

Home and Native Land: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Ontario Grade 7 History
Curriculum

by

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B.A., Brock University, 2012

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Abstract

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A narrative of denial and ignorance of colonial history is pervasive in Canadian school curriculum. Generations of Canadian children learn about history without adequate understanding of Indigenous peoples and of the negative impact of colonialism. Drawing on Indigenous and critical race theories, this research study applied a critical discourse analysis to explore how historical narratives are (re)circulated in school history curriculum. Using the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum and two history textbooks, the information that is currently being presented to Grade 7 students in Ontario history classes was analyzed. The study found that themes of denial, ignorance, Euro-centrism, racialized sexism and White settler colonial hegemony are pervasive in the history curriculum and textbooks, while information regarding distinct Indigenous peoples and their nations, their histories, and their contributions to Canadian history, are largely absent. These findings highlight implications for curriculum reform and the need for anti-racist, decolonizing pedagogical and curricular approaches.

Keywords: colonialism, pedagogy, curriculum, racialized ignorance, Indigenous

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Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional territory of the Lekwungen and W SÁNEC peoples on which the University of Victoria is situated. I acknowledge my privilege as a visitor on their territory, as I have been able to make Victoria my home, write this thesis and complete my degree. I would also like to acknowledge the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, what is now southern Ontario, where I had the privilege of being raised.

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Preface

“Oh Canada! Our home and Native land”

But who is the reference “our home” intended to include?
 Whose home is it Native to? And what group of people does the pronoun ‘our’ speak to?
 Another word for Native is original
 What happens when you put the first two letters of the alphabet on original?
 You get Aboriginal.
 Oh Canada, ‘our’ home and native land
 This may be your home now, but it is Aboriginal land.

“From far and wide, oh Canada”

An anthem intended to represent and include all from coast to coast
 How is this so?
 When a national anthem is only produced and marketed in two languages,
 How can this represent all Canadians?
 Who is not included?
 Who is out of sight and out of mind?
 With minimal recognition of their presence,
 From far and wide, Oh Canada.

I’m not demanding perfection, but it can start with the person in your reflection.

“God keep our land glorious and free”

Who is this God? –and whose religion and beliefs does it include?
 This land may be glorious, but it is not free.
 The land is not free as not only does it have monetary value,
 But only certain individuals are more free to own this land,
 Others are devalued.
 God keep our land glorious and free
 And how can this land be called so glorious today?
 This land full of hurt, blood and tears
 From the attempt to completely extinguish
 Thousands of nations over the years.
 Oh... Canada.

Oh Canada,
 This anthem for other countries to hear and learn about ‘our great white north’
 What are other nations learning?
 An anthem required to be played each morning in educational institutions
 What are the children learning?

I’m not demanding perfection, but it can start with the person in your reflection.

(Hayley Clausing, 2013 March 4).

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

Introduction

As noted Indigenous educator and scholar Marie Battiste (2002) has argued, “Canada’s educational institutions have largely ignored, and continue to ignore, Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy” (p. 9). Indigenous peoples are often mis- and under-represented in Canadian school curriculum (Battiste, 2002; Godlewska, Moore & Bednasek, 2010). Godlewska et al., (2010) stress that Canada has a “long history of ignorance” and that “education may not be the source of ignorance, [however] it is now perpetuating it” (p. 417). As a former student of the Ontario public school system, I have no recollection of ever being taught about Indigenous histories, cultures and their valuable contributions to Canada. Consequently, I have examined Ontario’s contemporary public education curriculum for Grade 7 history students to see if and how similar themes of ignorance are perpetuated.

As the researcher conducting this critical discourse analysis, I am the “central figure who influences the collection, selection, and interpretation of data” (Finlay, 2002, p. 531). The theoretical framework, data analysis and findings presented in this thesis are rooted in my own epistemological perspective and social location. To make this visible, I have engaged in researcher reflexivity, which “can be defined as thoughtful, conscious self-awareness” (Finlay, 2002, p. 532). Keeping an ethic of reflexivity in mind, I must first situate myself.

I am a White, able-bodied, young female adult, raised in a Christian home in southern Ontario, with Austrian and German ancestry, and am currently pursuing a

Masters degree in Child and Youth Care and a career in the social service field. Because of my social location, my experiences in Canada have come from a place of White settler privilege. As Dyer (1997) argues, there are “graduations of whiteness: some people are whiter than others” (p. 12). Our interaction with bodies, images and language all shape knowledge, and in a North American context, social groups are divided in part by their appearance and function in relation to dominant Euro-Western racial norms (Dyer, 1997). My appearance of blond hair and White skin from my Austrian and German background anchors my unquestioned position of privilege in Canada, as Teutons, along with Anglos and Nordics, have historically been more “securely white” than Latins or the Irish (Dyer, 1997, p.12). Due to my family’s level of privilege, my Grandmother was able to immigrate to Canada in the 1950s from Austria with less than 10 dollars to her name. White privilege and colonial practices ensured that my family had no issues with accessing and owning land, making Canada their home and feeling as though they belonged.

The privilege that my family and I hold has been socialized in me as normal, when in reality it is the result of the hierarchical inequalities imposed by European colonization and the continued forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The history and context that have made my White privilege possible were never taught to me or made visible until I took an interest in feminist and social justice studies in post-secondary education. Prior to this, throughout my experiences of the Ontario public education system, I was exposed to a very different narrative of the Canadian nation. I had no idea that Canada is a colonizing nation, which has the purpose of assimilating, exterminating and segregating Indigenous peoples in whatever ways possible. I was not

taught to see my privilege as a White person, but rather was socialized to think that we were the rightful founders of the Canadian nation. The curricular content presented to me did not “explain how society was created or crucially transformed, how the individuals in that society were reconstituted, [and] how the estate was established” (Mills, 1997, p. 10). Because of my interests in practicing anti-oppressive child and youth care work, and in order to address this pervasive erasure in education, I am interested in a critical exploration of the current education and curriculum system to see how racialization narratives are presently being taught to students. I chose critical discourse analysis (CDA) as my methodology, because I wanted to analyze the ways in which European White settlers, Indigenous peoples and others are portrayed in history curriculum, including texts and images.

Grade 7 Ontario history students are taught colonial narrative depictions of early contact and settlement from the years 1713 to 1850 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This qualitative critical discourse analysis research study examines the curriculum content regarding the depictions of early contact and settlement, analysing the way the history and emerging identity of Canada are taught to middle school-aged children. Discourses are used to describe and label individuals, locations and objects in order to differentially constitute, structure and value them (Fairclough, 2001). In North America, settler discursive formations constitute Indigenous peoples, Canadian citizenship, European settlers, the Canadian nation, education, and children, in very particular and problematic ways. These discursive formations are shaped by the limitations of colonial worldviews and languages, particularly as they are communicated in the “Queen’s English” –the English language which invisibilizes other languages and ways of being

(Battiste, 2002). Battiste (2002) states that “modern educational policy has focused almost exclusively on English-language instruction, with regional concerns for the retention of French” (p. 18). The terminology and discourses that are used in North America in the English language are steeped in European colonial ideologies and ontologies (Battiste, 2002). Consequently, as this research study analyzes discourses that are written in English, and is itself written in English, is therefore derived in some way from European colonial ideologies, which is all that I know as an English speaker. Nonetheless, there is a value in critically unmasking colonial discourses in and through the English language, as this makes the analysis available to a Canadian audience.

Context

This research study was conducted in the Canadian province of Ontario, specifically in southern Ontario. Southern Ontario is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. Growing up in southern Ontario, I do not recall being taught about the different Indigenous nations in my area or in Canada more generally. I do not remember Indigenous leaders or speakers ever coming to my school and speaking about their different cultures, traditions and histories. I do not remember being taught that there are different nations and important distinctions among various Indigenous communities. An important part of my work for this research project has been to thoroughly research the different local Indigenous communities on whose territories I have resided and studied, using a variety of resources. This work is part of my own ongoing process of dismantling racialized ignorance. Consequently, I have researched the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Wyandot cultures by drawing on various resources. I want to acknowledge that simply researching about Indigenous peoples is not enough to

redress the damaging colonial relations I speak to in this study, as it might contribute to further appropriation and misrepresentation. Rather, my research is an important first step as part of a more extensive process of re-learning to which I am committing for the long term.

Honouring distinctions among different Indigenous communities is incredibly important, rather than seeing Indigenous peoples as only one homogenous group (L. Smith, 1999). There are many Indigenous perspectives, theories, values, cultures and traditions; some happen to be similar just as there are similarities in other cultures across the world (L. Smith, 1999). Despite the forceful removal from their homes and land, and despite the constant assault on their political, economic, social and cultural structures by European colonization and settlement, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Wyandot peoples, and their cultures, continue to live and thrive in southern Ontario.

The Anishinaabe peoples or, Anishinaabeg (plural form), which means, “The Original Peoples”, migrated from the East coast to the Great Lakes region (Little River Band, 2014). Today, the Anishinaabeg communities are located in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan (Little River Band, 2014). The Anishinaabeg are patrilineal, meaning that the child born into the family takes the clan of the father, as it is not permitted for Anishinaabeg to marry within the same clan (Gehl, 2013). The Anishinaabeg are now divided into seven Nations: Ojibwa, Odawa, Potawatami, Chippewa, Mississauga, Algonquin and Delaware (Gehl, 2013). I think that it is important to note that these names were given to the Anishinaabeg in the eighteenth century by the French and English as a way to differentiate the nations (Roy, n.d.). Colonial practice was to name First Nations without

consultation, and often these names were racist (Roy, n.d.). However, despite the acquired names, the term Anishinaabe is commonly used and is now a preferred term (Roy, n.d.).

Anishinaabemowin is the name of the common language that Anishinaabe people speak, although there are slight differences among the nations (Gehl, 2013). My intent is not to generalize or present stereotypical representations of what are incredibly diverse Anishinaabeg communities and histories. However, it is important to make some information visible as part of the process of re-centering the continued presence of Indigenous nations in Ontario. It is critical to recognize integral aspects of Anishinaabeg life including different orientations to society, culture, nature, land and life that contrast with Euro-Western ontologies of dominion over land and “othered” societies. For instance, the Anishinaabeg have always practiced a range of ceremonial practices that are rooted in their relationship with their environment and land. Again, it must be emphasized that there is tremendous diversity in Anishinaabeg identities and traditions, with each person deciding how often he/she participates (Little River Band, 2014). These ceremonies include, among others: Pkwenezige Pigitinigewin (Smudging, which is the burning of sacred medicine for purification), Kchitwaa Mkadekewin (fasting), Kchitwaa Naanagidoonwin (Talking Circle which includes discussion on varied topics), and Kchitwaa Noozwinkewin (Naming ceremony for adolescents before reaching adulthood) (Little River Band, 2014). Traditionally, Anishinaabeg use Kchitwaa Mshkiki (Four Sacred Medicines) for ceremonies, prayers, offerings of gifts, purifying and healing (Little River Band, 2014). The medicines include: Sema (tobacco), Kiishig (cedar), Mshkwadewashk (sage) and Wiingash (sweet grass) (Little River Band, 2014).

There are seven doodem (clans): Awaazisii, Baswenaazhi, Aan'aawenh, Nooke, Moozoonii, Waabizhishi and Animikii (Little River Band, 2014). The Baswenaazhi are the crane clans, and the Aan'aawenh are the loon clans, who work together as the leaders and Chiefs for the Anishinaabe nation (Little River Band, 2014). The fish clan, Awaazisii, are the wise people who solve the problems within the nation and settle arguments between the Aan'aawenh and Baswenaazhi clans (Little River Band, 2014). Nooke are the bear clans who protect the safety of the community (Little River Band, 2014). The peacemakers are the Moozoonii, the deer clan, who are kind and gentle (Little River Band, 2014). The warriors are the martin clans, Waabizhishi, who have fighting skills to protect the nation (Little River Band, 2014). Animikii are the bird clans, the spiritual people, who have the ability to predict the future (Little River Band, 2014).

The Haudenosaunee, which means the People of the Longhouse, historically lived in longhouses, and today the longhouses are primarily used for ceremonies and governance (Gehl, 2013). Longhouses are framed in wood, covered with elm bark, measuring approximately 5-6 meters tall and up to 20 meters long (Silverthorn & Kilsby, 2013). It was common for several families within the same clan to live in the same longhouse (Silverthorn & Kilsby, 2013). Haudenosaunee peoples belong to The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which has existed since time immemorial (Childs, 2014). The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, founded by Aionwatha (The Peacemaker), is made up of six nations (Childs, 2014). The six nations involve: Kanien'kehake, Onayotekaono, Onundagaono, Guyohkohnyoh, Onondowahgah and Ska-Ruh-Reh (Childs, 2014). The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is renowned for its democratic system, and is the world's oldest representative democracy (Childs, 2014). In fact, the American constitution was

modelled after it (Childs, 2014). The nations in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy are renowned for their agricultural knowledge; historically they have harvested and traded “the three sisters”: corn, beans and squash (Childs, 2014). Hunting and fishing were and continue to also be important (Childs, 2014). Unlike the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee clans are matrilineal; the children take the clan of their mother (Childs, 2014).

Within the six nations in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, there are clans, which represent the systems of governance (Childs, 2014). The English gave the Kanien’kehake people the name, Mohawk, which has three clans: the turtle, the bear and the wolf (Childs, 2014). The Kanien’kehake nation are the Elder Brother nation within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and are known as the People of the Flint (Childs, 2014). Today, the Kanien’kehake communities are spread out in Ontario and Quebec, Canada, and New York State, USA (Childs, 2014). Traditionally, their territory stretched across New York State; however, during the American Revolution, the Kanien’kehake were coerced to relocate by the French (Childs, 2014). Similar to the Kanien’kehake, the Onyota’ake nation is divided into three clans: the bear, wolf and turtle (Childs, 2014). Onyota’ake is also known as Oneida, which means People of the Standing Stone (Childs, 2014). Six million acres of land was allocated to the Oneida from The Treaty of Canandaigua; however, over time, the New York State continued to cut down the territory, resulting in forceful relocating (Childs, 2014). The Oneida peoples currently live in Wisconsin and New York, London, Ontario and the Grand River Territory reservation in Canada (Childs, 2014).

The Guyohkohnyoh nation, also known as the Cayuga, are one of the Younger Brother nations in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Childs, 2014). The Cayuga are known as the People of the Great Swamps (Childs, 2014). Five clans are in the Cayuga nation, including the turtle, bear, wolf, heron and snipe clans (Childs, 2014). After losing most of their land following the American Revolution, the majority of Cayuga peoples now live in Ontario and Oklahoma (Childs, 2014). The Onundagaono nation, commonly known as Onondaga, meaning the People of the Hills, were the last to be appointed to join the confederacy from Aionwatha (The Peacemaker) (Childs, 2014). The Onondaga have seven clans including: beaver, turtle, wolf, deer, hawk, bear and eel (Childs, 2014). Following the American Revolution, the Onondaga settled in the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, as well as, just south of Syracuse, New York (Childs, 2014).

The Onondowahgah nation are known as the People of the Hill, more commonly known as Seneca (Childs, 2014). The Onondowahgah work alongside the Kanien'kehake and the Onundagaono, as Elder Brothers in the Grand Council (Childs, 2014). There are eight clans in the Onondowahgah nation, including: turtle, bear, wolf, beaver, snipe, heron, deer and hawk (Childs, 2014). Today, the Onondowahgah live on the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Ontario, Canada, as well as in various areas of the United States (Childs, 2014). The last addition to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy was the Tuscarora nation, which in their language is Ska-Ruh-Reh (Childs, 2014). Any concerns or issues that the Ska-Ruh-Reh have, they are to speak with the Cayuga who then bring the concerns to the Grand Council (Childs, 2014).

The Wyandot peoples are the original residents of the St Lawrence Valley in Quebec (Redish & Lewis, 2015). Many Wyandot peoples still live along the St. Lawrence

Valley; however, most were forced to move to Ohio, Michigan, Kansas and Oklahoma since the European invasion (Redish & Lewis, 2015). There are three Wyandot First Nations located in Quebec, Oklahoma and Kansas, each of which have their own government and laws (Redish & Lewis, 2015). Wyandot peoples are also known as Huron-Wendat (Redish & Lewis, 2015). Huron is the name given to the Wyandot peoples by the French settlers, which was never accepted by the Wyandot peoples (NaNation, 2000). Whereas, Wendat comes from the Wyandot language, meaning “peninsula people” (Redish & Lewis, 2015). Historically, Wyandot peoples lived in Longhouses, with a similar structure as the Haudenosaunee longhouse, constructed out of wood and bark, and varying in length (Redish & Lewis, 2015; Silverthorn & Kilsby, 2013). Longhouses today are used for traditional ceremonies (Redish & Lewis, 2015).

The native Huron-Wendat language and fluent speakers of the language have nearly been eradicated through White settlement and colonization; consequently, today Wyandot peoples mainly speak French and/or English (Redish & Lewis, 2015). Wyandot peoples culture has equalitarian relations among women and men, where both men and women are permitted to be members of their government, just as they are both permitted to vote (Redish & Lewis, 2015). However, women are considered the head of each household and children belong to the clan of their mother (NaNation, 2000). Historically, the Wyandot were divided into 12 clans; however, today there are 7 clans (NaNation, 2000). The 7 clans still in existence include: Big Turtle, Little Turtle, Wolf, Deer, Bear, Porcupine and Snake (NaNation, 2000). Marriages are not permitted within the same clan, instead a Wyandot person must marry outside of their clan (NaNation, 2000).

Traditionally, Wyandot peoples were farmers, harvesting sunflowers, corn, beans and squash, as well as hunters and fishers (Redish & Lewis, 2015).

This brief information about Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee and Wyandot peoples has been included because it is important to honour the historical and current presence of these Indigenous communities in southern Ontario.

