally by the mainstream media and yet a year later, having receded from public view, little had improved for the Aboriginal communities involved. Printing follow up stories in Native presses such as the *Calumet*, was one strategy for keeping these issues alive in the popular imagination. Writing and publishing a protest literature was also a means of circumventing the constraints on Native peoples' capacities for extensive travel. The distances between Native communities and the expenses involved in traversing them generally discouraged engagement in the local struggles of other nations. At a time when Aboriginal political action on a national scale was red-taped, forestalled while provincial and federal government departments argued over jurisdictional matters, circulating newspapers ensured that information, at very least, would flow.

The *Calumet*'s second issue features a speech made by Alberta Indian Association President, Harold Cardinal (30 November 1969). Cardinal received a fair bit of attention from the non-Native media as well. He was distinguished as one of Canada's most extraordinary people in 1969 and lauded in the mainstream presses as one of a new genre of Indian leaders. Cardinal later provided the timely *The Unjust Society*, which analyzed the operations of the Indian Affairs Branch. Together, *The Unjust Society*, and the presentation of *Citizens Plus* (The Red Paper) by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta to the Canadian Prime Minister, alerted the public that Indian people were not prepared to excise either their

legal or their cultural distinctiveness. Cardinal, who was considered a moderate, insisted for instance, that Indian people would continue to resist all attempts at whitewashing or assimilation, but were quite willing to assume a role as the "Red Tile" in Canada's cultural mosaic.

*The Calumet* reviewed Cardinal's book, which also touched on his generation's changing attitudes toward the Churches' authority in Indian Country. As the residential schools began to close, little by little the terror that was often associated with, and produced by, those institutions began to fade. Activists such as Cardinal, Vine Deloria Jr., and George Manuel, many of whose prime preceding influences had been strong adherents of Christianity, began to vociferously express the view that the Churches were not in fact, the champions of the oppressed, but themselves, agents of oppression. In *Unjust Society*, Cardinal intones, "If the Great Spirit is dead, the Indian knows who killed him. It was the missionary" (quoted in *The Calumet* February 1970).

In keeping with this theme, a *MacLean's Magazine* article recounts the story of Charlie Wenjack, an Ojibwe student, who died of exposure while attempting to run away from a residential school in Kenora, Ontario (Adams, February 1967). Whereas a century earlier, this story may have elicited calls from the public for an improved pedagogy at such institutions; by the late sixties, concerned members of the public questioned the appropriateness of the residential school system in total (ibid). It appeared as though increasingly secularized segments of the mainstream, who were sufficiently removed in time and sentiment from their colonial precursors, were finally able to hear and to appreciate anti-colonial criticism, even if they were not yet moved to act on it.

In producing the *Calumet*, it was clearly the intent of the UOI Executive to empower Native communities in cities and on reserves, by providing information as well as a context for the exchange of informed views on Aboriginal matters. The paper went a step beyond the mainstream presses in providing well-articulated models derived from the process of protesting, which served as step by step instructions for mobilizations of assertive action. The paper reported, for instance, on the successful strategies in use among Native political activists in Ontario. The 31 March 1969 issue reported that to protest the poor medical treatment meted out to reserve residents in the north, Andrew Ricard, Moose Factory Band Council Chief, compiled a petition in which he stated "We are tired of being made second-class citizens by middle class whites." He promised to begin making a record of the complaints issuing from Native people concerning their treatment at northern hospitals and to send copies each month to local and national newspapers until medical care improved.

A *MacLean's Magazine* article which focused on Ricard's strategy of having "lured a national TV crew" to the region to cover the story suggested that this tactic of employing "exposés" successfully prompted a government investigation of northern hospital services (Tennant July 1969:1). Hal Tennant's article suggests that this "new" type of Native leader possessed "the determination and communications know-how to beat the white man at his own game" (ibid). The *MacLean's* journalist noted several of the other strategies of protest found in the *Calumet* story. Tennant refers, for instance, to Cape Croker Band Council Chief and UOI President, Wilmer Nadjiwon's resignation from the advisory committee to the Ontario Indian Development Branch, as a "power play." Nadjiwon's tactic prompted the subsequent resignation of several civil servants who did not wish to appear to support the Federal government branch's policy of inactivity. Tennant also comments on speed or "fast footwork" which enabled Native observers to correct erroneous statements made in the Legislature by the Minister of Social and Family services, using telecommunications technologies.

It is significant that each of these stories was previously covered in the *Calumet*. The Native paper, however, did not treat the uses of electronic technology, the strategies of petitioning the media and politicians, nor the walkout as particularly novel or revolutionary. An oxymoronic image of primitive bush dwellers mastering high-tech equipment or of country bumpkins conquering complicated political maneuvers, is nowhere to be found in Native publications at this time. Modern Aboriginal journalists, many of whom were politicians, saw themselves as links in a long tradition of leadership in which versatility and innovation were selectively incorporated with conservatism, with little controversy.

The Aboriginal activists preceding these journalists had skillfully exploited the mass media to their own ends for some time. The accomplishments of Loft, Paull, the Steinhauers and Jones—all prolific petitioners and influential lobbyists—would indicate that this type of leadership and the strategy of employing the media for the purposes of public relations had evolved over a much longer history of protest activity<sup>36</sup> Indian leaders, if not media literate themselves, were certainly aware of these model mediators and masters of re-invention. It was not, therefore, that Native leaders had only recently achieved competency, as Tennant suggests, but that their capabilities had recently become *imaginable* to government administrators and the public alike. Consequently, despite their own cultural ineptitude in Aboriginal contexts, government representatives were becoming progressively more receptive to the idea of conversing *with*, rather than dictating *to*, peoples they believed had recently become conversant or competent with regard to

the civil affairs of the state.

While Canadians tended to view these “developments” as cases of successful Aboriginal adaptation to Canadian ways, what they were witnessing was in fact the indigenization of those ways. The decolonization of Native spirituality, for example, would require that Native people first engage the dominant historiography of Christianity in the colonial era. It was critical to familiarize oneself with the dominant models in order to successfully subvert them. Similarly, a truly distinct form of Native governing—self-government—would require a temporary immersion, an extended quest one could say, in the ways of the mainstream political system. By the same token, however, bi-cultural Native peoples had little faith in Canadians’ capacities to approximate Aboriginal ways.