Terminology

As indicated in the previous section, in this study the specific names of First Peoples and their communities have been used wherever possible. The term ‘Indigenous peoples’ has been used more broadly to reference individuals who are First Nations, Metis and Inuit in Canada. This term also distinguishes peoples from around the world through their shared struggle against dispossessing and colonization by settlers (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; L. Smith, 1999). L. Smith (1999) illustrates how Indigenous activists have fought for the final ‘s’ in ‘peoples’ “because of the right of peoples to self-determination” and “as a way of recognizing that there are real differences between different Indigenous peoples” (p. 7). One limitation of the term ‘Indigenous’ is that “it appears to collectivize many distinct populations whose experiences under imperialism have been vastly different” (L. Smith, 1999, p. 6).

The terms “settler” and “settler colonialism” have been used to denote individuals, particularly Europeans, whose history of migration was/is spurred by “the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). Under settler colonialism, the settler “never leaves” and colonial dominion is reasserted each day of occupation (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Settler colonialism describes a process by which

individuals, again specifically Europeans, relocate to and take over a territory that was already settled by diverse Indigenous societies (Veracini, 2010). Colonial settlers have the intention of removing existing Indigenous societies and asserting power and dominion to expand and develop their own society (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Veracini, 2010).

Linked to the concept of “settler colonialism” is the term “colony”, which denotes “both a political body that is dominated by an exogenous agency, and an exogenous entity that reproduces itself in a given environment” (Veracini, 2010, p. 2-3). I have used the term ‘White’ when speaking about individuals of European descent, as a way of describing how White citizenship has become the normative Canadian identity. The concept of Whiteness, and the positioning of “White” as the superior, purest racial category, is rooted in European colonial ideologies and early race theories that used skin colour-among other determinants-to create racial hierarchies that persist to this day (Francis, 2011; Mills, 1997). Carter et al. (2007) define Whiteness as a “hegemonic system that perpetuates certain dominant ideologies about who receives power and privilege” (p. 152). Within Canada, Francis (2011) argues, Whiteness is the dominant system that has been constructed by the European settlement process, conferring disadvantages on Indigenous peoples such as the imposition of British concepts of law, government, family, education, religion, and language.

The Hegemonic System of Whiteness

The dominant use of the English and French languages is merely one of the many epistemological erasures that have been and continue to be imposed on Indigenous peoples due to the settlement of European societies and the hegemonic system of Whiteness (Battiste, 2002). Indigenous peoples in Canada face endemic rates of social

and economic exclusion and poverty. For instance, Francis (2011) illustrates that in 2000, “42 percent of Indigenous people in urban centres lived on a low income compared to 17 percent among other Canadians” (p. 161). Yet under a system of hegemonic Whiteness and denial, there is little to no recognition that Indigenous peoples and communities far too often have a lack of equitable education funding, health care and human services, safe housing, clean running water, safety in practicing cultural traditions, political participation, and employment opportunities (Allan & Smylie, 2015; Francis, 2011).

Godlewska et al. (2010) argue that the persistent and systemic inequity between settler Canadians and Indigenous peoples is largely ignored in the Canadian education system. As previously mentioned, it was not until my interest in feminism that I was introduced to, and continued to learn about, the extensive list of genocidal policies inflicted on Indigenous communities by the Canadian colonial state. Some of these impacts include: the spread of disease resulting in the extermination of approximately 70 to 95 percent of Indigenous peoples; sterilization and scientific experiments conducted without consent; forced relocation of entire communities; residential schools; outlawing Indigenous cultures, spiritualities and languages; defining and legally enforcing external measurements for Aboriginal status that continue to marginalize women specifically; removing children from their homes; separating families, and; sexual, physical and emotional abuse in generations of Indigenous communities (Allan & Smylie, 2015; Francis, 2011).

Given these sustained assaults on generations upon generations of Indigenous communities since first European contact, there is an urgent imperative for Canadian children to learn about the history and contemporary reality of settler state practices and

policies. Godlewska et al. (2010) argue that “the history of Canada’s dealing with Aboriginal Peoples is a history of ignorance, not a passive or haphazard but a profoundly purposive and wilful ignorance” (p. 419). I have explored this issue by investigating how narratives of “first contact” are constructed and communicated to Ontario history students in the seventh Grade. My research study analyzed if and how Indigenous peoples are represented in history textbooks, and in what manner, and whose story of Canadian history and European settlement is being told. Godlewska et al. (2010) argue that each aspect of Canada’s history –such as the Royal Proclamation and the Indian Act- is misunderstood, and this misunderstanding has served the interests of Canadian settlers at the expense of Indigenous peoples. One of the primary ways in which knowledge is produced and reproduced is through the education system (Battiste, 2002; Godlewska et al., 2010).

The mainstream public education system in Canada is based on EuroWestern-centric perspectives and beliefs (Battiste, 2002), and as Godlewska et al. (2010) argue, it is biased and resistant to change, ensuring that colonialism remains unchallenged. Children are socialized through the knowledge presented in the education system which often depicts White people’s understanding and knowledge of the history and identity of Canada as a nation founded by Britain and France, and White perceptions of their relations with Indigenous peoples (Godlewska et al., 2010). Battiste (2013) argues that “Canada has generated in its self-narrative a description of a generous, liberal, and progressive society that has overcome its earlier bigotries and prejudices” (p. 125). Consequently, “some silences might appear accidental or incidental, but their frequency, immediate context and placement in these courses suggest at the very least a subliminal

white-washing of key issues” (Godlewska et al., 2010, p. 426). Godlewska et al. (2010) argue that many schools in Canada have curriculum that perpetuates this self-interested lack of knowledge by maintaining false information about Indigenous peoples in Canada and far too often completely excluding information about colonization.

The recently released report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) states that “too many Canadians still do not know the history of Aboriginal peoples’ contributions to Canada” (TRC, 2015c, p. 114). Because of this reality, one of the central themes in the recent appeals from the TRC (2015b) is to examine our current education system. The TRC (2015b) has called upon the federal, provincial and territorial education governments to collaborate with Indigenous peoples and educators to “make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students” (p. 7). The TRC (2015a) emphasizes that “the importance of truth telling in its own right should not be underestimated; it restores the human dignity of victims of violence and calls governments and citizens to account” (p. 12).

It can be argued that the education system abides by what Mills (1997) refers to as ‘The Racial Contract’, which encompasses the notion of White supremacy that maintains racial hierarchies of ‘White’ and ‘non-White’. These separations are produced through socialization as if a society prior to colonization never existed (Mills, 1997). The Racial Contract encompasses White hierarchy and the knowledges produced have the inability “to understand the world they themselves have made” (Mills, 1997, p. 2). Mills argues that a version of “feel-good history for Whites” is constructed and (re)produced through

education, textbooks and narratives, which then becomes consumed by the population as normative epistemology (as cited in Steyn, 2012, p. 8). The “feel-good history for Whites” involves narratives told through the perspectives of White European colonists (Mills, 1997; Steyn, 2012). This has resulted in stories that are favourable for White colonists, denying the historical and continuous abuse of non-White individuals (Mills, 1997; Steyn, 2012). Mills (1997) argues that it is important to understand that racism is caused by White domination, and that White domination causes White ignorance. In agreement with The Racial Contract, Steyn (2012) argues that societies that are structured in a racial hierarchy have an “ignorance contract”, where “ignorance is understood as a social achievement with strategic value” (p. 8). In order for White power hierarchies to be maintained, Steyn stresses, White epistemologies of ignorance are imperative (Steyn, 2012; Sullivan & Tuana, 2010). According to Steyn (2012), epistemologies of ignorance maintain supremacy as a systematic achievement, constructed by power and maintained by power. Rodriguez (2000) argues that, “whiteness has historically been appropriated in unmarked ways by strategically maintaining as colourless... behind its constant constructions of otherness” (p. 1). For instance, when children go to the ‘multicultural’ section of the library, they see books with images of individuals with different appearances, skin pigmentation and hair textures, etc.; however, there are often no White representations (Dyer, 1997). There is far too much research focus on examining “people of colour”, as if White individuals are colourless and unquestionably central and normal (Dyer, 1997; Rodriguez, 2000).

There are many different ways White epistemologies of ignorance are produced within Canada, and it is of value to research these different methods of producing

ignorance in order to further identify the ways in which Canada is distributing ignorance. This was my main focus on my study. Consequently, I analyzed the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum and textbooks to identify the colonial narratives and the role that knowledge, and types of knowledge, play in education institutions.

Researching Ignorance in Curriculum

To explore these issues, I have conducted a discourse analysis, which involved analyzing the relationship between language, social context and relationships of power (Fairclough, 1985; Kirby, Greaves & Reid, 2006; Padgett, 2008). Through analysis, the meanings that are embedded within language which make an impact on the life world are revealed (Fairclough, 1985; Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). Ontario curriculum for Grade 7 history classes involves the study of Canada from 1713 to 1850, which was, during this time called New France and British North America by European settlers. As I engaged in a critical discourse analysis of three Ontario Grade 7 Canadian history textbooks, the following research questions were used to explore the data:

What do we not know?

- What are the essential features of the textbook?
- What information is being presented?
- Who is being represented in history?
- What time frames are being represented in the textbooks?
- How are European settlers represented?
- How are Indigenous people represented?
- How are others represented?
- How are the relations between European settlers and Indigenous peoples represented?
- What information is missing?

Why do we not know it?

- Who creates the information in these textbooks?
- What is the purpose of producing the information in these textbooks?
- How is the information presented?

What differences might knowing it make?

Are there current effects to teaching this information to middle school students?

Are there education systems that attempt to teach different information that is presented in the textbooks and curriculum?

As I explored these questions, my intension was to make the following concepts more visible: knowledge and power relations, Canadian history and citizenship, national identity, Indigenous identity, race and racialization, Whiteness and privilege, migration, colonialism and imperialism. This research study is needed because, as the TRC (2015a) argues, far too many individuals residing in Canada are unaware of the ways in which the country became colonized. Individuals in Canada are unaware of how generations of Indigenous children were victimized by the state and other colonial policies such as the Indian Act, residential schools, crown treaties, and so forth, that have placed Indigenous peoples in a marginalized position. Instead, as Fee and Russel (2007) argue, Canadians “typically represent themselves as tolerant and polite”, as if they are not a racist, colonizing nation, denying that racism does currently exist (192).

Individuals often associate racism with mainstream idealistic views, which involves the perspective that racism occurs at an individual level; excluding the actuality that racism is founded on social system structures (Bonilla-Silva, 2005). Racism is often conceived of as an individual belief, as though only a selected number of “irrational thinking”, “incorrect” or “stupid” individuals are “racists” (Bonilla-Silva, 2005, p. 4). This view involves the idea that the ‘racist individuals’ express their racism in direct, overt behaviours such as verbal harassment or explicit discriminatory actions such as exclusion (Bonilla-Silva, 2005). Consequently, if Canadians do not show overt prejudice racist actions, they deem themselves and others as being ‘not racist’ (Godlewska et al., 2010). However, racism is a systemic, pervasive issue that enables settler Canadians to

have employment, own a house, participate in political and civic life, access social services, enjoy the benefits of citizenship, and learn and speak English or French as if they are the native languages in Canada (Battiste, 2002). Much of the Canadian education system teaches English and French, falls under the model of British law, teaches a EuroWestern-centric history of Canada and is one of the greatest influences on the socialization of Canadian children (Battiste, 2002). Consequently, the focus of this research study is timely as it explores how the Ontario contemporary Grade 7 history curriculum might be reproducing racialized, colonial ideologies that maintain the marginalization of Indigenous peoples while supporting a national narrative of denial and White privilege.

Summary

Godlewsa et al. (2010) argue that the “Ontario schools are complicit in perpetuating this self-serving ignorance and maintaining the injustices of Canadian history as a living reality for Aboriginal people today” (p. 419). Consequently, it is imperative to make visible the ways in which the systemic racialization and disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples is being perpetuated. One of these ways is through the Canadian education system. I think that it is important to critically explore how educational curriculum contributes to particular representations of settler Canadian society.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological approach I employed to conduct my inquiry into the historical narratives presented in the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum. I first describe the history, main tenets and applications of critical discourse analysis, and then outline my key questions, data sources and data analysis method. Finally, I explore issues of validity as well as the study's limitations and other important ethical considerations.

Critical Discourse Analysis

The methodological approach that was used to conduct this research project was critical discourse analysis (CDA). Critical discourse analysis is similar to discourse analysis (DA), with both methodologies overlapping in some areas yet promoting different perspectives (Maingueneau & O'regan, 2006). Both CDA and DA analyze and interpret the uses of language and discursive practices (Maingueneau & O'regan, 2006). Fairclough (1992) defines discursive practices as "the practices of producing, distributing and consuming texts" (p. 269). CDA is different than DA as it applies a critical approach to language, illustrating how power relations, prejudices and discrimination are embedded within discourses (Maingueneau & O'regan, 2006). A discourse denotes spoken and written communication such as the semantics of language, as well as the codes, conventions and representations of language that are specific to a particular culture, field of practice, historical time period, and so forth (Fairclough, 1992; Maingueneau & O'regan, 2006).

Traditional discourse analysis typically involves analyzing written, vocal or sign language, and semiotic events or language forms (Alyward, 2010; Kirby et al., 2006;

Padgett, 2008; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). A main approach to discourse analysis involves a focused analysis of the language that is used, concerning the grammatical structures and how the features are connected within a textual context (Bloome & Clark, n.d.; Johnstone, 2008). The origin of discourse analysis is embedded within the philosophical tradition of hermeneutics, as many of the first discourse analyses were conducted on religious scriptures and hymns (Alyward, 2010). It was later influenced by German and French philosophical traditions in psychology, sociology and linguistics, as well as the ethnography of communication (Bloome & Clark, n.d.). The focus of discourse analysis is on the use of language and how it is embedded in socio-cultural formations (Alyward, 2010). This perspective is drawn from the theoretical foundations of constructivism and structuralism within a social context (Alyward, 2010; Padgett, 2008; Wetherell et al., 2001). Discourse analysis examines the systems of both knowledge production and knowledge representation (Hall, 1990).

In addition to a focus on the content, meaning, intent and context of discourse, a critical approach to discourse analysis has the goal of understanding the relationship between language, social context, and relations of power (Fairclough, 1985; Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). The purpose is to reveal the meanings embedded within language and the impact on the life world and social relations (Fairclough, 1985; Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). The process involved in critical discourse analysis is to analyze the meanings and ideologies that are present within language and how these contribute to the formation of particular kinds of subjects (Fairclough, 1985; Padgett, 2008). The critical analysis of discourses involves examining, analyzing and exposing the messages that are less visible, such as revealing biases, contradictions and assumptions (Fairclough, 1985).

Discourses are not complete representations of social life and practices; rather they are established features of societal interactions that place populations in positions within society (Fairclough, 2001; Johnstone, 2008). Discourses refer to the ideas and concepts within social and historical contexts that are constrained and shaped by social structures and which play a role in shaping them in turn (Fairclough, 2001; White & Stoneman, 2012). In other words, discursive formations, subjects, social contexts, social structures and ideologies are all mutually produced (White & Stoneman, 2012). As historical and social contexts are continually being altered, discourses and language are also ever-changing (White & Stoneman, 2012). Consequently, discourses contribute to the reproduction of macro structures as power and the role of power is consistently involved (Fairclough, 1985; Foucault, 1972). In other words, rather than the notion that power is employed between people or groups, Foucault (1972) argues that power itself is dispersed everywhere and is continually in circulation.

The main approach to critical discourse analysis emphasizes the broader socio-cultural, economic and political context, which is a common conceptual focus in post-modern and post-structural traditions in the social and human sciences (Bloome & Clark, n.d.; Johnstone, 2008). CDA has been used in diverse social and human science fields and theoretical legacies, such as in feminist, queer and women's studies, post-colonial and global studies, and critical race theory (Bloome & Clark, n.d.; Johnstone, 2008). CDA theorists in these fields have drawn on the critical perspective offered by post-structural theorists such as Foucault to provide a critique of dominant norms, ideologies and social formations related to gender, Whiteness, heteronormativity, colonialism, and state formation (Bloome & Clark, n.d.; Johnstone, 2008). Through the analysis, the

purpose is to make visible the ways in which dominant, normative discursive power formations are produced and maintained; focusing attention on the “social institution and upon discourses which are clearly associable with particular institutions” (Fairclough, 1985, p. 747). Therefore, CDA seeks to denounce discursive dominance with the attempt of dismantling power formations, by collaborating with the marginalized, providing practical goals for social transformation.

Drawing on this legacy of critical discourse analysis in the social and human sciences, this qualitative research study used a critical socio-political approach to explore discursive representation of colonial Canada in Ontario history textbooks. My inquiry is concerned with how historical narratives and representations in history textbooks influence children’s subject formation as Canadian subjects and the societal power structures based on knowledge produced by dominant White power relations. Critical discourse analysis examines the social power enacted by the elites and institutions that produce social and political inequalities (Fairclough, 1985). As language is analyzed, power relations are found through subjugated discourses by focusing on the strategies of manipulation and control that which keep the underlying ideologies hidden (Foucault, 1972). Subjugated discourses are excluded from dominant power structures through systems of power -such as educational institutions- that manage and discipline subjects (Foucault, 1972). Situating discourse analysis within a critical framework enabled me to analyze the language and images used in history textbooks and provincial curriculum, exploring the production of discursive formations of settler privilege and the marginalization of other voices and knowledges.

Analyzing Discourses of Power

Gee (1990) argues that there are “little d discourses” which include the actual language and “big D discourses” which include the non-language elements that illustrate specific identities and activities. The little ‘d’ discourses are the words in language such as conversations, stories, arguments and so forth; whereas the big ‘D’ discourses go beyond being just language, as the big ‘D’ discourses are the ways of being in the world and seeing the world (Gee, 1990). The role of power within society is shaped by discourses and the ways in which members of society engage with these discourses (Foucault, 1972). An example of the little and big discourses presented by Foucault (1972) involves the institutional site of the hospital. Hospitals are governmental institutions that employ differentiated hierarchized staff members who are taught “certain elements of the diagnosis, certain signs of the developing condition, and certain criteria of cure” and so forth (Foucault, 1972). The discourses of information made available to doctors and nurses within the hospital is hierarchized, just as the patients, on the lower end of the hierarchy, are exposed to certain discourses regarding the treatment they are receiving (Foucault, 1972). The discourses of information, expert knowledge, medical treatment in institutional sites such as hospitals, are examples of how power relations are maintained governmentally. I will incorporate these analytical aspects of critical discourse analysis in my data analysis, enabling Whiteness, power and privilege within Canada to be more visible and highlighting current and historical political issues impacting State-Indigenous relations and Indigenous self-determination within the settler state.

The analysis of power structures is a common focus in critical discourse analysis. To construct my conceptual framework, I have drawn on theoretical paradigms that complement the topic as well as my personal theoretical orientation and postmodern, Indigenous, feminist and critical social research frameworks. Critical postmodern theorists argue that there is not one reality; rather, there are many different realities, each with its own epistemological foundation (Esterberg, 2002; Lather, 2004). Each reality has its own perspective, just as each written text has its own reality and its own perspective (Esterberg, 2002; Lather, 2004; Lincoln, 1998; White & Stoneman, 2012). In critical discourse analysis, the foundational ideas encompass perspectives that challenge generalizing and the notion that all human relations are due to universal, natural facts (White & Stoneman, 2012). Critical social theories provide a rooted theoretical orientation as they encompass the role of relational understandings through knowledge that is generated by systems of power (White & Stoneman, 2012). Consequently, language and discourse not only represent the life world, but also create the world.

Because this research study is examining Canadians' sense of identity including relations among European settlers and Indigenous peoples, I have incorporated contemporary Indigenous theories and literature related to topics such as colonization and settler statehood, Indigenous resurgence and self-determination, cultural studies, and decolonizing education. It is important to note that Indigenous peoples have different perspectives and worldviews that cannot be located under just one theoretical paradigm. Rather, Indigenous theoretical paradigms are based upon the many premises, values and worldviews that Indigenous peoples hold and also have in common (Downey, 2010; Kuokkanen, 2000; L. Smith, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Veracini, 2010). Indigenous

theories bring a useful analysis of the experiences of people and places involved with colonization, attempting to make the issues and experiences of colonization more visible and thus contestable (Downey, 2010; Kuokkanen, 2000; L. Smith, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Veracini, 2010). In addition, they document the diversity of Indigenous histories, cultures and realities; they tend to support the revitalization of Indigenous knowledges, languages, arts and social structures, as well as resurgence and self-determination (L. Smith, 1999).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) has identified a crucial tension for researchers seeking to bring together critical post-modern theories together with Indigenous ones, particularly in studies that analyze the marginalization of Indigenous peoples. L. Smith (1999) asserts that there “can be no ‘post modern’ for [Indigenous peoples] until we have settled some business of the modern” (pg. 35). Despite Smith’s critical points, Kuokkanen (2000) does see connections between postmodernism and Indigenous paradigms, as they both challenge and deconstruct EuroWestern dominant values, worldviews and forms of knowledge. Although there are important differences in topic and focus, Indigenous paradigms can also be connected to intersectional and anti-racist theories, as there is a need for less dualistic and hierarchal forms of knowledge (Kuokkanen, 2000). An ‘Indigenous paradigm’ challenges dualistic notions by acknowledging and deconstructing the hierarchal differences, recognizing how these “dismissive and biased attitudes” directly affect Indigenous peoples, their selfhood and cultures (Kuokkanen, 2000, p. 413). Kuokkanen (2000) suggests that an “Indigenous paradigm would be a culturally specific discourse based on Indigenous peoples’ premises, values and world view” (p. 413); thus, introducing new perspectives to research

yearning to “diminish the dangers of misinterpretations of [Indigenous] cultural expressions” (Kuokkanen, 2000, p. 414). Additionally, the purpose of all of these frameworks is to examine inequality and work towards social justice and transformation for individuals who are marginalized (Esterberg, 2002). Whiteness and critical race theory paradigms argue that race is a socially constructed concept that has been created in order to develop and maintain boundaries between the individuals who have been designated as superior, typically White individuals, and marginalized “others” (McDonald, 2009; Thobani, 2007). My methodology works across and draws on all of these frameworks, critically analysing the discourses of racism and racialization, colonization, White privilege and ways of attaining knowledge, as well as those of first contact, discovery, treaties and other settler historical information presented about the founding of Canada.

Data Collection

The data that has been used in this research project consists of two Ontario Grade 7 history textbooks and the official Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum. The two textbooks have been selected by contacting middle schools in southern Ontario to find out which textbooks are most prevalent in use in Grade 7 history classes. Public middle schools in four school board districts in southern Ontario were contacted to find out which textbook is being used in their classrooms. These school boards include: Waterloo Region District School Board, Thames Valley District School Board, District School Board of Niagara and Toronto District School Board. Ten middle schools from each school board were randomly selected, and telephoned to ask which textbook(s) is used in their classrooms. As a result, the two most used textbooks are:

Bain, C. M. (2008). *Canadian History 7*. Toronto: Pearson.

Clark, P., Arnold, P., McKay, R., & Soetaert, L. (1999). *Canada Revisited 7*. Edmonton: Arnold Publishing.

During this process, unfortunately I was unable to collect answers from all 40 schools contacted. Out of the 40 schools that I contacted, I received 21 responses. Out of the 21 responses, 10 schools indicated that they are using *Canadian History 7* by Bain (2007), and 8 schools indicated they are using *Canada Revisited 7* by Clark et al. (1999). When telephoning the schools, it was challenging to speak with the Grade 7 history teachers as school secretaries did not want to disturb them during teaching hours. When I called outside of teaching hours, the teachers were unable to be located as they were busy with other tasks or had left their classroom. The school secretaries were typically unaware of which textbook was being used. I did not receive a firm response from the District School Board of Niagara and the Thames Valley District School Board. Because this research study does not involve human subjects, and the only data materials used in this study are publically available textbooks and provincial curriculum, I did not want to continue to call these schools. However, the Waterloo District School Board and the Toronto District School board provided me with the title of the history textbook used in their Grade 7 history classrooms. Based on the amount of responses I did receive and the fact that the books used correlated across districts, I was able to recognize a pattern and was able to identify what appear to be the two most used Grade 7 history textbooks used in Southern Ontario in the 2014-2015 school year.

The issue of experiencing difficulty in making contact with teachers may speak to the broader issue of teachers having a heavy workload of instructing, marking, lesson

planning, parent meetings, school committees, among other responsibilities. Their workload with the high number of students in each classroom may mean that they have little to no time for extra conversations outside of their responsibilities, as the Ontario mandate for class size for Grades 4-8 must have an average of 25 students per class in each school district (McElroy, 2014). Another issue may involve a sceptical discomfort on the part of secretaries in being asked information pertaining to research; perhaps they felt aspects of confidentiality were being challenged, attaining potential gatekeeping functions and wanting to be cautious about disclosing information.

All data materials used in this research project are publically accessible. I located *Canadian History 7* written by Bain (2007), online through the Pearson website (<http://www.pearsoned.ca/school/product/pearsonetext/>). I accessed the textbook online by creating an account as a guest, and purchasing the access to the textbook for one year as an “etext”, viewing the textbook online. *Canada Revisited 7* by Clark, Arnold, McKay and Soetaert (1999) was purchased second hand from Amazon.com.

The curriculum used for analysis is the official provincial curriculum that is used in all Grade 7 history classrooms. The Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum covers the topic of New France and British North America and the challenges and conflicts in Canada from 1713-1850. I accessed The Ontario Curriculum through the publically accessible Ontario Ministry of Education website:

(<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/grade7.html>). The curriculum document predominately used for my research project is:

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013). Social studies grades 1 to 6 history and geography grades 7 and 8. *The Ontario Curriculum*. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for

Ontario.

This document outlines the official Ontario learning expectations for history and geography for Grade 7 and Grade 8 students. My main focus was on the Grade 7 history curriculum; however, in the midst of my research, I found it necessary to also examine Ontario Grade 8 history curriculum as well as Ontario Grade 6 history curriculum. As I was analyzing the presence of Indigenous histories in the Grade 7 curriculum, I was required to look at neighbouring grade levels in order to compare and contrast the discrepancies.

Examining the Data

The first step in examining data using critical discourse analysis is to decide what constitutes data, and then select the form of data to be used (Fairclough, 1985). With the selected data, researchers are to read and reread the material, and/or view and review the video/film footage, and/or listen and relisten to auditory material (Fairclough, 1985; Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). While the researcher repeatedly reviews the material, it is important to remain vigilant about gaps and contributions, and to stay attuned to different and new insights, themes and concepts that may surface (Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). These concepts and themes become salient by examining specific facets of the text, such as the use of grammar, linguistic style and vocabulary (Fairclough, 1985). Vocabulary can be examined by analyzing the experiential values of the words, as in the classification, or if they are ideologically contested (Fairclough, 1985). The relational value of words can also be examined which includes noticing whether euphemisms or colloquial words are used, and if so, examining the context of the informal words, and the purpose for the use of the words (Fairclough, 1985). As concepts

and themes are identified and mapped out, the researcher begins to group them into similar codes and sub-codes (Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). The grouped codes are put into categories, which are then compared and contrasted (Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). The researcher then determines what can be concluded about the material and about the themes that are present, and which aspects of the data may be discarded or kept for another round of analysis (Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008). Along with analysing the themes within the different materials, discourse analysis involves the careful study of the authors and/or producers of the material. This may include questions such as: for what purpose was this material created? What is the conveying message? Who wrote the material and for what purpose? What is the social location of the author(s)? How may the social location of the author(s) affect the content written? How does this data relate to the original research question (Kirby et al., 2006; Padgett, 2008)? What is contradictory, missing or unsaid and why?

For my research purposes, I adapted this process to also consider the use of images and other historical documents in the history textbooks. I conducted an analysis of selected images used in the Grade 7 history textbooks that convey representations of colonialism, Indigenous peoples, the Canadian landscape, and other relevant representations. For example, this included images with the appearance of ‘Europeans fighting the enemies’, images that portray Europeans and Indigenous peoples at war together, early treaty and trade meetings, or having other interactions in early colonial settlement of Canada. The ways in which Europeans, Indigenous peoples and potential others have been distinguished in the images have been analysed, such as the clothing they are dressed in, their skin colour, hair colour and facial features. The actions and

expressions demonstrated on their faces have been analysed, looking at the ways in which the individuals are portrayed and distinguished, and examining the discourses that are present in these differences, including the use of captions, descriptions and other related documents and descriptions.

Limitations, Ethical Issues and Important Considerations

Discourse analysis is a useful approach for graduate research because the materials that are utilized are typically easily accessible and can be endlessly revisited and reviewed, compared to the use of participants as data and the potential difficulty in accessing more information as a study evolves (Kirby et al., 2006). Researchers can conduct a discourse analysis on their own, or work with other researchers, comparing and contrasting their findings (Kirby et al., 2006). Kvale (1995) argues that as research moves away from facts and predictions to interpreting meanings, the criteria for validation is altered. Consequently, concerns for validity in qualitative research methods such as critical discourse analysis and discourse analysis are often questioned and challenged.

Gee (2005) speaks to these concerns and argues that “validity is not constituted by arguing that a discourse analysis ‘reflects reality’ in any simple way” (p. 94). This is because, as Gee (2005) asserts, “humans *construct* their realities, though what is ‘out there’ beyond human control places serious constraints on this construction” (p. 94). Furthermore, “language is always reflexively related to situations so that both make each other meaningful” (Gee, 2005, p. 94). Therefore, “the analyst explains his or her data in a certain way and those data so interpreted, in turn, render the analysis meaningful in certain ways and not others” (p. 113). In other words, it is the clarification of how and why the data results are considered meaningful, which enables the reader to assess the

level of validity (Gee, 2005). Some analyses will be more valid than others depending on the level of detail asserted (Gee, 2005).

Critical discourse analysis presents validity and reliability concerns due to the notion that some researchers simplistically describe the data on a surface level rather than digger deeper into analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007; Kirby et al., 2006). The level of difficulty and complexity of a critical approach to discourse analysis is based upon the researcher's desire for critical analysis and how far in depth he/she wishes to explore beyond the immediate level of the text's vocabulary, grammar and linguistic quality (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007; Kirby et al., 2006). Critical discourse analysis complements the context of this study as it provides a methodological and conceptual process for critiquing power structures and dynamics in social contexts, raising awareness about inequalities (Fairclough, 1985; Padgett, 2008). I have deliberately employed a critical approach to discourse analysis to provide me with a theoretical framework to identify underlying discursive formations that both replicate and possibly disrupt dominant settler narratives of early colonialism.

One significant limitation of this study is related to the fact that I only focus on the curriculum content, and not the teaching approach and outcomes. Although they may use the same textbooks, each teacher interprets the Ontario curriculum and history textbooks in very different ways. Teachers -and schools- have their own perspective on the content in the textbooks, using different language, questions, activities and lesson plans when instructing their history classes and discussing the content. Teachers may be including information that is not presented in the textbooks that is not necessarily required. I am unable to observe and record every Grade 7 history class in Ontario,

although, I can identify this as an issue that impacts the curriculum delivery process. As a result, these differentials will not be made visible in my analysis, nor is this the focus of my study. My focus is on analyzing the textbooks and curriculum that are provided by the province of Ontario, as their content has been vetted by the province and is deemed central to what is communicated to students about early colonial history.

Another significant limitation of this study is that knowledge is learned in different ways other than in education institutions, and students have other ways in which they may be learning about the history of Canada. Students may be learning through their family members, communities, other media, country of origin, after school activities, and so forth. The way in which each student will interpret, understand and absorb the information presented in their history classes is another significant limitation. Individuals learn new knowledge collectively and individually; therefore, each student will interpret the knowledge presented by the teachers differently, based in part on their own familial, ethnic, socio-economic and cultural background, context, and personal experiences.

It is imperative to clearly state that this research study is not identifying exactly what the students are learning in Grade 7 history class; rather, it is identifying and critically reflecting on the content that is present in the sanctioned provincial curriculum for Grade 7 history class. Due to the reality that there are many ways of knowing and many forms of gaining knowledge, my findings about the curriculum presented in the textbooks cannot be generalized to represent the actual learning outcomes of Ontario students. Further, the knowledge presented in Grade 7 history textbooks cannot be completely connected to the ways in which general members of society perceive the identity and history of Canada.

Despite these limitations, the provincial curriculum used in this research study has been carefully reviewed and vetted by the Ontario Ministers of Education. Curriculum is designed in a manner to socialize children into particular kinds of values, knowledge and belief systems (Fairclough, 1985). The socialization of children and youth, Fairclough (1985) argues, “can be described in terms of the child’s progressive exposure to institutions of primary socialization” (p. 748). These primary institutions involve the child’s school, their family, and social peer group (Fairclough, 1985). Consequently, “social institutions are determined by the social formation, and social action is determined by social institutions” (Fairclough, 1985, p. 748). The way schools define curriculum and pedagogical methods ultimately illustrate the relationships between the state, the school, teachers and students (Fairclough, 1985). Educational institutions construct discourses in curriculum and in the social formations of the schools with regards to reflecting the dominant values and ideologies (Fairclough, 1985).

Fairclough (1985) argues that, “changes may occur at the level of concrete action which may reshape the institution itself, and changes may occur in the institution which may contribute to the transformation of the social formation” (p. 748). As a result, the data used in this research project is extremely significant as it represents a deliberate choice about what discourses and narratives of Canada are to be conveyed to students in Ontario Grade 7 history classrooms. Fairclough (1985) argues that one of the ‘critical goals’ of CDA is to focus “attention upon the ‘social institution’ and upon discourses which are clearly associable with particular institutions” (p. 747). I have analyzed the connections between the colonial discourses in the Ontario Grade 7 history textbooks and curriculum.

A final issue regarding the validity and relevance of my findings is that I have interpreted the textbook in a different manner than the students due to my own social location and through my lens as a graduate student researcher employing a critical discourse analysis. The textbooks and provincial curriculum have been analyzed using postmodern, Indigenous and critical social theoretical frameworks, which support me in examining the knowledge that is presented at the surface level as well as the discourses that are embedded within. Because I am conducting a critical discourse analysis, my own critical lens and perspectives, attitudes and beliefs regarding settler colonialism, gender, and social justice will be incorporated as I connect themes and categories of the content. As previously stated, all researchers will interpret the textbooks and curriculum very differently. For example, I may connect certain language in the textbooks to racism and colonization, whereas other researchers may instead view the content as neutral or even beneficial. Since I am conducting this study with no other researchers, my biases and perspectives influence the results and conclusions that I suggest.

An important ethical issue that needs to be addressed involves my own personal commitment as a researcher and practitioner, which is to engage in research that does not reproduce damaging colonial narratives. My analytical stance is a deliberate response to the lack of knowledge and understanding that many Canadians have regarding the history of Canada's dealing with Indigenous peoples (TRC, 2015a). The "cultural genocide" (TRC, 2015a, p. 3) of Indigenous peoples was purposive (Godlewska et al., 2010). Consequently, it is vital to analyze the knowledge presented to the generations being socialized into a settler society that is built on a foundation of cultural genocide as a basis for its own survival. Thus, this research study holds an ethical commitment to contesting

damaging narratives with respect, dignity, and care. In other words, I intend to accurately and respectfully understand and write about the historical treatment of Indigenous peoples, with the objective of conducting no further harm.

Summary

Critical discourse analysis offers a useful methodological strategy to make visible the ways in which knowledge is produced and how this production affects individuals' perception of Canadian history. Institutions are extremely significant in the socialization of children, with the primary institutions including family, peer groups and school often playing central roles in constructing and communicating problematic discourses such as colonial narratives. The discourses are constructed within institutions, which are reproduced as though the ideologies and discourses are normal, unproblematic and real (Fairclough, 1985). It is important to identify different forms of knowledge and to critically examine how the knowledge is being produced and sustained, particularly across generations. It is imperative to explore the roles that knowledge hierarchies play in practice, as systems of racialization and colonization are endemic in Canadian society and shape the everyday lives of Indigenous peoples, White Canadians, and racialized and immigrant Canadians.