In order to address this very subject Councillor Simeon McKay submitted a letter to *The Calumet* insisting that members of the Native community of Kasabonika in northern Ontario were struggling with the high price of food and the low return on their furs. He felt that non-Native journalism, for instance, was not appropriately responsive to this particular community’s unique demands. The letter reads:

Last year on October 11 a CBC film crew came in here to make a story of Kasabonika to show on the program (the way it is) they only wanted to talk about medicine, we wanted to talk about how to get enough food and better clothes for ourselves and our children but the woman who was the director would not listen to us. It is the same stupid way that the white man always does. We wrote to ask the CBC to send a television crew to talk about the things that are really important to us but they don’t even answer our letters (31 May 1969).

The mainstream press, however, was somewhat susceptible to the spectacle effect, or to events that were *staged* or *performed* rather than merely lived by Native community members. Staging live media events, moreover, seemed to have a much more profound and immediate effect on the spectating public than the strategy of petitioning MPs or appealing to the international community. The following story recounted by Métis historian, Terry Lusty concerns an organized protest over the same issues as those identified by the Kasabonika community. This strategy successfully attracted wide media coverage. Lusty recalls:

Stan Daniels...became the President of the Métis Association of Alberta, and Johnny [Sampson] was President of the Indian Association of Alberta...those two, they hitch-hiked all the way to Ottawa from Alberta here with two pounds of stinking sausage to decry...the expense people had to go

to, to purchase things like meat products and dairy products, especially in northern communities and remote communities – because the prices were just astronomical. And their point was well taken by the time they got to Ottawa with two pounds of stinkin' sausage, believe me! (5 July 1997).

In the mid-1960's in Cowichan BC, where George Manuel was working as a Community Development Officer, community members invited the press to investigate the substandard housing on the reserve. According to McFarlane, as a result of the national publicity that resulted from this strategy, the new DIA minister, Authur Laing was sufficiently shamed to promise to immediately improve the local conditions (1993:82). In the 1970's, while leader of the Grand Council of the Cree, Matthew Coon Come also conducted an enormously successful media relations campaign, dramatizing the Great Whale Hydro Project protest by canoeing from James Bay to New York, with news cameras in tow.

Providing the mainstream new apparatus with rousing sound bytes and stirring visual imagery, or engaging in media *performances*, has proven infinitely more successful for Aboriginal activists in the post-1960's era, than have the strictly *discursive* ventures into mainstream mediascapes. Consequently, many contemporary Native protestors have selected the enacted rather than the written protest as the register or vehicle of choice for publicly expressing messages of Aboriginal dis-sension. Aboriginal protestors have also begun to conceive and *plan protests as media events* in order to tap the political resources available through Canadian and international public opinion.

That communications between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations had been impeded up until this point, therefore, had much to do with a Euro-Canadian technological deficiency. For the most part, Euro-Canada was unversed in deciphering Aboriginal articulations and, consequently, oblivious to the possibility that Aboriginal modernities had pursued divergent directions. The communicative chasm did not, as is commonly thought, stem from any aphasia, inactivity or technological ineptitude on the part of Aboriginal leaders who for some time have been, by necessity, bi-culturally competent. Miles Morrisseau,<sup>37</sup> former publisher and founder of the Kettle Point, Ontario based *Nativebeat* newspaper writes in an article titled "Our People Speak, Listen to their Voices":

The stereotype of "the quiet Native" came out of the colonization experience, which is where many misconceptions were formulated. Of course, when you think about it, it's difficult to maintain any kind of dialogue when you don't even

speak the same language. Even if understood Native people's language is based on values and concepts that the mainstream society still has difficulty comprehending. So it wasn't as if Native people didn't have anything to say, just that the Europeans didn't have the capacity to understand.

Morrisseau insists however:

Throughout this whole process and the history of Native-EuroCanadian relations the most telling cause of Native's mythical silence has been ignored. The real reason that the Native voice has not been heard, is not so much that Native people weren't saying anything it was just that – NO ONE LISTENED (in *Nativebeat*, November 1992:14-15).

Unlike the popular national media, Aboriginal papers such as the *Calumet* and later *Nativebeat*, were often marked by critical discourses which drew attention to the processes that have subjugated Aboriginal knowledges. In authoring their own images, Aboriginal journalists challenged the mainstream monopoly on defining the nature and meaning of events. It was by wielding this interpretive power that the relationship between those in control of the technology (generally the dominant society) and those written about (subordinated groups) was normalized and reproduced. Mediating Aboriginal articulations via *The Calumet* represented an effective contest to the exclusive Eurocentric reference and significance of concepts such as technology, progress, and modernity. The paper publicized the UOI's preferred program for Native progress, for example, which required that Treaty rights, which were to some extent co-inscribed, take precedence over the Euro-Canadian authored *Indian Act*. In promoting Native articulated and operated educational programs, moreover, the *Calumet* suggested strategies for repatriating Aboriginal authority from the state – the allegedly neutral arbiter of Aboriginal affairs. Writers for *The Calumet* sought in fact to *decode* the *Indian Act*, challenging, for one, the government's authority to apply seemingly arbitrary hunting and fishing regulations which impinged on treaty rights.

Much like *The Indian*, which was published nearly a century earlier, *The Calumet* promoted a type of political literacy. The paper offered translations or interpretations of texts such as the *Indian Act* and clues as to the means by which Aboriginal people were governed by non-Indians. It also disclosed evidence of the ways in which various Indigenous interests were subordinated to those of the greater public, to special interest groups such as non-Native businesses, and finally, to the state. By exposing Eurocentrism as the discursive residue of colonialism, *The Calumet* thus promoted an understanding of the ways

in which colonial processes continued to underwrite contemporary Native politics — it is a tradition of Anishinabe journalism which has been carried on by writers for the UOI's newest paper, *Anishinabek News*.

Diminishing the threat of forcible enfranchisement had the effect to remove the very barriers to communication that Indian legislation had erected. Similarly, the closing of the residential schools, the newly enacted Human Rights legislation, and the growing inclination of some non-Native groups to work collaboratively with, or at least listen to, Native peoples signaled a fissuring of the seemingly impenetrable Euro-Canadian power structure. What appeared to be a loosening of the internal coherence of the Euro-Canadian master narrative of progress, moreover, posed new possibilities for Native strategizing. The repertoire of resources from which Aboriginal people in Canada selected possible futures for themselves, what Appadurai (1996) calls the "ideoscape," had expanded considerably during the integration era. This occurred owing not merely to Indian peoples' increased access to the world at large via electronic mediation and migration, but also due to increased interaction with different groups of Native and non-Native peoples in Canada. Although non-First-World peoples are commonly presumed to share a common failure to replicate the European trajectory of progress, modernity, as Mitchell points out (2000:1), is created out of the very *interaction between non-First-world peoples and their cultural others, including Europeans at large.*

The *Calumet* looked to other Native papers for alternative models, publishing stories from Alberta's *The Native People*, Saskatchewan's *The Moose Call*, and northern Ontario's *Kenomadiwin News*. When it did so, it provided Ontario readers with access to non-local forms of knowledge and information, which made possible a sort of cultural nationalism among these culturally and experientially diverse Aboriginal peoples. At the same time, new types of lateral syncretism, or intertribal cultural borrowing were becoming more and more common. Although in many cases never having actually directly interacted, Native peoples from across the country increasingly acquired the distinctly modern sense of belonging to a sort of virtual community, to a territorially based nation (Turtle Island or North America), and consequently, of sharing a national tradition. This weaving together of traditions and discourses was part of the ongoing hybridization of Aboriginal cultures.

The innovation of intertribal forms, what Appadurai (1996:110) refers to as experimentation with the "means of modernity," did not involve a simple return to pre-contact traditions. Nor was it a case of "misreading" (Naficy 1993) nor of "inventing" (Keesing 1989, Handler and Linnekin 1984) the past. In fact, many Aboriginal nations had come to accept reserves, powwows, farming, hunting with guns and trapping, fiddle

music, syllabic writing, Christianity and other attributes incorporated since contact as *traditional*. It is worth stressing that processes of syncretizing and indigenizing involve considerable and selective cultural filtering. This active capacity for incorporating the exogenous and innovating neo-traditional forms is what has sustained the very notion of *Aboriginality* for peoples faced with rapid cultural change.

The emerging notions of Native nationalism and visions of a virtual community were linked to (but not determined by) the transformation of Aboriginal communications. Indeed, Aboriginal media provided a crucial context for converging many of the conflicting discourses and competing voices concerning pressing Aboriginal matters such as: sociality, spirituality and the politics of history. On the latter topic, it is important to consider that re-configurations of the past, and investments in "traditionalism," by Aboriginal activists, were more about charting a path into the future than establishing an accurate or empirical historical record. Inscribing the past with Aboriginal authority, although it was a process rife with ambiguities, was a means of coming to terms with the disruptive tensions brought on by colonization, modernization and liberation. As Fred Plain the newly elected UOI President asserted in 1969:

We, the Indian people, know ourselves better than the most educated white man. We understand the basis of our fears and frustrations. We also know that we must be the masters of our own destiny (*Calumet* 31 October 1969).

Charting one's own way into the future in the contemporary Aboriginal universe required asserting some measure of control over collective imaginings of the past. Serving as a guest on the London area Aboriginal radio show, *Smoke Signals*, over twenty years later, Plain would reiterate this notion of directing one's own course into the future. He submits:

If they change the *Indian Act*, re-write it completely, and place in it instead of restrictive phraseology, they place in it phraseology that gives you more room to maneuver, is that self-sufficiency? Is that self-government?... I firmly believe...our only way of self-government is for us to go out and live it ourselves. We believe we're Aboriginals, then let's act like Aboriginals. We believe we have inherent rights, let's believe and act like we have inherent rights (on *Smoke Signals*, 15 August 1992).

Fred Plain concedes that this Indian legislation provides some protection for Native peoples, but he clearly sets out the limits of its reach into the lives of Aboriginal individuals.

In 1971, after Native groups had unanimously rejected the abolishment of the *Indian Act*, the government formally retracted the policy. As

a result of the consultation process, a political network had developed, as had numerous organs. *The Calumet* was eventually replaced by the *Ontario Indian* (1978-), and then, by *Sweetgrass* (1984-6) (Riggins 1983). During these years, Native cultural mediators became increasingly adept at employing elements of non-Native political and communications apparatuses to their own advantage. They were also actively engaged in articulating an alternative discursive formation – an Aboriginal mediascape. As *Ontario Indian's* assistant editor, *Sweetgrass's* founding editor and contemporary writer, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias remarked, Native peoples were strategically deploying, among other devices, written English – “a language which has been used as a weapon [against them] as a tool to empower” (6 February 1992). To Canadians, who had only recently become capable of acknowledging Aboriginal adeptness, and only because Indian people did the work of cultural translation for them, it appeared as though Aboriginal people were finally becoming Canadianized.

Ironically, it was the very process of cultural blending which on the surface appeared to be a story about inevitable cultural homogenization or assimilation, that made collective assertions of Aboriginality, the social achievement of narratives of locality and thus decolonization, itself, possible. The principle sites of such blending—Native political organizations, friendship centres and the emergent Aboriginal mediascape—operated as megaphones, mediating Aboriginally preferred self-representations and self-renderings of Indian identity that were deeply engaged with the dominant historiography. For, as Appadurai asserts, it is the dialogue with the colonial past, not the simple dismantling of colonial habits and modes of life that constitutes and enables decolonization (1996:89).

## **Southern Ontario Indian Country's Contemporary Mediascape**

Despite auspicious beginnings many Native newspapers met similar untimely fates. Often plagued by chronic staff shortages, the lack of Native specific media training institutions, serious under-funding and irregular production schedules—all of which affected subscriber loyalty—many newspapers were destined to short life spans. Even after the government did begin to fund some Native communications experiments, many were geared to the north and excluded southern urban groups. All state sponsored projects, moreover, were subject to the whims of government benevolence which, as in the case of rations in post-treaty times, was typically forthcoming when self-interest prevailed and withheld when

Native necessity was at its foremost.