Chapter 3: Data Analysis

In this chapter, I present the results of my critical discourse analysis of the two history textbooks most used in southern Ontario and of the updated Ontario curriculum for Grade 7 history students. Critical discourse analysis is “a mode of enquiry that has developed methods and theories that examine the relationship between language, power and ideology” (Thomas, Wilson & Leeds, 2013, p. 1123). Following the analytical procedures outlined in the previous chapter, I read the materials many times with the goal of analyzing the meaning and ideological messages conveyed in the curricular segments, sentences and words. Drawing on the critical theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, I looked at the use of vocabulary, grammar and language, along with how certain words were featured and positioned in the text (for instance, how some words were capitalized and others were not). Because critical discourse analysis “tends to be selective, [both] focusing on vocabulary and metaphor” (Thomas et al., 2013, p. 1126), I paid attention to metaphorical descriptions and comparisons. I also critically analyzed the images presented in the textbooks, along with the captions featured with the images. The importance of re-reading material was apparent, as I was able to see the evolution of my analysis with each new cycle of analysis. For instance, with each new reading I was able to pay attention to layers of historical information, connections among data sources, and how voice and authorship were framed in terms of the authority and legitimacy of the content presented.

As I engaged in various cycles of reading, re-reading, identifying themes and sub-themes, I also looked for contradictions, incongruities and omissions. When grouping my analysis into themes, I made decisions about what to pursue and include, and what to

discard from the process; a clear audit trail of my decisions became essential as every page in the textbooks was loaded with complex ideological representations and content. In essence, each page would have provided enough content for an entire analysis.

I approached the analysis purposively from a researcher's lens, of course, but I also (re)imagined myself as a student in Grade 7 reading the material. I revisited my White Grade 7 self prior to my undergraduate degree when I learned about my White privilege and systemic racism. I imagined what it would be like to read the textbooks and curriculum at face value, without the knowledge drawn from a critical analysis. I also wondered what it would be like to read the material as a Haudenosaunee student, an Anishinaabe student, another White student, an immigrant student, and so forth. I wondered how each student would interpret the stories and content in the textbook differently. As "discourses are ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions and cloths" (Gee, 1990, p. 142), each person will interpret the discourses in the textbooks and curriculum differently than I have. Beyond the author, different relationships of language, power and ideology shape the text depending on the person who is conducting the reading and/or analyzing.

Further, as Fairclough (1985) suggests, "the socialization of the child can be described in terms of the child's progressive exposure to institutions of primary socialization"; therefore, critical discourse analysis pays a significant amount of attention to "types of discourse which are institutionally identified" (p. 748). My socialization in various institutions such as in my White middle class household and in a public school in

a city in southern Ontario, all contributed to the way in which I conducted my research study.

As the researcher, I was the “central figure who influences the collection, selection, and interpretation of data” (Finlay, 2002, p. 531). Therefore, my perspectives and process of reflexivity influenced every aspect of my methodology. Due to the amount of information to analyze in the textbooks and curriculum, and because of the time and space limitations in a Master’s Thesis, I have been unable to include all of the identified themes drawn from my analysis. I have narrowed my focus to the most salient and timely themes, which I present in the following sections. The research questions I used when making the determination of what to include and how were:

1. How are Indigenous Peoples represented in Grade 7 textbooks?
2. How are the land and geography of Canada represented in Grade 7 textbooks?
3. How are the European settlers represented in Grade 7 textbooks?
4. Are any other groups represented and if so, how?

These four questions provided material for a significant amount of analysis and reflection. In particular, what stood out most across all of my data sources was how language, images and terminology were used to shape particular kinds of representations and accounts of colonialism and of Indigenous peoples, and the ways in which Canada was portrayed as a developing settler nation through historical narratives. I explore each of these issues in turn in this chapter.

Language

Overall, I found the language used in the textbooks and curriculum to be generalizing and unclear. I first looked at the use of terminology when referring to

Indigenous peoples, White Settlers and whoever else was present in the materials. The language is generalizing and unclear because there are no explanations as to whom the terminologies encompassed. There are few to no explicit connections to specific Indigenous nations; rather, Indigenous peoples are predominately presented as a homogenous group, a singular identity. These language and terminology issues are explored in detail in the following sections. I have developed a table (Table 1) that documents the different terminology used across my three data sources. Many of the words listed are used infrequently; the bolded words are used predominately throughout the material.

Table 1:

Terminology Used in Data Materials

	Bain (2007)	Clark et al. (1999)	Curriculum
White Settlers	French English British American Loyalist Acadian Canadien European Settler Explorer Fur trader Soldier People of Canada West/East Upper/Lower Canadians	French English British American Loyalist Acadian Canadien European Settler Colonizer People of Canada East/West Non-Native People People of Canada West/East Upper/Lower Canadians	French English British American Loyalists Acadian Non-First Nations Colonists Canadians European Settlers Western settlers
Indigenous Peoples	First Nations people First Nations peoples Aboriginal people Iroquois Huron Mohawk Original inhabitants	Native peoples Iroquois Huron First People	First Nations peoples First Nations Métis Haudenosaunee
Other	Black Loyalist Black slave	Black Loyalist Black slave Black people Scottish/Irish immigrant	Ukrainian/Scottish/ Irish immigrant African Canadian Black Loyalists

White settlers. As shown in Table 1, all three data sources use nearly the same terminology when referring to White settlers, which involves differentiating them by their original country of origin in Europe. I would argue that this is not entirely concerning as the data materials are acknowledging that the settlers are not native to Canada, but rather are from European countries. However, by identifying the White settlers as individuals from their country of origin in Europe, their nation is represented rather than their race. What is missing from all three forms of data is the use of the term ‘White’. This is concerning, as it coincides with Mills’ (1997) notion of the “Racial Contract”, which illustrates that White is seen as colourless, as if Whiteness were normal and natural rather than a racialized category. For example, White individuals are written about without the adjective of “White” preceding their role, whereas the materials use the terminology of “Black” when referring to “Black slaves” and “Black loyalists” (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This notion is further articulated in the Indexes of the textbooks, as there is a section under “Black” in the index, where there is no section of “White” (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). In another sentence, Bain (2007) differentiates between loyalists by saying, “Over time, for both Black and white loyalists, it became clear that Shelburne would not become a strong and thriving community” (p. 94). Here, Bain (2007) capitalizes ‘Black’, but does not capitalize ‘White’. This correlates with Rodriguez’s (2000) argument as he says, “Whiteness has historically been appropriated in unmarked ways” (p. 1). By capitalizing ‘Black’ but not ‘white’, there is a lack of attention drawn to Whiteness; it remains invisible, unproblematic. In these examples, Whiteness is considered so normal that it is taken for granted as the default. In

contrast, Black is used as a marker of racialized otherness, of ‘non Whiteness’ (Mills, 1997).

Overall, the curriculum often refers to White settlers as “French and English colonists” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This is good, as their role as colonizers is rendered explicit, rather than solely referring to them as French or English. However, the textbooks depict colonizers in a positive light. In the historical narratives, the European settlers are portrayed as motivated, hard-working and successful adventurers (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). For example, in a concluding paragraph, Bain (2007) states the following to students: “You learned that life was hard for the French colonists, and that working cooperatively with the First Nations was important to the colonists’ survival” (p. 22). This summarizing statement speaks to the discursive tone of both textbooks; they depict the colonists as brave and hard-working, whereas life for Indigenous peoples is not portrayed as difficult. An example is seen in Clark et al.’s (1999) textbook discussion of European men “who were willing to venture into the interior rivers and lakes and bring back beaver pelts” (p. 30). Clark et al. (1999) continue to say that “these men were entrepreneurs, working for themselves rather than representing a company. These energetic and daring adventurers became expert canoeists” (p. 30). Here we see that when European settlers take on entrepreneurial roles, they are depicted with respect and portrayed as brave adventurers—even though they learned how to hunt beaver and build canoes from First Nations peoples.

The terminology of “colonies” and “colonists” is used throughout the texts only to describe early contact; in this regard, the curriculum is separated into two distinct sections. Section A outlines questions and expectations involving “New France and

British North America, 1713-1800” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 138), whereas section B outlines questions and expectations involving “Canada, 1800-1850: Conflict and Change” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 142). The terminology used in the two sections is different when referring to White settlers. Section A uses “French and English colonists”, whereas in section B, the terminology switches to “Canadians” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). Similarly, Bain (2007) and Clark et al. (1999) use “the people of Canada East” and “the people of Canada West” as well as, “Upper Canadians” and “Lower Canadians” in the last two chapters of their textbooks. As the textbooks and curriculum present Canada as becoming further developed, the terminology of “colonist” is gradually dropped; this implies that the current White population is not colonial settlers and that Canada is no longer a colonial state. As the terminology switches to “Canadians” in section B, the ‘others’ have become highlighted (for example “African Canadians”, “Irish immigrants” and “Métis and First Nations”) (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This appears to insinuate that the ‘others’ are not Canadians.

The categorization of White Canadians in contrast to racialized others again coincides with Mills’ (1997) concept of “The Racial Contract” and hegemonic systems of Whiteness. Using this frame to understand my data, the texts clearly convey a process whereby French and English colonizers have been made into authentic and deserving Canadian subjects. This positioning is available only for them; they become legitimate Canadian citizens, whereas the ‘others’ are positioned as outside the norm, uncivilized, not Canadian. This use of language perpetuates the White perception that Canada was

founded and developed by English and French settlers, and that authentic, original Canadians are of English and French origins.

Indigenous peoples. When referring to Indigenous peoples, overall, Bain (2007) uses ‘First Nations people’ and ‘First Nations peoples’ throughout his textbook. Similarly, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) uses the term ‘First Nations peoples’ as well as ‘First Nations’, whereas Clark et al. (1999) predominately used ‘Native peoples’. As previously discussed in Chapter 1, the term ‘Indigenous peoples’ is used broadly to reference individuals who are Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and other First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals (L. Smith, 1999). The term ‘Indigenous peoples’ has become an increasingly appropriate term to use in the English language today, when speaking broadly and globally about Indigenous peoples, in part because it references their shared struggle against European imperialism (L. Smith, 1999). L. Smith (1999) argues that the term ‘Indigenous peoples’ has “enabled the collective voices of colonized people to be expressed strategically in the international arena” (p. 7).

The term ‘Aboriginal peoples’ in contrast, is unique to Canada and is more contested. According to the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982, section 35 (2) states that “Aboriginal Peoples of Canada” refers to all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada (Constitution Act, 1982, s 35). The term can be viewed, as Alfred and Corntassel (2005) state, as “an agenda of silent surrender to an inherently unjust relation at the root of the colonial state itself” (p. 598). Despite this term being “a state construction that is instrumental to the state’s attempt to gradually subsume Indigenous existences into its own constitutional system and body politic” it is considered a correct legal term (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, p. 598). Consequently, either Indigenous peoples or Aboriginal

peoples are appropriate terminology given the right framing and context; however, not all three materials that were analyzed used this terminology. In addition, the correct terms used by First Nations to refer to themselves are not often used. It is very important for students to learn about debates regarding terminology, such as why the term ‘Aboriginal’ is critiqued. It is also significant for students to understand the differences among Indigenous peoples, similarly to the differences among the different countries and ethnic groups of origin of Europeans-Canadians.

The Indigenous peoples who the authors are addressing in the textbooks and curriculum would predominately be First Nations, as the time period being considered would be before the advance of the Métis population. As well, the information would be unlikely to include Inuit people due to the southern location, though there may have been some contact with Inuit in coastal regions during the fur trade. Both Bain (2007) and Clark et al. (1999) introduce intermarriage and Métis families, yet continue their use of ‘First Nations’ and ‘Native peoples’ terminology, whereas, the curriculum correctly uses ‘Métis’ and ‘First Nations’ to depict two different groups of individuals (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

The Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) and Bain (2007) both include ‘s’ at the end of ‘Nation’ to say ‘Nations’, which is correct as it demonstrates more than one Nation in First Nations. Clark et al. (1999) also adds the ‘s’ to ‘Native peoples’, indicating that there are more than one people, and more than one culture. As previously stated, the ‘s’ at the end of ‘peoples’ is for the “right of peoples to self-determination” as it is “used as a way of recognizing that there are real differences between different Indigenous peoples” (L. Smith, 1999, p. 7). Consequently, overall the terminology used is

not incorrect or concerning; however, improvements could be made. For example, the textbooks and curriculum make very little differentiation among the nations. Bain (2007) and Clark et al. (1999) used 'Huron' and 'Iroquois' to differentiate when illustrating the alliances made with the French White settlers. However, as previously mentioned, their preferred names are Haudenosaunee and Wyandot.

The blanket generalizations about Aboriginal peoples are reflective of a broader issue, which is a lack of accurate, up-to-date information about the histories and cultures of the thousands of diverse and distinct Indigenous nations in Canada and in North America. The lack of respectful and appropriate terminology in the curriculum is a key finding of this study. As Battiste (2013) argues, "educators and teachers must recognize the nature of language as a meaning-making from within a particular racial location that is always sliding and changing, floating in a sea of signifiers" (p. 138). As a result, I would suggest that there needs to be recognition of the different terminology in order to honour the uniqueness and diversity of Indigenous communities. This would model to students the importance of understanding how historical context impacts not only language, but also cultural identity and respect.

Absent Histories

In regards to the dearth of differentiation among the various nations, there is also an information gap regarding their distinct histories and cultures pre-contact. Bain's (2007) textbook begins with three small paragraphs acknowledging that "for thousands of years, First Nations peoples had lived on the North American continent" (Bain, 2007, p. 6). The half page excerpt skims over generalized information, for example; "the First Nations had a societal structure", "they also had their own spirituality. They had stories

explaining the creation of the world; they gave thanks to the Creator, or Great Spirit, for the food plants they harvested” (Bain, 2007, p. 6).

This is the only section in Bain’s textbook that mentions brief aspects of Indigenous cultures in Canada. This sole section simplifies stereotypical imagery of Indigenous peoples and completely leaves out the realities of the thousands of established societies with their own political and economic systems, languages, knowledges, trade routes, child and family systems and so forth, that were all in existence and developed prior to the European invasion. There is no other mention of how students could learn this content, nor are there any suggestions that students have already learned or will come to learn the information.

In contrast, Clark et al. (1999) begin their textbook with a chapter entitled “First People” (p. 4). This chapter, consisting of 10 pages, includes images and short paragraphs briefly highlighting different aspects of “Northwest Coast Peoples”, “The Plains Peoples”, “Iroquoian Peoples” and “Algonquian Peoples” and their cultures (Clark et al., 1999, p. 4-13). The ten pages provide brief outlines of different cultures, histories and traditions of select Aboriginal groups in Canada, which is a greater amount of information than in Bain’s textbook (2007). However, it is worth noting that the broad regional terminology (e.g. Northwest, Plains, Algonquian, etc.) is drawn from English language anthropological categories; these do not reflect the terms the First Nations in the indicated regions have used to identify themselves.

The ten pages begin with Clark et al. (1999) stating, “this chapter provides a short review of what you studied last year in history” (p. 4), implying that students had learned about the different cultures, histories and traditions of Indigenous peoples in Grade 6.

However, in my review of the Grade 6 curriculum, information regarding these histories and cultures were absent. The Grade 6 history curriculum includes information regarding Canada's national identity with references to climate, landscape, mining, logging and wildlife (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The only content that might include Indigenous peoples in any way includes the following questions: "evaluate some of the contributions that various ethnic and/or religious groups have made to Canadian identity"; "identify various types of communities that have contributed to the development of Canada"; "describe significant events or developments in the history of two or more communities in Canada" and "identify key differences, including social, cultural, and/or economic differences, between two or more historical and/or contemporary communities in Canada" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The questions are vague and generalizing, with no concrete evidence to show if and how Indigenous histories, cultures and traditions are being taught to Grade 6 students in Ontario. The questions also focus only on the benefit to Canada of various ethnic groups; they are not studied as distinct and significant in and of themselves. The rest of Grade 6 history curriculum in Ontario asks students to learn about Canada's participation in international accords and organizations (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). Consequently, it appears that many students are learning about European global leadership and even colonization internationally, without learning about Indigenous nations here that were and still are being colonized.

Use of Past Tense

Throughout both textbooks, past tense is used when speaking about the presence of Indigenous peoples and the existence of colonization in North America.

The existence of Indigenous peoples and culture as historical. In the ten pages where Clark et al. (1999) discuss aspects of different histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples, the language used is consistently presented in the past tense. For example: “Children were very important because they were the ones who continued the culture”; “Plains peoples were governed by councils consisting of both men and women”; as well as “The Iroquoian peoples lived near the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River on forest-covered rolling hills that contained many lakes” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 9-10). Evidently, Clark et al. (1999) are illustrating the information as historical and the cultural traditions as located firmly in the past. At the end of the chapter, the authors add a brief note stating, “although this chapter has been written in the past tense as the generalizations refer to the historical period under study, many Native people today hold the beliefs and values described” (p. 6). This is a step in the right direction; however, I question the positioning of this statement in the chapter. If this statement is speaking to the entire ten pages, it should be clearly stated at the beginning in order for students to consider this issue before reading. Updated information should also be provided to denote present implications, as the texts do with Canadian, British and French histories.

Similarly, Bain (2007) appears to present Indigenous peoples, their communities and their cultures as bounded in the past. For example, at the end of a chapter discussing the Loyalists, Bain (2007) proposes a learning activity for students, which instructs them to “Find out what First Nations historically occupied your area” (p. 107). This question suggests to students that there are no Indigenous peoples currently living in their area. This also suggests that the student who is reading this textbook is not an Indigenous person. Parallel examples include: “Before the arrival of the French, First Nations

peoples lived their lives according to traditional ways” (Bain, 2007, p. 60), as well as, “living in New France were Cree, Montagnais, Iroquois, Huron, Ottawa, Mohawk and other First Nations peoples. They had lived in the area for thousands of years” (Bain, 2007, p. 37). The erasure of contemporary Indigenous nationhood is also seen in the overview of the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum as it states, “students will learn about various groups that existed in colonial Canada and how they were affected by the conflicts and changes that characterized this period” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 135). These examples, among many others in all three data sources, reflect the problematic notions that Indigenous traditions and cultures are not only missing from Ontario curriculum, but that children and youth are taught to see Indigenous peoples as inconsequential to contemporary Canadian society and Canadian identity. These examples reflect a deeply entrenched national discourse that positions Indigenous people as relics of the past, not as active members of a modern country. This narrative is steeped in colonial ideologies and policies that deliberately sought to “eradicate [First Peoples’] existence as *peoples* through the erasure of the histories and geographies that provide the foundation for Indigenous cultural identities and sense of self” (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, p. 598).