Despite these setbacks, several successful Ontario Native media endeavours continue to operate to this date. Most notable perhaps are Waywatay radio, newspaper and television in the north, local reserve based newspapers and radio in the south, the province-wide *Anishinabek News* newspaper, the Hamilton based Native Indian/Inuit Photographers' Association (NIIPA) and the Centre for Aboriginal Media (CAM). Most recently, Native communicators in Ontario have contributed significantly to the development and success of the national Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). To promote media skills training, in 1997 Tyendinega's First Nations Technical Institute inaugurated its one-year Aboriginal Media Program, and has been expanding ever since (Manatch 17 December 1998). Contemporary Aboriginal communicators in Ontario, moreover, are pursuing the successful strategy of refusing to limit themselves to one medium. Toronto based Cayuga actor and media activist has aided in the development of several on and off-reserve Aboriginal radio stations. Among other media projects, Farmer founded *The Runner* and *Aboriginal Voices* magazines, as is the creator and Executive Producer of APTN's highly lauded television program, *Buffalo Tracks*. The spoken language portions of this programming are predominantly English-language. As *Buffalo Tracks*' Chief Writer and Producer, Minnie Two Shoes suggests, however, these sorts of cultural mediations are fashioned not simply in English, but in the Indigenized English of highly creative contemporary Indian people – in what she calls, "*In-dee-ah-nish*." Farmer uses the considerable exposure he achieves through film and television to promote awareness of, and support for, Indigenous media and to inspire Aboriginal individuals to "become one of the heard."<sup>38</sup>

Another Six Nations ex-patriot, Dan Smoke began his media career co-hosting a radio show with his wife, Mary Lou Smoke on London's university radio. They have also recently ventured into newsprint and onto television (see Buddle 1993). Because the London and surrounding area Native community is fairly heterogeneous, Dan and Mary Lou make a deliberate effort to minimize cultural differences speaking often of, for instance, "the" Native perspective, history or experience.<sup>39</sup> There are clear indications in terms of the radio show's structure, however— which begins each week with a Thanksgiving Address—that elements of the format have been culled, whether consciously or not, specifically from Iroquoian and Ojibwe ceremonial traditions. Far from espousing easy essentializations however, one of Dan's more recent articles for the *Anishinabek News* confirms the general openness to experimentation and innovation that characterizes Aboriginal socio-political, economic

and communicatory strategies in contemporary times. Dan writes that members of the Caldwell Nation, for example, are willing to employ “any means necessary” to make their voices heard (January 2001). Consequently, as many strategies or styles of Native protest and of Aboriginal journalism as there are Native protestors and journalists are imaginable.

More than the content of Native newspapers and radio, and more than a Native media department’s video trajectory, however, what is revolutionary about the creation of a Native mediascape is the context for the negotiation of new forms of Indianness that media activities provide. Donna Rae Paquette who worked in the early 1970’s for the first Native communications society in Canada—Eugene Steinhauer’s Alberta Native Communication Society (ANCS)—recalls:

It had never been done before, to have Indian radio broadcasts...never mind reporters and broadcasters of native descent. It just wasn’t done. We could be ditch diggers and waitresses and chamber maids, we could fight forest fires and clean other people’s houses, pick rocks, hoe sugar beets and do the many tedious back-breaking servile types of labour expected of us. But we always knew there was no such thing as a professional native person, a white collar Indian (*Edmonton Journal* 15 September 1995).

To read newer forms of Aboriginal competency as evidence of culture loss, homogenization or assimilation, one must subscribe to a concept of culture as object – one that cannot accommodate internal diversity and contradiction. According to the above theory, nor could such an entity survive historical mutations and emergences or syncretic blending, without the inevitable dissolution of the very transhistorical essence that is alleged to constitute the collectivity in the first place. Coast Salish novelist, Lee Maracle<sup>40</sup> offers a more creative approach to culture change. Maracle, who refers to herself as a “mythmaker” explains:

There’s two sorts of positions in our Big House tradition ...One, is the Keeper of the Stories – that’s the person who has the original, the hard core, version that never changes from generation to generation. And then, there’s the people who perform the stories, either in dance or in oratory, and in my case, I try to take that story...and put it into a novel (17 November 2000).

She describes the mythmaking process as involving a “modernizing” and translating into “myth” of the traditional stories, in order that they may be written down. This idea of an agentive, negotiable mode of tradition and a non-negotiable seemingly eternal mode, resonates with assertions made by other Native media activists, for whom isolation from

so-called "modern" influences and technological cleansing are simply not reasonable options. In an article in the first national Aboriginal newspaper, Richard Wagamese<sup>41</sup> rejoins for instance, that far from being a case of mainstream mimicry, applying elements of electronic technology to Native modes of discursivity is a case of traditional adaptiveness in action. He writes:

As Native communicators we are the modern continuation of [an] ancient storytelling tradition. We tell our stories around different fires but we tell them nonetheless. We tell them around the fires of radio transistors and television tubes. We tell them with the fire of laser printers, computer terminals and satellite beams. We are the keepers of a proud and culture-sustaining tradition....We are involved in the passing on of stories as they happen in our communities, politics and universe that directly affect the lives of the people. As such, we are in the business of empowering the people (*Windspeaker* 7 June 1993).

Native media is therefore, not simply about transmitting information or opiating the Aboriginal masses. Culturally mass mediating Indianness represents a crucial form of social agency. Abenaki activist, recording artist and filmmaker, Alanis Obomsawin asserts the centrality of broadcasting in Native community life at the CRTC hearing for the Toronto area Aboriginal radio station, JUMP! FM Radio (AVR). She insists that Aboriginal radio service is not simply a means for transmitting news and entertainment, but is essential to urban Aboriginal cultural and political expression and community interaction. She submits:

I think if we look at our experience with the radio stations in the Indian communities and reservations and Métis communities, the fact that they did acquire a radio station has changed their lives – not just in communicating with the people but for information, for the language that is being spoken at the local station, for the social meetings, for people. You go into a reserve, you go into a community, and all the houses have that radio station on.... So a radio station here, for me, is not a luxury. It is going to be very good for our people, but also the teaching that it will do for the rest of the country I think is very important (31 January 00).

At a time when the stakes associated with identities circulated through the media are enormously high, destabilized identities, like contested pasts, have the effect to problematize political action. As such, the emergent Native media apparatus may serve as an indispensable laboratory for the generation, circulation, importation and testing of the materials

for Native identities that creatively rejoin historical memories with contemporary realities, and local with transnational imaginaries. Aboriginal broadcasting practices and products, moreover, may prove to be crucial tools in the negotiation of the gap between the dominant perceptions of Indianness and the self-perceptions of Indian people by establishing, by virtue of Aboriginal authority, a dialogue with cultural others.

## Conclusion

As least as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, Native peoples were aware of the need for, and possessed the technological expertise for creating, a foundation for a national Native mediascape. Contrary to common assumptions, therefore, an apparent Native illiteracy, absence of mass communications experience and disinterest in print media, are not what impeded its creation. Rather, it was government legislation in combination with other forces from without that successfully stopped Aboriginal messengers from establishing a Native communications infrastructure dead in their tracks. The legislation concerned matters such as forced enfranchisement, Indian Department control over band funds, the ban on collecting subscriber fees and deterrents to political organizing. This legislative affront, in conjunction with the ill-fated results of control contests between Aboriginal peoples, the Churches, corporations and the state, contributed to the underdevelopment of reserve economies, and to the general decline of Aboriginal authority. The impetus for the virtual explosion of Native media from the mid-1950s onward, however, was not the government sponsoring of such endeavours, despite some communications scholars' assertions to the contrary. Native peoples themselves have provided the inspiration for, and undertaken the initiation of, Native communications development from its inception.

Native communications flourished only after Native activists' century long struggle to remove the legislative barriers to inter-tribal communication had succeeded. The current Native media movement which seeks to connect urban with reserve Aboriginal communities and tribal with national Native polities, and which strives to self-mediate Indianness on a global scale, therefore, must be viewed as an Aboriginal accomplishment – one achieved *despite* state involvement, not *because* of it.

Anthropologists have insisted for some time that Indigenous peoples do not passively receive cultural products, nor technologies from the West, but rather actively seek, select and interpret introduced technologies, practices and messages. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many

Aboriginal peoples successfully resisted assimilation by critically assessing missionary, settler and government discourses. Sage mediators played the various denominational discourses against each other, pointed out the lack of consensus among government departments and the lack of consistency in settler discourse – they deconstructed and re-deployed the very weapons that were designed to destroy what was distinctive in Aboriginal cultures. These proved to be potent political techniques for asserting the national and international solidarity of Indigenous peoples in some situations, and local or cultural differentiation in others. Today, Native peoples are employing media technologies to extend contemporary relevance to these culturally constituted political, spiritual and historical debates.

It is crucial to understand that the configurations of Indigeness are created, rather than simply traded, by Indian peoples through Native media. On this score, Appadurai's work is useful. He suggests that while electronic media may be a globalized feature of modernity, rather than becoming increasingly similar people are imagining and articulating increasingly differentiated lives, by employing media to "annex the global into their own practices of the modern" (1996:4). That a global diffusion or circulation of symbolic products exists cannot be denied. Thompson asserts, however, that the appropriation of media products is always a local phenomenon in that it involves individuals situated in particular socio-historical contexts, who make sense of them using the resources at their disposal. He submits that the localized character of appropriation has not been eliminated by the globalization of communication, but remains instead inherently contextual and hermeneutic (1995:174). That Aboriginal people who are involved in local and national Native medias are selectively fashioning modern media technologies not simply to represent, but to reinterpret and revindicate "traditional" Aboriginality, would support Castillo and Nigh's (1998:44) thesis, moreover, that the processes of globalization can result in the parallel processes of "localization."

In Aboriginal communities in Canada, media technologies have been used much in the same ways as have tribal cultural centres and museums (Erikson 1999), as part of a generally subversive strategy which helps to articulate rather than to destroy multiple (changing, situationally and historically contingent) versions of Aboriginality. Native communicators in regions throughout the country are asserting through Native media that contemporary Aboriginality is very much a question of creatively negotiating and balancing persistence with innovation in the midst of dramatic social change. It also about accommodating local and national configurations of community amidst increasingly differentiated cultural places and incrementally mobile Aboriginal populations.

Native newspapers, radio and television have been employed both as means and modes of political self-determination, self-styled modernity and cultural competence – in ways, therefore, that are not necessarily derivative of mainstream or global models. Meadows (1995:208) submits that it is the “process of production which ensures Indigenous media programs emerge from—and are thus part of—the social structure of the community.” Aboriginal presses, radio, film and television are critical cultural resources. The neo-traditional practices associated with their production and circulation ensure that they do not represent simply a difference in the use of neutral technologies. Instead, Aboriginal media constitute identifiably different *technological inventions*.<sup>42</sup>

What is significant for anthropological consideration here, therefore, is not that Indian peoples are culturally mediating Aboriginality electronically, but rather that they are selectively configuring the means of cultural mediation to serve the interests of Aboriginal modernities. The unique configurations or discursive formations that come about as a result of negotiating Aboriginal needs with media technologies, broadcast policies, and Indian legislation, are what render Native presses, video, film and radio distinctly Indigenous.