Colonization as past. The notion that colonization is a time-bounded historical event that only occurred in the past is a theme that emerged in both textbooks and in the Ontario curriculum. For example, the governmental curriculum repeatedly differentiates time frames between “Colonial and Present-day Canada” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). In the overview of Grade 7 history curriculum, it is stated that “students will learn about various groups that existed in colonial Canada and how they were affected”, as

well as, “they will begin to apply the concepts of historical thinking to their study of Canadian history, leading to deeper and more meaningful explorations of life in colonial Canada” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 135). By using this differentiation of periods in time, the provincial curriculum is teaching children that colonization is ‘over and done with’ and that Canada is no longer an active colonial settler state –when in fact it is. The reality is that generations of Indigenous families are experiencing the damaging effects of assimilation and colonization to this day (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Clark et al. (1999) dedicate a page in their textbook to defining ‘colonization’, whereas Bain (2007) does not even mention the word. Clark et al. (1999) argue that, “colonization refers to one country bringing another separate region under its direct control. This is often accomplished by establishing permanent settlements in the new region” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 17). What is useful about this definition is that the authors used the word ‘control’, because power and control are main aspects of colonization. However, in stating that colonization is “accomplished by establishing permanent settlements in the new region”, the authors insinuate that colonization is more or less a one-time act.

Clark et al. (1999) continue to say that the purpose of the “new settlements” was “expected to develop the region’s resources and supply the European country with inexpensive raw materials or products”, which in turn would be “manufactured into goods” and “sold at a higher price” (p. 17). Colonization is being presented as merely an efficient and beneficial way to make profit, and to control a territory’s raw materials and resources. This again re-emphasizes the construction of colonization as historic, relatively benign and beneficial for European settlers, and as bounded in the past. For instance,

Clark et al. (1999) state that, “during the 1500s and 1600s, many Europeans wanted to be wealthy and powerful” (p. 15). The material does not address the other layers involved with colonization. For instance, in order for Europeans to gain power and wealth in Canada, they depicted Indigenous peoples as “mentally inferior, child-like, unpredictable, untrustworthy and violent” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p.3). These derogatory descriptions “were used to justify colonial policies of, paradoxically, both exclusion and assimilation” by segregating Indigenous peoples to land of poor quality, creating legislation and policies with restrictions, along with the generations of trauma from residential schools (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 3). Unfortunately, these realities of colonization and its enduring impact are completely absent from the Grade 7 Ontario history curriculum.

Oppression as historical. Throughout the textbooks and curriculum, if notions of oppression and hierarchal social statuses are posed, they are presented as historical. For example, Bain (2007) states, “New France was what historians call a hierarchical society” (p. 26). This not only implies that New France, and not present day Canada, is hierarchical in nature, but it also suggests that the term “hierarchical society” is only used in a historical context. Later on, Bain (2007) also states that “the people of New France considered some groups to be at the bottom of the hierarchy” (p. 36). Again, this appears to insinuate that there are no enduring racial power differences and inequities in present-day Canadian society, and that these early social hierarchies somehow dissolved through time. In fact, they persist in current indicators of systemic social, economic and political exclusion facing Indigenous peoples and racialized minorities. Bain further states:

Recall from Chapter 1 that in the early days of New France, relations between the French and the First Nations peoples were sometimes poor. But relations slowly

improved as New France became more developed. In 1701, 1300 representatives of more than 40 First Nations peoples met leaders of New France in Montreal. They included representatives of the Iroquois Confederacy, who had been enemies of New France since the 1630s. The First Nations peoples signed a treaty with New France, in which both sides agreed to cooperate with each other in the future. (2007, p. 48)

As Bain (2007) writes this, the ongoing dispossession, deprivation, and poverty Indigenous peoples have been experiencing since White settler European invasion is completely minimized, if not erased. Statements such as that relations “were sometimes poor” and that “relations slowly improved as New France became more developed” (Bain, 2007, p. 48) imply that the scale and intensity of the violence perpetrated on Indigenous communities is insignificant at best and non-existent at worst. Such conceptualizations completely deny the reality that relations did not merely improve once a treaty in New France regarding cooperation was signed in 1701, as settler governments instead disregarded this treaty. In reality, Indigenous communities were decimated by disease, war, colonial policies of starvation, rape, forced removal from lands and hunting grounds, and targeted cultural genocide (Allan & Smylie, 2015).

Later in the textbook, as the development of New France is described, Bain (2007) argues that “Canadian history is full of conflict that has resulted in positive change” (p. 138). This is also seen in the curriculum, which states that the “First half of the 19th century was a major time for conflict and change in Canada” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 137). Bain (2007) also asks students to “do some research about how the beliefs and attitudes of the First Nations peoples and the French settlers and traders

worked themselves out” (p. 63). Again, it is insinuated that Canada had a slight history of prejudice, but those “beliefs and attitudes” were resolved through good will and diplomatic cooperation, suggesting that present-day Canada is no longer steeped in these colonial legacies. However, there are “alarming disparities in health status, social determinants of health and access to health care experienced between Indigenous populations in comparison to non-Indigenous populations in Canada” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 9).

These statements in the textbooks portray an image of Canada as a multicultural nation with an interesting colonial past. In actuality, Canada has always had race-based legislation and policies. These colonial policies entail “the obstruction of Indigenous self-determination and failure to recognize treaty and land rights, the lack of access to services and resources and over-surveillance by criminal justice and child welfare systems” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 6). For example, “legislative amendments were made to effect automatic enfranchisement” for any Indigenous person who earned a university degree (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 8). The Indian Act itself is a race-based legislation that enables the federal government to determine who is considered “Indian”, while the act “engrained sexism towards First Nations women in Canada (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 10).

There are many other examples involving the Canadian government using their power to control land where established Indigenous communities live in order to gain wealth (King, 2012). One such example involves Harper’s plans of building a pipeline connecting the Alberta oil sands to the west coast of British Columbia, thus threatening

coastal areas, wildlife and yet again intruding on the territories and treaty rights of Indigenous communities in the area.

What Roles are the Indigenous Peoples Portrayed to Have?

As we have seen the histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples are rarely and if so, minimally discussed in the textbooks and curriculum. When analyzing how Indigenous peoples are depicted in the two Grade 7 history textbooks, I discovered that the textbooks had depicted them as holding two different roles in Canadian history. These two roles or archetypes are represented in both textbooks; one being the role of the hunter, and the other, is the role of the warrior.

The hunter. As White settlers searched for wealth in North America, instead of finding diamonds and gold as they hoped, they saw the ways in which Indigenous peoples lived off the land, hunted, used and traded animal furs among other Indigenous communities (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). Bain (2007) states that the White settlers learned how “Canada was rich in fur-bearing animals, and the First Nations were keen to trade pelts for supplies” (p. 13). The animal furs were of value in Europe for clothing style and decoration (Clark et al., 1999). As a result, White settlers learned that by exchanging their European supplies with Indigenous communities for animal furs, a great profit was made, thus fulfilling the intentions of seeking out wealth in North America. It appears that Indigenous peoples are written about in these textbooks as though one of their primary roles in Canadian history was to help the White settlers gain wealth through the fur trade.

Here (Figure 1) is an image of a trading post, presented in Bain's textbook, where White settlers appear to own the post as they are behind the counter inspecting the animal furs (Bain, 2007, p. 113). The First Nations man is looking at the gun with a peculiar look on his face. This image insinuates a certain level of expertise on the part of White traders, who, depicted as savvy businessmen and entrepreneurs, inspect the fur



Figure 1: The Trading Post (Bain, 2007, p. 113)

while the Indigenous man curiously, without expertise, looks at the European good that may be up for trading. Faintly behind the Indigenous man, appears to be another Indigenous person; however, this person appears to be in the background, perhaps waiting in line to trade animal furs. Again, the image conveys a power hierarchy as there are two White settlers teamed up to analyze the animal fur, exuding confidence in their posture and facial expressions, whereas the Indigenous person is conveying timidity as he waits to hear what price the pelts will fetch.

Clark et al. (1999) illustrate that “alliances with local Native peoples were essential for the Europeans. They supplied the Europeans with furs, food, and canoes, acted as guides and interpreters and often saved their lives” (p. 29). These statements may appear as complementary for the Indigenous communities; however, paternalistic

discourses of European control and power are greatly explicit. The language used here is from the perspective of the White settler, with Indigenous people playing a secondary, assistive role in the story of nation-building. Indigenous communities are represented as naïve, passive helpers. The textbook does not go on to say how these alliances were essential or important for Indigenous communities, yet the importance of the survival and well being of the White settlers is emphasized. Clark et al. (1999) proceeds to say that “one of the reasons the Native peoples were essential to the fur trade was because they brought furs from the interior regions, to the French traders”, because, “during times of hostilities, it was safer to have the Native allies bring furs to the French” (p. 30). Again, the safety and survival of the White settlers is depicted as being of greater value than the lives of the Indigenous peoples who are represented as servants, guides and auxiliaries.

Similarly, Bain (2007) states, “with the assistance of the First Nations peoples such as the Huron, the French fur traders built an efficient system for transporting furs to central points” (p. 47). Again, this statement, among many others in both textbooks, appears to depict Indigenous peoples as subordinate, providing “assistance” for the “French fur traders” (Bain, 2007). Furthermore, these statements suggest that the fur trade belongs to the White settlers, as though the fur trade was initiated and lead by them; in reality, Indigenous communities were trading furs among each other long before the invasion of White Europeans.

Below (Figure 2) is an image found in Clark et al. (1999) textbook in a section that is describing the fur trade and the ‘coureurs de bois’, or “runners of the woods”, “which is the name given to Europeans who travelled inland to trade for furs” (Bain, 2007, p. 13). The image displays the White settler as the main focus, with the Indigenous

people appearing as secondary or peripheral. The White settler appears larger, as if he is the leader of the group of hunters, with his eyes looking out, focused on the task at hand –he is depicted as confident and commanding. In contrast, many of the Indigenous peoples



have their backs hunched

Figure 2: Coureurs de bois (Clark et al., 1999, p. 91)

over and eyes looking down or over at the White settler, appearing compliant. The one individual to the right of the White settler is looking up submissively at the White settler. The White settler is fully clothed in what appear to be animal skins, whereas the Indigenous peoples are nearly naked and exposed; their nearly naked bodies with their ribs and muscles exposed through their skin emphasizes their depiction as savages. The White settler stands upright, looking out into the country, exuding confidence and leadership. This image coincides with the discursive representation in all of the texts that repeatedly reduce Indigenous peoples into the archetypes of hunters and helpers to White settlers.

In the images I surveyed throughout the materials, Indigenous peoples routinely appear as instruments in both survival and profit for the White settlers, as both textbooks illustrate the relationships between communities that were made. For example, Clark et

al. (1999) state that “to strengthen New France’s most important industry, the fur trade, Governor General Frontenac encouraged friendships with some Native peoples, exploration, and military activity” (p. 64). This statement is loaded with discourses of power and control. First of all, when Clark et al. (1999) begin with “to strengthen New France’s most important industry, the fur trade”, again there is the insinuation that the White settlers own the fur trade. Secondly, there is no clarity as to which Indigenous communities and nations the White settlers were encouraged to befriend. One can only assume that the encouraged friendships are with the peoples who would generate more wealth, since Clark et al. (1999) used the word “strengthen” (p. 64). Again, Indigenous peoples are depicted in the subordinate role of assisting White settlers in their fur trade success, while White settlers then returned to Europe, selling the animal furs for a greater profit.

Keeping Indigenous peoples involved in the fur trade in a subordinate role assisted with the building of the European empire, as Indigenous peoples were seen as disposable labour while European imperialism flourished (Mills, 1997). European empires were built not only on the colonization of Indigenous peoples in Canada, but also in New Zealand, the US, Australia, Rhodesia, Cuba, the Philippines, South Africa, South and Central America, Asia, Africa and elsewhere (Mills, 1997). The difference is that western countries such as United States, Canada and Australia “all maintained white immigration policies until a few decades ago, and native peoples in all three countries suffer high poverty, infant mortality, and suicide rates” (Mills, 1997, p. 29). Yet, factual historical information about the exploitation of Indigenous peoples for the expansion of

the European empires is completely absent from the Grade 7 Ontario history textbooks and curriculum.

Another example of how the textbooks depict Indigenous peoples as a means for benefitting White settler wealth is where the authors introduce the idea of intermarriage. Bain (2007) states that many French men “lived with or married First Nations women. This helped them to have a closer relationship with the people who could get furs for them. It also helped them to learn valuable survival skills” (p. 21). Similarly, Clark et al. (1999) declare that “family ties were useful in trading sessions”, because,

trading between native bands was customarily done through family contacts. To become part of this family trading system, some of the young French men stayed to live with a band during the winter. These young men adapted to the Native way of living, often marrying Native women and becoming part of the bands. (p.30)

These relationships are described as though the marriages and family ties were initiated merely to advantage White men. Women are depicted as completely voiceless and passive, strategic pawns or objects in business transactions that benefit only White men’s pleasure and wealth. It is notable that this is also the only time in the textbooks that Indigenous women are portrayed as having any kind of role. Such discursive representations speak to the beginning of the racialized sexism that Indigenous women continue to face now; their depiction as available for White men’s pleasure and benefit underlies the phenomenon of missing and murdered Indigenous women. This salient issue is further discussed in the final chapter.

Indigenous people’s role in assisting in White settler power and control was prioritized as most important: if and when relationships with Indigenous peoples did not

assist with this, the relationships were sacrificed. This is described in the example of how Samuel de Champlain, a prominent French leader, purposely established settlement in the St Lawrence valley against the wishes of Chief Donnacona and the Haudenosaunee nation (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). Samuel de Champlain did this in order to have “better access to the Native peoples and the fur trade” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 28). It is unclear what “better access to the Native peoples” exactly means; however, this description appears laden with discourses of power and control as these decisions were clearly not mutual but rather forced on the Haudenosaunee communities –and on the women specifically. Since the settlement created a rift with Chief Donnacona, the settlers shifted their alliances to the Wyandot and Anishinaabe (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). It is clear to see how Indigenous peoples were merely made subordinate associates, thoroughly exploited, in order to benefit the Europeans.

The warrior. As White settlers continued their colonization of North America, certain Indigenous communities were sought out for positive relationships to assist with fulfilling goals of wealth, power and control, whereas other, perhaps less compliant Indigenous communities were depicted in the textbooks as the enemy. As previously referenced, the White settlers ignored the wishes of Chief Donnacona in regards to settlement along the St. Lawrence River (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). Due to this, White settlers sought out the Wyandot communities as trading partners, but more so as allies against the Haudenosaunee (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). Since the Wyandot became allies with White settlers, they are depicted in the textbooks as partners, whereas the Haudenosaunee are depicted as the enemy. Clark et al. (1999) illustrate this by saying that “the French needed the Huron to be their military allies to help fight the Iroquois” (p.

29). Likewise, Bain (2007) says, Champlain “established military alliance with the Huron people” and during an attack, Champlain “fired [two rounds] into the group of Iroquois attacking his party” (p. 8). These statements insinuate that the enemy was the Haudenosaunee, as if the White settlers and the Wyandot were merely protecting themselves, their settlement, and their alliance.

Here (Figure 3) is an image in which Clark et al. (1999) illustrate a “legendary battle” along the Ottawa River “during the wars when the French, the Huron, and their other allies were in bitter conflict with the Iroquois and their allies” (p. 33).

The image presents the White settlers as though they are being attacked, leaning over a rock wall, while the Haudenosaunee are entering the French forts. The image portrays a hierarchy, as the White settlers are placed higher up,



Figure 3: Battle along the Ottawa River (Clark et al., 1999, p. 33)

whereas the Indigenous peoples are lower. The one White settler who is on display holding a wooden barrel, Adam Dollard, is featured in the textbook as being an army commander (Clark et al., 1999). This image portrays the French White settlers winning and having power in this battle; they do not appear wounded or in pain, but rather, they

seem in control. In contrast, the Haudenosaunne appear as injured, losing the battle; one warrior is flung backwards, mouth open wide, appearing to writhe in pain.

Furthermore, when Bain (2007) illustrates this story of the alliance formation between the French and the Wyandot, he depicts the Wyandot as the individuals seeking war; he states that, “in 1609 the Huron persuaded Champlain to help them attack the Iroquois who lived to the south” (p. 19). Consequently, it appears that overall, textbooks are portraying Indigenous peoples as individuals who seek conflict, whereas the White settlers are seeking protection. Clark et al. (1999) state that: “in 1648 to 1649, the Iroquois began attacking and destroying Huron settlements”; “in March 1649, 1000 Iroquois warriors attacked Huronia”; and “in the late 1640s, the Iroquois attacked the fur brigades” (p. 35). The message in these statements appears to be that it is the Haudenosaunee who are the enemies, who are abusive and violent toward the Wyandot villages, threatening their canoes and carts that have trading material (Clark et al., 1999). The only explanation given by Clark et al. (1999) regarding why the Haudenosaunee would be attacking Huronia, Huron settlements and the fur brigades, is that it was simply due to “hostilities between the Huron and the Iroquois” (p. 35). This suggests that Indigenous peoples are repeatedly and randomly fighting, like savage warriors, whereas the White settlers only fight strategically to protect their trade or their settlement.