### Notes

1. Research for this paper began in Montreal in 1990 during the “Oka Crisis.” Some of the funds for research conducted in Southwestern Ontario in 1992 and 1993 were provided by the “Reserve English” and “Performing First Nations Identity through English Discourse: A Comparison of Algonquian and Iroquoian Language Use in Southwestern Ontario” SSHRC projects. Research from 1995 to 1998 was made possible by a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, Ashbaugh Scholarship and Departmental grants from McMaster University. I am very grateful to Dan and Mary Lou Smoke, whose enthusiastic support and ongoing collaboration has made much of this research possible. I am also deeply indebted to Gary Farmer, whose unrelenting efforts to diffuse Aboriginal radio far and wide, never cease to inspire. Nia:weh, Migwetch. I thank Wayne Warry, Harvey Feit and Regna Darnell for their helpful comments on early drafts of this paper.
2. In this category, I have collapsed into one, the two dominant tropes Faye Ginsburg (1993:560-1) has identified as “the Faustian contract” and “global village” models. The first describes the approach of those who view technology as polluting “pure cultures,” or as

- disauthenticating traditional values. The second represents McLuhan's vision of a universalizing democracy occasioned by electronic inter-connections. As the former represents merely the "negative" aspects of the latter, which is a uniquely First World vision, I prefer to consider them as variations on the same theme.
3. In the 1970's, along with Anna Martin and Simon Ortiz, Gerald Wilkinson edited the Albuquerque New Mexico newspaper, *ABC (Americans Before Columbus)* which began publication in 1963.
  4. Some noteworthy exceptions include: Ginsburg (1993, 1991), Kulchyski (1988), Meadows (1995), Michaels (1984, 1986, 1987), Ruby (1990), Turner (1991a, 1991b, 1992), Worth & Adair (1972a, 1972b).
  5. The following accounts locate the impulse for Native media development in the allegedly unsolicited provisions made by the Canadian government to supply funds for Native political associations and communications societies (Raudsepp 1984, Rupert 1983, Smith and Brigham 1992).
  6. I would distinguish my use of the term "modernist," from that of "modernity." The former designates a trans-disciplinary school of thought, which is theoretically orientated to the fixing of categories and structures for analytic purposes. The latter refers to the practice of relating to contemporary inter-cultural realities – a process that is inherently complex and contradictory. The latter is therefore more likely to generate obstacles to, rather than to facilitate, the drawing of neat symbolic and practical boundaries around entities such as cultures, locales and nations.
  7. Upon examining so-called "professional" journalistic practices for which the electronic technologies serve as a principle vehicle of dissemination, however it is plain to see that storytelling genres are deeply embedded in the socio-cosmological beliefs and politico-historical habits of the mainstream. So-called "traditional journalism," for example, uses particular formal conventions for storytelling. There is a tendency to situate urban areas at the center and remote communities at the periphery, to champion the majority often at the expense of minorities, and to privilege the immediate over the long-term, the abnormal over the commonplace, and the individual over the community. It is a storytelling genre, moreover, which communicates a tremendous disdain for contextual and historical information. It is one that betrays an interest in the spacial versus the cultural or temporal and that encourages almost an obsessive compulsion to seek out short, simple and palatable explanations which permit more distance to be covered albeit at less depth (Buddle 1998).

8. The academic literature related to Indian urbanization in Canadian cities details the downward spiral to despair that is alleged to mark most efforts to leave the more "traditional" reserve context (Davis 1965, Denton 1972, Dosman 1972, Kerri 1978, Krotz 1980). A newspaper article entitled, "What other group of squatters would be so well-treated?" charges that urban Native peoples ought not to be the recipients of any "special treatment" (*Toronto Sun*, 6 January 1995). And, in response to a Native protest that held up a major Toronto thoroughfare, an article entitled "Let's Treat Natives Like Any Other Canadians," asserts that the solution to Native unemployment in cities is to "shut down Indian affairs, make native peoples full and equal citizens with all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Start a process that should have begun a century ago" (*Toronto Sun*, 20 June 1999).
9. When Native people employ forms of so-called "modern technology" such as the English language or communications media, they are sometimes charged with having indefensibly defiled their once pristine stasis, with promiscuously integrating Euro-Canadian cultural traits and producing inauthentic amalgams. In the Delgamuukw land claims case, for example, Justice Allan McEachern ruled in 1991 that the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en had extinguished Aboriginal title to their lands. McEachern claimed that eating pizza and wearing blue jeans constituted enough of a break with the "aboriginal" past to render modern Native peoples non-distinct from the rest of Canadians. In this case, Aboriginal peoples are accused of being opportunistic traitors to their own peoples and Canadians alike. This type of judgement is especially evident where Aboriginal peoples' technological borrowings render them competitive with Euro-Canadian commercial interests. Commercial fishing boats belonging to Burnt Church reserve residents in Nova Scotia and to Cape Croker residents in Ontario have been vandalized by irate non-Native fishermen, who insist that Aboriginal fishers are unfairly advantaged. Urban Indian peoples, who today make up the majority of the Aboriginal population in Canada, are especially vulnerable to such characterizations.
10. Some environmentalists have sought to discredit the seal and whale hunts pointing to the use of "modern" technologies such as traps, skidoos and motor boats which they argue invalidate the Aboriginal hunters' claims that these are "traditional" activities (see Wenzel 1991, Erikson 1999).
11. See Jerry Mander's *In the Absence of the Sacred* (1991) for an example of this thinking.

12. One ideology informing the Indian Department policies impeding Native agricultural productivity was that, within the scheme of the evolutionary hierarchy of technologies, Indian people on the prairies ought to be prohibited from making the “unnatural leap” from crude instruments to labour-saving technologies. Policy makers assumed this would preserve the “immutable laws of evolution” (Carter 1990:213). Waisberg and Holzkamm offer the following with regard to the failure of Indian farming projects in the Hudson’s Bay Territories:
- Amendments to the 1880 Indian Act, and further regulations passed in 1881...deterred produce sales to non-Indian customers through a stipulation that purchase from Ojibwa farmers was illegal without written permission from an Indian Agent. The chiefs referred to this restriction as the primary cause of failure in reserve farming. They observed that agriculture without a commercial component was an unremunerative, and therefore, unattractive, occupation for band members (1993:186).
13. The paper performed a similar function to the Catholic Church sponsored paper, *Setaneoei* (1887-1934), which was a mixed English/Micmac language paper produced for the Native Catholic mission community in Restigouche, Québec. For the most part mission papers combined mission tracts with local news. The papers promoted literacy and Christianity.
14. Regina’s was entitled, significantly, *Progress*; Port Simpson’s *Nana-Kwa*; Alert Bay’s *The Thunderbird*; Blue Quills’ *Mocassin Telegraph*; Kootenay Residential School’s *The Chupka*; Alberni’s *Western Eagle* and Chooutla’s *Northern Lights* (Miller 1996:160).
15. Aside from the Indian department, for the most part, council minutes were not intended to be circulated among a non-Native readership. The 1846 and 1870 General Council minutes, for instance, were printed, but not published, at Hamilton and Montreal newspaper offices – the 1874 and 1882 Grand General Council minutes, at Sarnia and Hagersville print shops. The 1884 Grand General Council minutes were printed at Peter E. Jones’ printing establishment, the “Indian Publishing Company,” in Hagersville, and parts were later reprinted in *The Indian*, which was intended to serve a largely reserve based readership.
16. When Riel’s Provisional Government assumed representation for the French-speaking Manitoba Métis, the *Nor’Wester* newspaper was suppressed and in 1870, the *New Nation* became the official party organ (Stanley 1960:85). While the paper championed the views of

the Red River Métis and supported their allies, it was edited and published by Major Robinson, a non-Native American. Another Métis paper that emerged around this time was *Manitoba*, a French language paper that ran from 1871 to 1900. From May 1871 to September 1881, this St. Boniface based paper was published under the name *Métis*. Other newspapers at the time had Native sounding titles but were thoroughly Euro-Canadian in scope. The first newspaper published in the township of Iroquois in the Dundas County region, for instance, was entitled *The Chief* (1858-1860). It was a non-Native paper, as were the *Grand River Sachem* (1855-?) and the *Lakefield Kachewanookah Herald* (1855-59).

17. Jones Sr. wrote that the Credit River runners easily covered eighty miles per day. In the winter, they made the trip from Toronto to Georgian Bay in only four days. One-day journeys from Toronto to Niagara were frequently made, moreover, and were considered short trips (1861:62,75).
18. The news of the world feature was discontinued by the fifth issue. In an Editorial note, Jones writes:

Newspapers are so plentiful in the country that they find their way into nearly every house, Indian and white, and our news respecting Indians and matters of special interest to our people are so numerous and of such importance, that we shall have to ask our friends to look to the white man's paper for the general news of the world (17 March 1886:54).
19. Over time, various members were added to the paper's staff. With issue number 12, for instance a new business manager was hired, with number 14, a new journalist and publisher, and with issue 17, a new manager for the advertising department. Beginning in the first week of 1886, at which time there were enough subscribers to warrant an increase in production, a new eight (as opposed to twelve) page edition of *The Indian* began to be produced on a weekly basis. An extra page of advertising was added to each weekly issue.
20. In 1935, Joe Sampson, the newly elected Alberta League President, requested twelve copies of the *Indian Act* from the Indian Department. He was concerned that many Native persons had little familiarity with the very regulations by which their lives were governed, and consequently lacked the tools to recognize and resist the methods by which they were subjugated. The reply he received from A.F. Mackenzie, the Secretary of the Department, stated that a wide distribution of the Act was "unnecessary" and that Individuals desirous of clarification as to particular provisions ought to rely on their Indian agent's reading of the Act (Sluman and Goodwill 1982:163).

21. Roberta Jamieson, the first Aboriginal woman to be called to the bar in Canada is the current band council Chief at Six Nations. She calls her own particular strategy of dealing with the government, "non-adversarial conflict resolution." An article in *Windspeaker* reports that at a special Chief's Assembly on governance, held 22-23 May 2002, Jamieson shared her views with fellow chiefs of how effective protests might be managed. The article states:

She urged Native leaders to lobby...MPs, contact church and labor leaders and other influential Canadians and "advise" the government...Jamieson strongly urged the chiefs to not boycott...consultations....She urged every organization to demand to be heard (*Windspeaker* June 2002:3).

22. Foucault uses the term "subjugated knowledge" to delineate those ways of knowing that are dismissed as non-authorized, and consequently silenced, while others are established as true, official and therefore, credible.

23. See endnote #35.

24. The committee planned a three year hearings schedule: 1946, was to be devoted to Indian Department officials. The following year, the Committee would hear presentations from Native, church and other organizations. The final year would be spent preparing revisions to the *Indian Act* (*The Native Voice*, December 1946:1).

25. It should be noted that Duncan Campbell Scott's involvement with the Indian Department ended in 1932 (Tittley 1986:22). After his retirement, several of the legislative tools he had developed and used as weapons in his own personal battles, as with Loft for instance, soon became inoperative. Frank Pedley, Scott's successor, did not appear have taken as active an interest in controlling band funds as did Scott. In general, as Tobias suggests, from 1933-1945 the government and civil servants responsible for the newly named "Indian Affairs Branch" paid little attention to Indian matters (1991:139). Section 141 of the *Indian Act*, concerning collecting subscriber fees, therefore, was not rigorously enforced during this time.

26. Chief Roberta Jamieson insists that present fiscal accountability issues are the direct result of government legislation which re-routed traditional communication corridors and deprived the Native leadership of its authority. A *Windspeaker* story reports that Jamieson said:

Of course there's a need [to improve accountability]. What else would you expect after a century of an *Indian Act* that held chiefs and councils accountable only to an Indian Agent?...The last thing government wanted then was for our

chiefs and councilors to be accountable to our own people (June 2002).