There are connections that are clearly missing in Bain’s (2007) statements. Huronia, which today is in the area of Barrie and Wasaga Beach in southern Ontario, was home to the Huron people (Clark et al., 1999). Between 1639 and 1649, the years when many attacks occurred, Champlain, a leader of the French explorers, sent Jesuits to this

area and built permanent mission churches and schools to convert the Huron people to Christianity (Clark et al., 1999). Bain references this by saying:

The Iroquois attacked the Huron in 1648. Five Jesuits who worked in Huron villages were killed. The following year, the Jesuits decided to abandon Sainte-Marie. They built a new centre on Christian Island, just off the coast of Lake Huron...in the winter of 1649, the Iroquois walked across the ice to Christian Island, and destroyed the centre. (2007, p.11)

Because I have thoroughly analyzed the two textbooks and curriculum, I have been able to make the connections that the Haudenosaunee attacks depicted in the texts were not only due to conflicts between the Haudenosaunee and the Wyandot. Rather, they were deliberate attacks conducted to defend and protect their communities from the missionaries and Christian assimilation. Yet, for students reading one textbook, I would imagine that this story would be interpreted as Bain (2007) suggests, that the war was because “the Iroquois were enemies of the Huron” (p.11). Thus both textbooks suggest that the Haudenosaunee are a dangerous enemy and that the Jesuits and missionaries were not harmful in any way to the Indigenous communities. Again, the discursive message is that when Indigenous people defend their communities, they are portrayed as dangerous and violent savages, whereas when White settlers defend themselves, they are portrayed as strong victims, righteous, entitled and protected by God.

More of this language appears only a few pages later, as Clark et al. (1999) state that the “Iroquois attacks on the tiny settlement of Ville-Marie over the next 25 years constantly threatened the survival” ... “it was difficult to build homes or plan and care for crops when enemies were often waiting in ambush” (p. 38). Again, these statements are

loaded with discourses of White virtue and blamelessness and Indigenous brutality and violence. Students are exposed to a message of assault and terror, depicting an enemy (the Haudenosaunee) who, for decades, is “waiting in ambush” and who ruthlessly “threatened the survival” of innocent White communities (Clark et al., 1999, p. 38). Again, there is no explanation as to why these attacks were happening.

However, a close reading of the text reveals the background and context. Ville-Marie, today known as Montreal, was a colony founded as a religious mission by Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve (Clark et al., 1999). Maisonneuve was trained as a soldier whose “main goal was the conversion of the First People to the Roman Catholic faith” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 38). Maisonneuve governed the area for 24 years, from 1641 to 1665, until it became a colony directly governed by royalty (Clark et al., 1999). Consequently, it is quite probable that this settlement was not welcomed by the Iroquois, nor were the missionary schools and churches, thus explaining why these battles occurred as perhaps the local community was resisting an invasion of their territory.

Below is an image (Figure 4) that appears when discussing Madeleine de Verchères, who is “A Canadian Hero” according to Clark et al. (1999, p. 80). Madeleine de Verchères is viewed as a hero because at age 12, she warned the French White settlers of “Iroquois attacks” where she lived along the St Lawrence River (Clark et al., 1999). The image has the White settlers in the forefront, illustrating the intense fear and panic on their faces as they close the doors to their village, securing safety from the impending attack. Again, the Haudenosaunee peoples are situated in the background, with bent legs appearing ready to pounce, with what appear to be guns.



Figure 1: Madeleine and the St. Lawrence River (Clark et al., 1999, p. 80)

As the textbooks further illustrate the development of New France, the role of Indigenous peoples remains solely as that of warriors/savages and naïve helpers. Bain (2007) states that “in order to compete with-and later, resist-the British, New France needed the support of the First Nations peoples” (p. 47). British White settlers also saw the potential for wealth, power and control in Canada, which challenged the control that French

White settlers were trying to establish (Bain, 2007; Clark et al., 1999). Consequently, the French White settlers now saw that using Indigenous peoples as allies would help them succeed in fighting off the British. Again, Indigenous peoples are portrayed as strategic pawns, merely helpers and warriors to the White settlers, who in contrast are depicted as engaged in nation-building. These characterizations are reiterated throughout the history textbooks. As they introduce the development of Upper and Lower Canada with the British White settlers in command, the texts show that the role of Indigenous peoples diminished until the commencement of the War of 1812. The War of 1812 is described as a war between the “Americans”, the “British North Americans, British forces, and their

Native allies” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 166). Again, Indigenous peoples appear as appendices and helpers to their European leaders.

The dual role of warrior and helper is firmly anchored in the colonial narratives, until a key point in history. After the war of 1812, according to Clark et al. (1999), “Native people [were] considered not useful anymore, thus they now must become assimilated” (p. 171). There is no follow-up to this statement; it appears in a list of the results from the war of 1812 (Clark et al., 1999). At no point is this significant shift in early colonial relations explained in context or from a critical lens. The text simply describes that once their role as warriors and helpers no longer served a purpose for White settlers, a new characterization of Indigenous peoples emerged, one that continues today, that of the “Indian problem”. Under this new trope, Indigenous peoples and their cultures and traditions are no longer useful; they are merely “in the way” of colonial and Canadian nation-building.

Dishonest Representations of Assimilation

Clark et al. (1999) define ‘assimilation’ as “the process through which one culture is absorbed into another” (p. 248). What is missing in this definition, are the actions and ideologies that underwrite deliberate colonial power and control. Instead, the definition assumes that one culture naturally connects and intertwines with the other, as if all individuals involved are mutually and willingly involved in the process. In reality, the cultural assimilation that has been occurring in Canada for Indigenous peoples has been conducted with rationale and intent, and through the use of force and exploitation. European settlers did not assimilate into Indigenous communities, but rather have commandeered their homeland and forced their cultural worldview onto them. The

statement: “Native people [are] considered not useful anymore, thus they now must become assimilated” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 171), suggests that Indigenous peoples no longer have worth, rights, or self-determination under an emerging Canadian state. These are profound, deeply disturbing statements, yet they are mentioned casually to students who are reading this textbook.

The depiction of Indigenous peoples as passive recipients of assimilative strategies is amplified in the mention of the role of the Christian church in Canadian history. This image (Figure 5) appears in both textbooks when discussing the role of the



Figure 5: First Ursuline Nuns with Indigenous Girls (Bain, 2007, p. 31; Clark et al., 1999, p. 79)

Church in New France. The caption under the image states: “A 1931 painting by Lawrence R. Bachelor titled *First Ursuline nuns with Indian Pupils at Québec*” (Bain, 2007, p. 31) and “In 1640, most children in New France were taught by their parents. These Native children, being taught by the Ursuline nuns, probably had lessons in the Roman Catholic religion, French, and basic mathematics” (Clark et al., 1999, p. 79). Just as Clark et al.’s (1999) caption states, the Ursuline nuns taught only children from

Indigenous communities, insinuating that their parents were incapable of and not permitted to teach their own children. Instead, the image presents the children as happy and peaceful, sharing flowers with the nuns. The nuns have nurturing smiles on their faces. The light colours in the image represent a peaceful meadow, as though there is no stress or discomfort. The image, along with the caption that belongs to the image, makes no direct reference to assimilation or forced attendance –even though the notion that Indigenous children are wards of the colonial state remains embedded in Canadian law and in the Indian Act to this day (Allan & Smylie, 2015).

Another important theme is that the image appears to present only Indigenous girls who attended the schools. This image is one of only a few images that involves Indigenous women in both textbooks. One area where Indigenous women appear is in the 10 pages at the beginning of the Clark et al. (1999) textbook where “First People” are discussed. The only other exception is when Kateri Tekakwitha is written about (Clark et al., 1999). Kateri Tekakwitha’s mother was Anishinaabe and her father was Haudenosaunee (Clark et al., 1999). She converted to Christianity, became a devout Christian, and fled her village to join the mission because, according to Clark et al. (1999), “the Mohawk in her village threatened her with death” (p. 39). In this particular story and illustration, the Haudenosaunee again are positioned as the enemy, and their assimilation into Christianity is depicted as normal, brave and beneficial. It is worth noting that beyond a few mentions and images, this is the only full narrative in any of the materials that describes an Indigenous woman. Not only is she an Indigenous woman, but also she is an Indigenous woman who converted to Christianity and rejected her own community, which is what the White settlers sought out. As noted previously, other than

this story, it appears that the textbooks and curriculum only include Indigenous women when referencing their intermarriages and their forced participation in assimilation.

Overall, I found there was a persistent, systemic absence of any account or discussion of the tremendous cost of assimilation for Indigenous peoples. The one most direct reference to assimilation that I could find in both textbooks and curriculum is the following:

There was some effort to assimilate First Nations peoples, converting them to Christianity and French ways, wiping out the differences that made them distinct peoples. But the efforts at assimilation were not consistent. The French devoted more attention to establishing and developing a colony than to assimilation. In the 1670s, the governor of New France held annual meetings to consult with leaders of the friendly First Nations, near present-day Kingston, Ontario. This suggested that the French were prepared to accept the differences between the original inhabitants and themselves. (Bain, 2007, p. 19)

The way in which this paragraph is written suggests that White settlers were relatively benign and did not inflict harm on Indigenous communities. When Bain (2007) suggests that “the efforts at assimilation were not consistent”, he insinuates to students that there were no deliberate and systemic assimilation strategies put in place during this period. There are no descriptions of the significant historical shifts in colonial policy as the number of settlers increased, and how more and more Indigenous land was taken from them (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 2013). In reality, not only were Indigenous communities forced to relocate, but the legislation such as the ‘Crown Lands Protection Act’, which passed in 1839, classified all land as owned and protected by the crown.

These policies enhanced the dominance of British imperialism that significantly shaped Canadian law (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 2013).

In other areas of the textbooks, information about other strategies of assimilation, control and eradication are completely absent. Bain (2007) states that “one of the most disastrous results of the arrival of the settlers was that they brought new diseases with them (p. 22). Bain (2007) proceeds to say that “diseases such as smallpox were unknown in North America until then, and the First Nations peoples had no resistance to them” (p. 22). This statement does not clarify that smallpox and other diseases brought from Europe were lethal, killing a significant portion of Indigenous communities (Loiselle, de Finney, Khanna & Corcoran, 2012). The suggestion that the communication of diseases was unintended –a natural result of inter-cultural contact- removes any accountability from European settlers. Also, by leaving out information about the deliberate use of disease, the text suggests that the “disastrous results of the arrival of the settlers” were minimal. This again sustains a narrative that positions colonial violence as having occurred only in the past. It misrepresents the continued and intentional actions of colonial powers and of the Canadian state to assimilate and convert Indigenous peoples.

Summary

When analyzing the discourses present in the language and images of the two history textbooks and provincial curriculum, I found discursive representations to be generalizing and unclear. Much of the language used when referring to Indigenous peoples is situated in the past, as though Indigenous peoples, cultures, histories and traditions are either non-existent or bounded in the past. The ways in which Indigenous peoples are depicted are in subordinate, peripheral positions in which they willingly assist

White settlers in achieving wealth and success. White settlers are depicted as righteous, brave and civilized, as though they are innocently exploring new land for profit and nation-building. The assimilation of Indigenous peoples is briefly mentioned, but information on the intensity and scope of the trauma and abuses –and indeed, what is now considered to have been deliberate cultural genocide- is completely missing. The following chapter provides analysis of the findings in regards to making links with theories and concepts presented in Chapter 1, drawn from critical theories such as critical education, anti-racist and Indigenous studies. I also discuss the current pedagogies associated in the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum. Finally, I propose strategies to address and curtail the perpetuation of national narratives of ignorance and denial.

Chapter 4: Inquiring into Curriculum

This chapter reflects on a newly introduced pedagogical approach in the Grade 7 Ontario history curriculum, called The Inquiry-Process. I link my analysis of inquiry-based pedagogy to the key themes identified in the previous chapter. My discussion will highlight interconnected themes of sexism, racism and colonialism, the ways in which these themes have been rooted in historical narratives, and their continued re-inscription in contemporary Canadian education. My discussion concludes with an exploration of curriculum redesign and alternative pedagogical approaches for Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the authors of the two textbooks I reviewed both depict Canada as largely undeveloped until the arrival of White settlers. The Canadian landscape is presented through the same lens that justified the British colonization of Australia, New Zealand and other western settler states –that of ‘terra nullius’ (Buchan, 2007). Terra Nullius, often meaning ‘nobody’s land’, is a concept that refers to colonizers’ perception that land is uninhabited because it has never been put into production (i.e. exploited, logged or farmed), or owned by a state that they recognize (Buchan, 2007). This colonial lens positions Indigenous peoples as not having made efficient use of land and thus as having no sovereignty or ownership over the land (Buchan, 2007). In both textbooks and curriculum, Canada is represented as a nation that developed through the innovation and perseverance of White settlers, whereas the presence and significance of Indigenous communities is referenced less and less following descriptions of first contact and the main colonial wars. Instead, the historical narratives appear to solely emphasize the existence of Europeans and the roots of the

Canadian state as British and French. The textbooks and curriculum in Ontario are shaped by settler perspectives and worldviews that get to count as the only source of legitimate knowledge about Canada (Battiste, 1998). In turn, settler perspectives, “repackaged as data and findings- are activated in order to rationalize and maintain unfair social structures” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 2). Such lacunas show how “the Canadian nation state fails to acknowledge the existence or sovereignty of First Nations and Inuit communities prior to colonization by Europeans, or recognize the unique experiences and contributions of the Métis peoples” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 2). As Battiste (1998) argues, this sort of “curricula serve[s] as another colonial instrument to deprive Aboriginal communities of their knowledge, languages, and cultures” (p. 1).

In looking into how diverse Indigenous realities were effectively excluded from the curriculum, I also noted that colonialism is written about quite indifferently; it is not only represented as insignificant to the history of Canada, it is also portrayed as neatly bounded in the past. There is no acknowledgement that Canada remains a settler colonial state, and there are no links to colonialism’s ongoing negative impact on Indigenous peoples. No information is provided about early colonial policies that included bounties on Indigenous people, the use of disease and starvation that resulted in the deaths of thousands, broken treaties, and the forced removal of Indigenous peoples from their homelands to allow the colonial state to expand (Allan & Smylie, 2015; L. Smith, 1999). There is no description of the imposition of legal restrictions on Indigenous people’s travel, employment, education, cultural, spiritual and linguistic practices and political rights, nor is there mention of Canada’s history of legalized slavery, and other racist immigration and colonial policies such as the Indian Act and the Chinese Head Tax that

allowed Canada to flourish as a White nation (Allan & Smylie, 2015; L. Smith, 1999). Consequently, Grade 7 Ontario history students are exposed almost exclusively to White settler European perspectives as the central narrative of Canadian history, while diverse Indigenous histories and perspectives are essentially written out of the Canadian story. This correlates with Minnich's (1990) characterization of curriculum and pedagogy as "a kind of *hierarchically invidious monism*"; a system in which one "category/kind comes to function almost as if it were the *only* kind, because it occupies the defining center of power, either casting all others outside the circle of the 'real' or holding them on the margins, penned into subcategories" (p. 53).

In this chapter, I explore in more detail how these kinds of systemic curriculum omissions function and what they mean for Ontario Grade 7 students. I first explore how a EuroWestern-centric curriculum strengthens a "contract of ignorance" (Steyn, 2012) that maintains racial hierarchies. I also examine how systemic ignorance is sustained in part through racialized sexism and colonial policies targeting Indigenous women and girls. Finally, the newly-introduced Ontario pedagogical model –called The Inquiry-Process- and alternative approaches in history education are explored. My analysis of the curriculum will also touch on the recent release of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to demonstrate how the study's salient themes are connected to current debates about Indigenous rights, education and sovereignty.

A Socialization of Ignorance

As illustrated in Chapter 3, according to dominant White settler perspectives on nation-building, Indigenous peoples are portrayed as either helpers or opponents to European White settlers. The reduction of Indigenous peoples to these two roles is

extremely problematic; it reveals the strong undercurrent of a racist colonial imaginary of Canada as a “new world” built through European endurance. According to Battiste (2002), “these strategies caused Indigenous peoples to be viewed as backward and as passive recipients of European knowledge” (p. 4). By reproducing such narratives, Ontario’s Grade 7 history education remains steeped in purposeful ignorance. Such a discourse proclaims that “Eurocentric thought asserts that only Europeans can progress and that Indigenous peoples are frozen in time, guided by knowledge systems that reinforce the past and do not look towards the future” (Battiste, 2002, p. 4). For instance, the curriculum largely ignores contemporary colonialism, as well as extremely diverse and distinct Indigenous histories, societies, nations, cultures, spiritualities and traditions. This is particularly problematic given that there are now numerous, high quality pedagogical resources produced with and by Indigenous educational experts that would provide more nuanced representations of the diversity of Indigenous nations as well as colonial history.

An exclusive focus on a EuroWestern-centric perspective exhibits the presence of Mills’ (1997) concept of “the Racial Contract”, a contract in which humans are categorized as White and non-White, imposing a difference in status. The racial contract is a socialized contract “between those categorized as white *over* the nonwhites, who are thus the objects rather than the subjects of the agreement” (p. 12). Similarly, Steyn’s (2012) theory, the “Ignorance Contract”, argues that there is a “tacit agreement to entertain ignorance” which “lies at the heart of a society structured in racial hierarchy” (p. 8). As I explore next, Mills and Steyn’s theoretical frameworks are useful in

understanding how and why settler denials are so persistent, even in contemporary curriculum.

The Racial Contract is a political, moral and epistemological ‘social contract’, which is rooted in racism and White superiority; it is steeped in the purposeful socialization of the systematic ignorance of both current and historical colonization (Mills, 1997). As exemplified in the data illustrated in Chapter 3, the two textbooks and provincial curriculum adhere to the Racial Contract as the images and discourses create a ‘feel-good’ history for Whites in order to perpetuate the self-interested narratives of EuroWestern Canadian history (Mills, 1997). There is evidence in the discourses of the Ontario Grade 7 history textbooks and curriculum that demonstrates ignorance regarding “differential privileging of the whites as a group with respect to the nonwhites as a group, the exploitation of their bodies, land, and resources and the denial of equal socioeconomic opportunities to them” (Mills, 1997, p. 11). The experiences of White settlers are dramatized in regards to the hardships they endured upon settling and developing a ‘new land’. There is “no mention of Indigenous peoples, their struggles for the recognition of their sovereignty, or the contributions of Indigenous intellectuals and activists to theories and frameworks of decolonization” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 2-3).

Similarly to the concept of the Racial Contract, Steyn (2012) has advanced the idea of the “Ignorance Contract”, which is another useful framework for understanding how the Ontario Grade 7 history education system is socializing students. Steyn (2012) argues that “just like knowledge, ignorance can be put in place through communicative practices and disseminated across social settings, cultivated and nurtured intersubjectively, circulating through social networks and activities” (p. 10). My analysis

of the Grade 7 public school history curriculum demonstrates that there is an “agreement, whether explicit or implicit- to maintain White epistemologies of ignorance” (Steyn, 2012, p. 11). The Grade 7 Ontario history curriculum functions as a discursive site that communicates these messages of ignorance, constructed from positions of authoritative institutional power. Steyn (2012) asserts that institutional power, “is an important means for the production and maintenance of the unequal positionalities in society, with the result that, like knowledge, its distribution can be mapped along societal fault lines” (p. 10). The ignorance contract reproduces itself across generations, as Steyn (2012) argues; this certainly seems to be the case with the contemporary Grade 7 Ontario history curriculum, which conveys very much the same messages about colonial history that it did when I was a student over a decade ago.

An education system and curriculum created on the premises of ignorance and racial hierarchies strengthen the ideology that Canada is a peacekeeping, multi-cultural haven, and a non-racist nation (Fee & Russell, 2007). Adams states that Canadians have:

Managed to perpetuate the illusion that Canada has never been a white-supremacist society, an illusion that Canadian people continue to believe... [and] because they are unaware of their racism, they are self-righteous, arrogant, and free from any social conscience with regard to racism. (as cited in Fee & Russell, 2007, p. 193)

It is this design of ignorance that perpetuates settler racial hierarchies, which in turn maintains the violent act of colonization (Fee & Russell, 2007). As Tuck and Yang (2012) state, colonial violence “is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is reasserted each day of occupation” (p. 5). Colonial violence infiltrates everyday

realities, from state-imposed policies of the Indian Act which police what constitutes an Indigenous person, to the documented systemic under-funding of education and health care access for Indigenous peoples, to the drastic over-representation of Indigenous children in the child welfare and justice systems (Allan & Smylie, 2015; L. Smith, 1999). Such persistent structural inequities illustrate how the Canadian state “effectively obscure[s] the continual structural and systemic violence and marginalization of Indigenous peoples required to create and maintain the settler society of Canada” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 2). Perhaps the most telling indicator of continued, intergenerational colonial violence is the increasing number of missing and murdered Indigenous girls and women, a phenomena which is rooted in part in early colonial constructions of Indigenous women –a topic I explore next.

Socialization of Sex and Sexism

The two analyzed textbooks and provincial curriculum not only lack information about Indigenous histories, cultures, perspectives and overall presence, but the role of Indigenous women is either distorted or absent. As presented in Chapter 3, knowledge regarding the assimilation of Indigenous peoples is falsely portrayed in the curriculum and textbooks. The reality is that the early colonial missionary schools constituted the beginning of the Residential schools epidemic. The TRC (2015a) states that the missionary schools “wanted the children to abandon their Aboriginal identity and come to know the Christian god”, because “they feared that if the children were not educated, they would be a menace to the social order of the country” (p. 47). Furthermore, the TRC (2015a) points out that the schools “were part of the colonization and conversion of

Aboriginal people, and were intended to bring civilization and salvation to their children” (p. 47).

The false portrayals completely obscure the reality that the residential school system was intended to “kill the Indian in the child” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 13). The head of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1920, Duncan Campbell Scott, is quoted as saying: “I want to get rid of the Indian problem” (Moore, 1978, p. 114). In this same speech referring to the Indian Act, he explains to the House of Commons that “our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department, that is the whole object of this Bill” (Moore, 1978, p. 114).

This ideology of assimilation is implicitly evident in the imagery and discourses used to describe the missionary schools in the curriculum and textbooks. Images depict priests, nuns and teachers as well as Indigenous girls. The missionary schools are portrayed in an unharmed manner, as if the relationships between the nuns and Indigenous girls were mutually favorable, and as if the experiences the Indigenous girls had at the missionary schools were full of enjoyment. In stark contrast to these innocent depictions, the reality is that the residential school system has had “rippling, intergenerational effects not on only survivors, but their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 13) –yet the curriculum does not document these links for students. Most problematic is that Indigenous women are portrayed as though they are submissive, complying with the rules established by the White government and Christian leaders. The only other example in the textbooks and provincial curriculum that includes Indigenous women are the brief references to their

involvement in Métis families. The relationships between Indigenous women and White men in Métis families are portrayed as completely consensual, yet there are no suggestions of the presence of consent, romance, or meaningful partnerships.

The fact that Indigenous women are merely represented in curriculum and history textbooks as compliant participants in assimilation, and as mothers to Métis children, is an example of the intimate interconnection between racism, patriarchy and sexism that underlies European imperialism (Francis, 2011; Razack, 1998; A. Smith, 2003). This interconnection, in turn, is directly linked to the issue that Indigenous women have been considered “sexually violable and ‘rapable’” by European men since early contact (Francis, 2011, p. 45; A. Smith, 2003). Historically, French and English fur traders sexually used Indigenous women in order to sustain the development of the early colonies, effectively creating Métis ancestry (Francis, 2011). As White European women began immigrating to North America, “traders increasingly looked upon Indigenous women simply as objects of temporary sexual gratification, not as partners to whom they should make a long-term commitment” (Francis, 2011, p. 45-46).

Razack (2002) illustrates how “sexual violence towards Aboriginal women was an integral part of nineteenth-century settler strategies of domination” (p. 130). While European colonial societies were/are predominately patriarchal, many Indigenous communities were/are matriarchal, and more often egalitarian (A. Smith, 2003). Consequently, the egalitarian way of living among Indigenous communities poses a threat to the hierarchy of White men, as White women might have seen patriarchy as not being normal; as a result, egalitarian ways of living had to be eliminated (A. Smith, 2003).

It is documented that in the nineteenth century, the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) who patrolled the pass system -requiring Indigenous peoples to obtain a pass before leaving their reservation- engaged in coercive sexual relations with Indigenous women (Razack, 2002). Police officers and other White men in power regularly had “easy sexual access” to “Aboriginal women whose families were starving” (Razack, 2002, p. 131). Government agents would withhold food and other rations to Indigenous reserve communities unless Indigenous women were made available to them (Razack, 2002). “European societies were thoroughly misogynistic” and Indigenous peoples, particularly women, were viewed as “dirty” because in “patriarchal thinking, only a body that is ‘pure’ can be violated” (A. Smith, 2003, p. 73, 76). Consequently, Indigenous women became stigmatized as impure, promiscuous sexual objects for the use of White men (Francis, 2011). In other words, the control and colonizing of Indigenous women’s bodies strengthened the intersecting links between White racial hegemony and patriarchy in settler societies (A. Smith, 2003). This notion continues to underlie the way that sexual violence perpetrated on sex workers is continuously minimized; perpetrators are not systemically brought to justice as sex workers are viewed as though they are ‘asking for it’ (A. Smith, 2003).

The construction of Indigenous women as ‘rapable’ and disposable contributes to the current phenomenon of the more than a thousand missing and/or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada (Dickinson, 2014). United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, describes this issue in Canada as ‘disturbing’ and ‘epidemic’ (Native Women’s Association of Canada, 2013, as cited in de Finney, 2015, p. 171). Presently, Indigenous women not only experience twice

the physical, sexual, psychological and habitual violence as non-Indigenous women, but they also experience substantially disproportionate burdens of poor health, lack of access to health care and education, under-funding for victim and intervention services, chronic under-employment, and the highest rates of poverty in Canada (Bourassa, McKay-McNabb & Hampton, 2004; de Finney, 2015). The Indian Act has been “instrumental in undermining women’s roles and status” as thousands of women lost their Indian status and were unable to move back to their reserves after the residential schools and the 60’s scoop (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 10; de Finney, 2015). Forcibly removed from their reserves, Indigenous women ended up in cities where they were vulnerable to exploitation and violence, in part because they were under-educated, under-skilled and culturally disconnected (de Finney, 2015). They and their children faced persistent racism and child welfare interventions (de Finney, 2015). As Bourassa et al., (2004) explain, “women who bear their ‘otherness’ in more than one way suffer from multiple oppressions, leaving them more vulnerable to assaults on their well-being than if they suffered from one form of oppression” (p. 24).

The extensive connections between “colonialism, racism and sexism in understanding the health and well-being of Indigenous women, [illustrate how] it is critical to attend to how both historic and ongoing colonial policies and practices work to shape our social determinants of health and health outcomes” (Allan & Smylie, 2015, p. 16). Yet, the absence of Indigenous women in the provincial curriculum and history textbooks perpetuates a state of ignorance of these systemic national issues. As the ignorance is continuously reproduced in official curriculum discourses, children and youth in southern Ontario are being socialized with the message that Indigenous women’s

roles in Canadian history are limited to that of objects of assimilation and of sexual exploitation; in short, that they do not matter.

Representations of Indigenous women as insignificant are also mirrored in the curriculum's representation of Canadian nature and land as disposable and unquestionably available for use and exploitation (de Finney, 2015). Settler civilizations have been founded on the belief that humans, particularly White men, have dominion over women, people of colour, animals and nature (de Finney, 2015). Indeed, the colonial ideology that Europeans can buy and own land just as they can buy and own people is a central ontological principle of settler state formations (de Finney, 2015). It is an ideology that continues to underlie Western social and political systems and is enshrined in the Indian Act.

Truth and Reconciliation

It is clear to see from a critical discourse analysis that the Grade 7 Ontario history education system remains rooted in colonial ideologies. Despite the efforts of the Ontario Ministry of Education to “ensure that curriculum remains current, relevant, and developmentally-appropriate from Kindergarten to Grade 12” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014, para. 4), the recently updated Grade 7 history curriculum continues to adhere to racial and ignorance contracts. Given the persistence of damaging representations of Indigenous peoples in Canadian curriculum, appeals for substantial reviews of Canadian provincial and territorial curriculum are growing. The need for extensive curriculum reform was most notably highlighted by the recently released report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015b).

The themes of racialized sexism, ignorance, denial, dominion over land and resources, and misrepresentation of cultural and spiritual traditions that have been examined in the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum and textbooks are certainly not isolated discursive framings –similar representations are contained in other provincial and territorial curriculum. This is an issue that has been highlighted as an urgent concern for the entire Canadian education system (Battiste, 2002; de Finney, 2015; Francis, 2011; Godlewska et al., 2010). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRCb) report recently made several recommendations related directly to Canadian education curriculum, and the links are worth noting in relation to my study. The TRC “believes that in order for Canada to flourish in the twenty-first century, reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canada must be based” on the “Principles of Reconciliation” (TRC, 2015c, p. 3). Out of the ten principles, one principle declares: “Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society” (TRC, 2015c, p. 4). The TRC (2015b) states that, “in order to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation” (p. 1), the federal, provincial and territorial governments are called upon to create “a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students” (TRC, 2015b, p. 7).

Such a call has been made because “too many Canadians know little or nothing about the deep historical roots of these conflicts” (TRC, 2015a, p. 8). The TRC illustrates that:

this lack of historical knowledge has serious consequences for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and for Canada as a whole. In government circles, it makes for poor public policy decisions. In the public realm, it reinforces racist attitudes and fuels civic distrust between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. Too many Canadians still do not know the history of Aboriginal peoples' contributions to Canada. (2015a, p. 8)

Clearly, Indigenous histories, including education regarding the residential schools and assimilation efforts need to be included in Canadian curriculum (TRC, 2015a). However, according to the education co-ordinator for the TRC, Charlene Bearhead, parents and school staff may be concerned about children learning about residential schools due to the severity of disturbing and traumatic content (Apollonio, 2015). For thirty years, Charlene Bearhead has worked as a teacher, principle, education director and superintendent at both on and off reserve schools in Manitoba and Alberta (Apollonio, 2015). In regards to the issue of concerned parents and school staff, she states that "it's not usually the children that have a problem with the truth, it's the adults" (Apollonio, 2015, 05:50). In her experience, it is the 5-year-old children who "help us stay grounded in how horrific this history really was" (Apollonio, 2015, 06:30). Bearhead further stresses that there are numerous resources regarding residential schools that have been written at an age appropriate level, even for Kindergarten students, such as "Shin-chi's Canoe", written by Nicola Campbell who is a First Nations author (Apollonio, 2015). It is important to begin to teach children small bits of information at a time, Bearhead argues, even at age 5 in Kindergarten. Of course, the goal is not to frighten young children with details about sexual and physical abuse, but age-appropriate information needs to be

incorporated into curriculum early on so as to promote meaningful, cumulative understanding rather than one-time overviews (Apollonio, 2015). Echoing Bearhead's points about the importance of integrating information about residential schools throughout the Canadian curriculum, the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada have been called upon to "maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues" (TRC, 2015b, p. 7).

Transforming the Canadian history curriculum is an essential component of meaningful reconciliation (TRC, 2015b). Reconciliation is described by the TRC (2015a) mandate as an "ongoing individual and collective process, and will require commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada" (p. 16). Along with incorporating knowledge on residential schools, Battiste (2002) argues that "educators must be made aware of the existing interpretative monopoly of Eurocentric education and learn how the fundamental political processes of Canada have been laced with racism" (Battiste, 2002, p. 9-10). It is critical for all children in Canada to be taught accurate information regarding Canada's history, because as Charlene Bearhead states, "they [the children] will be the decision makers in the future" (Apolloni, 2015, 08:46).

Prior to the recent appeals from the TRC to change the content of the national Canadian history curriculum, the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum had undergone recent changes in the way in which the content is being taught. This past school year, September 2014 to June 2015, has been the first year that schools in Ontario have implemented a new "Inquiry" based learning format for the Grade 7 history curriculum. I

will explore this new pedagogical model, looking at the purpose for the change and how this connects with the socialization of ignorance.

Ontario History Curriculum and Inquiry-Based Pedagogy

The Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) altered the Grade 7 history curriculum to encompass an inquiry-based process of learning, which began implementation in September 2014. Thus far in this thesis, I have critically analyzed the *content* of the updated curriculum. I now turn my attention to the ways in which this content is being taught, through an inquiry-based process of learning. This inquiry model has also been incorporated in different capacities for all social science curriculum from Grades 1-6 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The purpose of the “use of the social studies inquiry process” is to encourage students to “investigate some global issues of political, social, economic, and/or environmental importance, their impact on the global community, and responses to the issues” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 16). The inquiry process is based on a model that consists of the following learning components: formulating questions: gathering, organizing, interpreting, analyzing and evaluating information/evidence/data, and, communicating findings (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) argues that “by applying the inquiry process, students develop skills that they need in order to think critically, solve problems, make informed judgments, and communicate ideas” (p. 7). Consequently, in this section I will explore this new pedagogical model in relation to my study’s key themes of ignorance, denial, racialized sexism, land and resource exploitation and ongoing colonialism.

The Ontario Ministry of Education (2013) proposes that by using an inquiry-based process, “students are engaged in aspects of communication...as they ask questions, organize and analyze information, and critically evaluate their findings” (p. 23). In association with the inquiry model, the expectations in both Grade 7 and Grade 8 history curricula are designed with the “Concepts of Historical Thinking” as its foundation (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 130). The four concepts of historical thinking are: Historical Significance, Cause and Consequence, Continuity and Change, and Historical Perspective (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). These foundational concepts support the content provided in the existing curriculum, from which I drew my data. The four concepts introduce Grade 7 students to the “Historical Inquiry Process” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The Historical Inquiry Process guides “students in their investigations of events, developments, issues, and ideas” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 132). In other words, rather than the curriculum operating in a concrete question and answer format, directly relating to a history textbook, the curriculum is now formatted to encourage students to take initiative and inquire about a range of possible different content and answers to supplement the curriculum content. The Ontario curriculum suggests that students are to engage in historical inquiry by formulating questions, gathering and organizing information from primary and secondary sources, interpreting and analyzing information and biases, and evaluating and drawing conclusions (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). The purpose is for students to “begin to apply the concepts of historical thinking to their study of Canadian history, leading to deeper and more meaningful explorations of life in colonial Canada” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 132-133).

The goal of encouraging students to explore colonial and Canadian history in deeper ways appears to be a step in the right direction in reducing the perpetuation of discursive ignorance across generations. However, when I analyzed the curriculum in depth, the process and expectations of an inquiry-based process still appear restrictive and linear.

This is a randomly selected example of a learning expectation in the expectation for the Grade 7 Ontario history curriculum:

Analyse some of the main challenges facing individuals and/or groups in Canada between 1713 and 1800 and ways in which people responded to those challenges, and assess similarities and differences between some of these challenges and responses and those of present-day Canadians. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 138)

This learning expectation reflects the historical inquiry processes of “continuity and change” and “historical perspective” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 138). This learning expectation is constructed around a broad time frame of nearly a century, and it includes abstract language such as “main challenges”. The activity does not differentiate between the specific histories and experiences of distinct communities and the scope and types of challenges they may have faced. Consequently, while students are invited to pursue their own questions within a broad topic area, the opportunity to teach specific information about Indigenous peoples and colonial history is lost.

Because each learning expectation in the curriculum is broad, there are example topics provided for each learning expectation for teachers to choose from when instructing students. Here are the examples provided for the previously stated learning expectation:

(e.g. with references to conflict arising from imperial rivalries; climatic and environmental challenges; competition for land and resources between First Nations and colonists; the hard physical labour and isolation associated with life in new settlements; disease; discrimination facing Black Loyalists; restrictions on rights and freedoms of slaves, seigneurial tenants, or indentured workers).