27. Benedict later founded the North American Indian Traveling College, a "School on wheels." And in 1968 along with Rorihkwats, he created the activist organ, *Akwesasne Notes* (Private Communication with Dan Smoke, 4 August 2000).
28. George Manuel, co-author with Michael Posluns of *The Fourth World* (1974), served under Harold Cardinal in the Alberta Indian Association in the early 1960s, on the Executive of the National Indian Council and as the NIBs President for 1973. He edited the paper from June to July of 1973 (Hady 1984:408).
29. By 1972, numerous Friendship centre newsletters and other bulletins existed, such as: the Canadian Indian Friendship Centre's *Edmonton Native News* (1963-?); the Calgary Indian Friendship Centre's, *Elbow Drums* (1966-81); Pincher Creek Alberta Napi Friendship Centre's *Napi News* (1969-?); the Regina Friendship Centre's *The Moccasin Telegraph*; the Prince Albert Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Service Council's *The Moose Call* (1963-70); the Brandon Manitoba Indian-Métis Friendship Centre's *The Scout* (1966-1982); the Vancouver Indian Centre's *The Telling Stone* (1968-69); and so on.
30. In addition to constructing discursive spaces, the indigenization of certain physical city spaces, such as selected schools, places of forms of employment, bars, restaurants, housing units, parks and so on, also contributed to the formation of a sense, among some urban Aboriginal peoples, of urban Indian solidarity.
31. *The Calumet* which means "Peace Pipe," was Ontario's second Native newspaper to receive a name on this theme (E.F. Wilsons, *Pipe of Peace* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the first). The significance of the name is discussed in the first issue:
 

The Calumet was once a most sacred and significant object among many tribes. It was widely used in many ceremonies, not only for war and peace. It has always been a sign of "friendship." When the Calumet was held out to a party or individual, this was a gesture of welcome and friendship. We would like to think that this symbol will have just such a meaning to all of our readers (30 September 1968).
32. What the government offered at the culmination of the consultation process in June of 1969 was the much maligned policy paper, best known as the "white paper." It proposed, in general terms, an abolition of Indian status as a legal concept, the transfer from the federal to the provincial governments of the responsibility for the provision

of services to Native individuals, and the transfer of ownership of reserves from the Crown to Indian people as private land holdings (Tennant 1990:149). The policy paper also promised that the federal government would provide funds to Native bands and organizations to consider policies and programs relevant to Native peoples.

33. In the south, for instance, leaders felt the *Indian Act* name should be retained, as should the clauses concerning Native women's rights upon marriage, and that bands should decide if adopted-out children ought to retain their status. Leaders in the north, favoured a name change to the *Citizenship or Treaty Act*, were more inclined to allow women to retain their Native status in mixed marriages, and were emphatic that adopted children retain their status. Southern Chiefs determined that the section on enfranchisement should be entirely eliminated from the Act, while those in the north opined that individuals should retain the option to enfranchise.
34. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002 Robert Nault, the Liberal Government's Minister of Indian Affairs tabled a bill entitled, "*The First Nations Governance Act*." It is a controversial piece of legislation which sets about to amend the *Indian Act*. While some Aboriginal women's and urban organizations have expressed non-enthusiastic support for the bill, the bulk of the Aboriginal leadership have expressed their dissent. Much as was the case with the *White Paper*, the primary criticisms centre on the process itself – on the government's determination to focus on governmentally authored rights, as are to be found in the *Indian Act*, as opposed to the co-inscribed treaty texts. In an interview with Canadian Journalists, Matthew Coon Come tells the government, "Deal with our treaties. Implement our treaties. You want to pass legislation? Implement the legislation that gives you the authority to go down a path of negotiations on our treaties that are in Section 35 of the Constitution" (in *The Edmonton Journal* 15 June 2002).
35. The paper was published by the Union of Ontario Indians President, Omer Peters; Vice President, Wilmer Nadjiwon; Treasurer, Terry Bigwin and Editor-Secretary, Helen Domenchuk.
36. While a new style of Native leader was clearly evident in the 1960's it was not due to any suddenly developed intellectual capabilities on the part of Aboriginal individuals, but to newly removed legislative impediments and public receptivity to Aboriginal action for justice. Native women were also achieving positions in various political offices at this time and in the Indian department. A February 1961 *World Affairs* article entitled "Women chiefs head twelve Indian Bands in Canada" locates the impetus for Native women's entry into the

realm of politics in the removal of several prohibitive factors. After considerable lobbying on the part of Native political organizations such as NBBC, NAIB and the IAI, in 1945, Indian Affairs made family allowance cheques payable to women. Then in 1951 the branch formalized Native women's right to vote and to assume office in tribal elections. It should be noted that while Iroquoian women had always been actively involved in traditional community political life, this was not necessarily the case in other Native nations.

37. Miles Morrisseau attended the Native Journalism program at the University of Western Ontario in London. He also worked as the National Aboriginal correspondent for the CBC and served on the board of the Native News Network of Canada. He worked for the Canada Council, for *Aboriginal Voices* Magazine in Toronto, and as the Executive Producer for the APTN's television talk show, *Buffalo Tracks*.
38. Under the aegis of the Aboriginal Voices Radio (AVR) banner, Farmer and a small group of committed volunteers have been steadfastly applying for what are, in many cases, the last radio broadcast frequencies available in Canadian urban markets. With licences in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, and several pending, and with a license to operate a national service Aboriginal Voices Radio is on its way toward achieving a nation-wide Aboriginal radio network. Not incidentally, the CBC—the national public broadcast system in Canada—has provided the greatest impediment to the development of this service. The substance of the negative interventions the CBC has offered at each CRTC hearing is that AVR will interfere with one of the several signals the corporation operates each market area. Despite these and other setbacks, "Become one of the heard," remains the slogan for the flagship Toronto station. Radio broadcasts are transmitted by Native Communications Incorporated (NCI) in Manitoba, Société de Communication Atikamekw-Montagnais (SOCAM) in Québec, and several reserve based radio station to urban areas as well as reserve communities. Once in operation, however, AVR in Toronto will be the first independently owned Aboriginal station in Canada to broadcast expressly to an urban Aboriginal population (and to interested members of the non-Native public).
39. It should be noted, however, that Dan (Seneca Nation) and Mary Lou (Ojibwe Nation) themselves represent the two major Aboriginal language families for Ontario, which are termed "Iroquoian" and "Algonquian" by linguists.
40. Lee Maracle appeared as a guest on the 17 November 2000 episode of *Buffalo Tracks*.
41. Richard Wagamese, a novelist and script-writer, is a former colum-

nist with *Windspeaker* (an Edmonton-based national First Nations newspaper) and a former syndicated columnist for the *Calgary Herald*. He has been involved with CFWE — The Native Perspective (a First Nations radio station now based in Edmonton), and other radio stations.

42. Eric Michales (1986) initially made this argument regarding Walpiri media in Australia.

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