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 138)

Despite the examples being more specific, it is still unclear how students are to inquire about the listed topics. Curricular expectations do not appear in a format that would promote critical thinking, rather than simply inquiry exploration. For instance, teachers are not provided additional resources that might bring critical issues to light, such as helping students to understand what slavery and the early reserve system entailed. In other words, unless students are directed to locate more accurate content related to Indigenous peoples and colonial policies, they may never understand the scope and impact of these policies. In addition, the language seems to minimize what are, in actuality, well documented historical facts, such as the treatment of slaves in Canada and the forced removal of Indigenous peoples from their homelands that goes well beyond the more benign description of “competition for land and resources”.

Along with the examples provided for each learning expectation, there are also sample questions. These are the sample questions for this particular learning expectation:

What were some of the environmental challenges facing people in early Canada?

What similarities do you see between these challenges and current environmental challenges facing Canadians? In what ways are the lives of elderly people different now than they were in the past? What are the main reasons for the

differences? What sort of care was available for sick people in eighteenth-century Canada? Why were traditional First Nations remedies so important? What were the limitations of these remedies? (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 138)

The other expectations outlined in the curriculum are similar to the example above in their use of generalized, abstract language. Distinct historical issues and diverse ethno-cultural communities are lumped together. For instance, there is no explicit acknowledgement of how colonial policies such as slavery and the Indian Act contributed to the deeply unequal treatment of Black and First Nations elderly and the sick, or of how discriminatory immigration policies excluded Asian immigration to Canada. Yet, these significant historical currents have deeply shaped who “Canadians” have been throughout history. It is also unclear how students are to think critically about these sample questions. Despite the incorporation of an inquiry process of learning, the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum “perpetuate[s] a biased construction of the strength of colonialism posing as globalism, Eurocentric institutions, economic survival of the nation, cultural institutions, and reasoned democracy” together with “the idea that Indigenous peoples are primitive, uneducated, justly conquered people who would have been assimilated long ago but for their cultured backwardness” (Battiste, 2013, p. 32). Such curricular discourses perpetuate “a cultural construction of knowledge built on Eurocentric origins and concrete science” (Battiste, 2002, p. 16).

Furthermore, the curriculum seems to assume that students are homogenous, as though they do not belong to ethno-cultural groups and are not able to draw on their own experiences and knowledge as part of the inquiry process. For instance, the curriculum does not acknowledge that Indigenous students in these classrooms may engage very

differently with this content and may themselves have valuable perspectives to share. There is no inclusion of local communities into the process in a meaningful way that would avoid tokenizing Indigenous content, students and educators as cultural showcases. Indigenous educators or leaders could be interviewed by students or as guest speakers to offer other kinds of content, and students could draw on the growing availability of culturally-diverse education resources. For example, online and multi-media Indigenous resources (such as the TRC report, the CBC's Eighth Fire series and APTN news) could be integrated into the inquiry process.

As it stands, the inquiry process seems to reproduce the tenets of “contemporary education” which focuses “on information to the masses, leading to standardized tests that draw out this information and those who can extract information are called educated and intelligent” (Battiste, 2002, p. 16). Creating generalized expectations was potentially purposeful to encourage students to query, thus adhering to the inquiry model. However, it is unknown which sample question(s), if any, should be answered in order for the student to successfully complete the expectation. As there are no direct learning expectation questions in the Ontario Grade 7 history curriculum regarding Indigenous peoples, Grade 7 history students in Ontario could learn about Canadian history without coming into contact with information or knowledge about Indigenous peoples and histories. As I have demonstrated, the information and resources that appear most available for teachers and students reproduce themes of colonial dominion, racism, sexism, and denial –while also writing out Indigenous peoples from the curriculum. Consequently, although the curriculum is suggesting that students are now engaging in critical thinking as they inquire about different perspectives, the curriculum content does

not appear to be facilitating this explicitly, due to the lack of accurate curriculum content. Thus, beyond pedagogical changes, it is also the content that needs change in order to support the inquiry model, just as the TRC (2015b) has called upon the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education for content changes that incorporate accurate education on Indigenous histories, cultures and contributions.

Despite significant gaps, the inquiry-based approach does offer promise. The intent of an inquiry based model process of learning is positive in theory; it aims to encourage students to think critically about historical events using different perspectives. One promising model in this regard is being implemented in British Columbia. For instance, the Ministry of Education in British Columbia has recently committed to the kinds of changes called for by the TRC (Meissner, 2015). As of 2016, students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in BC will be learning about Indigenous histories and cultures (Meissner, 2015). Students in BC will also be learning about “discrimination, inequality, oppression and the impacts of colonialism” (Meissner, 2015, para 5). BC Education Minister Peter Fassbender stated that “through the revised curriculum, we will be promoting greater understanding, empathy and respect for aboriginal history and culture among students and their families” (Meissner, 2015, para 15). While certainly these changes are not comprehensive, the curriculum and pedagogical changes that are beginning to take place in British Columbia could serve as a model for Ontario. In the following section, I explore how such a model could potentially be enriched with more accurate, appropriate and inclusive pedagogical approaches. These alternatives might challenge the perpetuation of colonial worldviews by proposing an anti-racist critical pedagogical method of teaching Canadian history.

Thinking Critically about Education

The practice of inquiry, or obtaining a critical perspective, promotes an intellectual work ethic; an open-ended, flexible learning approach can help nurture open, fair and independent minded individuals (Case & Wright, 1997). Critical thinking is often defined as being ‘active’ rather than ‘passive’ (Shaw, 2014). Education philosopher Richard Paul and education professor Michael Scriven define critical thinking as “the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action” (Shaw, 2014, p. 66). As inquiry-based pedagogies gain more traction in the Ontario curriculum, there is less of an emphasis on the notion of education programs focused on “knowledge transmission” that “defines teachers as experts and students as passive recipients of static information” (Britzman et al., 1997 as cited in Tanaka, Williams, Benoit, Duggan, Moir & Scarrow, 2007, p. 99). Consequently, if students are encouraged to think critically, there will be more consideration for narratives in history other than merely Eurocentric ones. However, the use of the label ‘inquiry’ could be misleading, because,

the mere fact that someone is analyzing an issue does not mean that they are doing it critically. In fact, the consequences of our collective failure to teach critical thinking are student analyzes that fail to detect dubious assumptions, contain many fallacious and unsupported statements, and reveal closeminded, prejudicial attitudes. (Case & Wright, 1997, p. 4)

When students are taught to absorb information at face value, the practice of viewing one perspective as the singular perspective will continue the perpetuation of racialized ignorance. Case and Wright (1997) argue that Canadian educators “should encourage students to think critically about matters that are at the very core of the curriculum” (p. 9). Students are not seen as blank slates, empty vessels to be filled; they are considered to be critical thinkers or to have other kinds of socio-cultural knowledge that might be brought into this curriculum. When there is an environment such as a classroom in a Eurocentric educational institution that values differing opinions and encourages diverse voices to be heard, “then students are more likely to come to respect other’s opinions” both inside and outside the classroom (Case & Wright, 1997, p. 9). Tanaka et al. (2007) emphasize that “as a learning community, we [should be] weaving real life into the curriculum” (p. 107). Weaving real life into the curriculum can involve, as Razack (1998) proposes, pedagogical “storytelling”, which is when the “critical educator thus takes as central the inner histories and experiences of the students themselves, seeking to foster critical reflection of everyday experience” (p. 43). As the voices of different children are listened to, not only do the students benefit by learning in a community, but the teachers learn how “particular children live those multiple positionings” (Razack, 1998, p. 43). Therefore, through the practice of critical thinking, the different perspectives of students might be appreciated and included more fully.

The practice of “critical reflection of everyday experience” could be implemented in Ontario Grade 7 history classrooms by generating discussions with students about how they and their families/friends/neighbours/communities/ancestors have either immigrated to or originated in Canada. For example, a student who may be first or second generation

Canadian could share the story of their family's immigration. An Indigenous student could share stories about their ancestors and the Nation that they belong to. A student who is White with generations of EuroWestern ancestors could share stories of when their families came to Canada. It is very probable that these conversations would generate conversations at home, thus involving families and community members in uncovering more accurate representations of Canadian history.

In accordance, by incorporating "critical reflection of everyday experience" into contemporary curriculum and pedagogy, perhaps conversations regarding societal stereotypes could be generated. For example, inquiry activities could both discuss and trouble overt and implicit stereotypes of Indigenous peoples and other groups. Conversations would involve addressing how stereotypes and biases fuel the marginalization and poor treatment of these communities in Canadian society (Allan & Smylie, 2015). As Allan and Smylie (2015) address, it is foundational to understand "the impact of historic, collective and intergenerational trauma" and how "advancing awareness of how these stereotypes are reinforced by the ongoing social exclusion and inequities faced by Indigenous communities subsequent to these traumas, including poverty, unemployment, homelessness and poor health" (p. 23).

In addition to discussing and troubling racialized stereotypes, the Canadian education system needs content on the overlooked histories of these racialized groups. Students need to be learning about the strengths and rich contributions that different groups have made to historical and contemporary Canada. For example, when incorporating content regarding the diversity of Indigenous cultures and their significant contributions to Canada (TRC, 2015b), Indigenous peoples must be directly involved in

producing this knowledge to ensure accurate and meaningful representations. Indigenous histories, cultures and spiritualities should not be taught in tokenizing or superficially celebratory ways. The full engagement of Indigenous educators and curriculum content experts is a critical step in the decolonizing of the education system.

Razack (1998) terms this “radical or critical pedagogy”, which is a pedagogy “that resists the reproduction of the status quo by uncovering relations of domination and opening up spaces for voices suppressed in traditional education” (p. 42). In critical pedagogy, as Razack (1998) asserts, “what are being sought, then, are ways to come to terms with the contradictions of everyday life, contradictions that reveal themselves in the stories of the oppressed and in which are located the seeds for critical consciousness” (p. 46). It is through this process that the racial hierarchies and differences in knowledge will be made more visible for all students. In a critical pedagogy model, “we critically examine what we share and do not share, that we work from the basis that we all have only partial knowledge, and that we come from different subject positions” (Razack, 1998, p. 47). Students in southern Ontario classrooms are incredibly diverse in terms of ethno-cultural background, languages, religion, citizenship status and cultural values. While the majority still have White, EuroWestern-backgrounds, there are growing numbers of racialized students and Indigenous students of diverse and increasingly mixed backgrounds. The student population also includes international students, refugees, and new immigrants –including some with Indigenous backgrounds. Consequently, there are differing perspectives to be heard.

There are both benefits and challenges with engaging a diverse and international student body in discussions of hundreds of years of Canadian history. Each student will

have their own perspective that could be accompanied with their own response trigger(s) to the content. For example, discussions on Indigenous genocidal attempts could trigger Indigenous students, as generations of their families and their communities have been experiencing assimilation efforts and Euro-centrism. A racialized student or a refugee who immigrated to Canada could be triggered due to having experienced similar European colonial policies or other kinds of ethnic, gender or religious violence. Racialized students could also have feelings surface regarding their own marginalization and experiences of racism during these discussions of colonialism and White privilege. Students from dominant groups (i.e. White students) will also bring their own perspectives from a privileged position, which could involve feelings of guilt, shame, anger, resistance, resentment and/or denial, as well as new understanding.

A variety of perspectives, experiences and triggers can open up fruitful and rich conversations regarding marginalization and Canada's history. As different voices are heard, students would ideally develop more nuanced understandings of the issues at hand. However, facilitating diverse student histories presents challenges for teachers who are leading the discussions. Some of these challenges are rooted in systemic and structural limitations over which students and educators have little control. For instance, increasing class sizes and chronic under-resourcing may mean that one teacher is responsible for providing additional resources, managing discussions with students who are already receiving various support services, who may have language barriers, and so on. Larger class sizes means teachers may be expected to include and honor 20-30 distinct cultural histories and perspectives, and potentially, different triggers on loaded issues such as racism, immigration, Indigenous sovereignty and Canadian culture. This would be a

challenge for teachers to support each perspective in order to promote cultural safety. In addition to negative stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, teachers and students in diverse southern Ontario classrooms may also be dealing with other forms of racism and discrimination such as Islamophobia, the dislike of individuals who are Muslim and/or Islamic; and xenophobia, the dislike of individuals who are from other countries.

The practice of critical thinking can encourage students to think and act innovatively, respecting the opinions of their peers and linking their individual experiences –and their knowledge of history- to broader understandings of political, historical, and socio-cultural factors. As a result, critical thinking is a step in the direction of anti-racist education. In accordance, DiAngelo (2011) argues that “anti-racist efforts ultimately seek to transform institutionalized racism; [therefore,] anti-racist education may be most effective at starting at the micro level” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 66). Critical pedagogy starting at the micro level would be compulsory; it would ensure that issues of colonialism, racism and White privilege are taught to all students, including White students. This is important since “white people often believe that multicultural/anti-racist education is only necessary for those who interact with ‘minorities’ or in ‘diverse’ environments” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 66). Despite White people in Canada being socialized to both ignore and benefit from racial hierarchies, all students are immersed in the same discursive formations that maintain Whiteness as the invisible normative center (DiAngelo, 2011). For example, DiAngelo (2011) highlights how “racially coded language such as ‘urban’ ‘inner city’ and ‘disadvantaged’ are used far more often than language such as ‘white’ or ‘privileged’” (p. 55). Just as we have seen in the textbooks

and Ontario curriculum, “white people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 55).

In correlation, Whitten and Sethna (2014) state that “anti-racism examines the intersectionality of race, class, gender and sexuality, which is directly embedded in the curricula” (p. 424). Consequently, anti-racism critical pedagogy assists students to think critically about the intersectionality of racial hierarchies in Canada. Equipping students with critical language and information is urgently needed if they are to participate effectively and productively in national debates about reconciliation, Indigenous self-determination, and multiculturalism. Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that true reconciliation and anti-racism must be steeped in Indigenous self-determination and decolonization, and that decolonization is not a metaphor for multiculturalism; indeed, Indigenous sovereignty rejects token multicultural discourses of equity and diversity. As Tuck and Yang (2012) argue, “decolonization offers a different perspective to human and civil rights based approaches to justice, an unsettling one, rather than a complementary one” (p. 36). Indigenous self-determination involves drastic transformation of power relations. For Indigenous peoples, it means “the return of homeland and permanent sovereignty over natural resources”, as well as the right “to govern themselves by their own laws and exercise jurisdiction over their territories” (Corntassel & Holder, 2008, p. 471). This repatriation involves Indigenous knowledges being viewed as a lawful right, one enshrined in the Canadian education system (Battiste, 2013; Ermine, 1995; TRC, 2015b).

Likewise, valuing Indigenous languages and knowledges in education “requires the protection of the lifestyles that permit intergenerational use of the lands, traditional ecological practices, and the maintenance of cycles of interaction with species and land

forms in a traditional lifestyle” (Battiste, 2013, p. 171). As a result, not only do Indigenous knowledges and languages need to be respectfully integrated throughout curriculum, but also, of course, educational institutions require a drastic re-visioning to support more culturally-grounded education for and by Indigenous peoples. Battiste (2013) asserts that this might involve strategies like having supportive distance education in order to “enable families to continue their traditional lifestyles” (p. 171), and including learning approaches such as “introspection, reflection, mediation, prayer, and other types of self-directed learning” (Battiste, 2002, p. 16; Ermine, 1995). Although these pedagogical strategies are present in some schools such as private and alternative schools, they have not emerged in mainstream education (Battiste, 2002; Ermine, 1995).

Also critical is the incorporating of Indigenous languages into the Canadian education system. Battiste (2013) emphasizes that “Aboriginal languages in Canada provide a direct and powerful means of understanding the legacy of Aboriginal knowledges and provide deep and lasting cognitive bonds, which affect all aspects of Aboriginal life” (p. 33). The survival of Indigenous languages permits Indigenous peoples to communicate shared beliefs “of how the world works and what constitutes proper action” creating a “collective cognitive experience” (Battiste, 2013, p. 33). Battiste (2013) illustrates that these “collective cognitive experiences” deeply connect the physical, social and spiritual relationships that are foundational to Indigenous knowledges. Diverse knowledges can be taught to Canadian children and youth by “teach[ing] holistic and humanistic connections to local and collective relationships” (Battiste, 2013, p. 66). Again, the notion of critical analysis and making connections

between pedagogy, curriculum and social and political systems are valuable methods in decolonizing education, as argued by Battiste:

As teachers begin to confront new pedagogical schemes of learning, they will need to decolonize education, a process that includes raising the collective voice of Indigenous peoples, exposing the injustices in our colonial history, deconstructing the past by critically examining of the social, political, economic and emotional reasons for silencing of Aboriginal voices in Canadian history, legitimating the voices and experiences of Aboriginal people in the curriculum, recognizing it as a dynamic context of knowledge and knowing, and communicating the emotional journey that such explorations will generate. (2002, p. 20)

As a growing number of educators argue, the decolonization of education is contingent upon Indigenous peoples having self-determination and thus, access to their lands, their own children, their own self-politics, cultures, epistemologies, languages and so forth (Ermine, 1995; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Therefore, in incorporating these pedagogical proposals, as well as the proposals outlined by the TRC, Ontario should move far beyond merely producing curriculum that is deemed “inquiry based”, yet layered with disproportionate Euro-centrism and misinformation about Indigenous communities. To achieve this goal, Canadian curricula must be truly steeped in anti-racist decolonizing critical pedagogy and Indigenous histories, cultures and contributions.

Conclusion

Razack (1998) states that “individuals who develop critical thinking can challenge oppressive practices” (p. 43). In a provincial education system that maintains Euro-

centrism, it is “important that we critically reevaluate those institutional practices or structures within the educational settings that represent the maximum concentrations of power” (Sefa Dei, 1993, p. 47). Canadian children and youth need to be taught to think critically about the education that is presented to them, as “the goal [should be] to generate the development of perspectives and skills that enable all people, regardless of racial location, to be active initiators of change” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 66). However, “it is not enough to leave anti-racist education to individual teachers in their respective classrooms” (Sefa Dei, 1993, p.47); substantial changes at the federal, provincial and territorial curricular level also need to be in place (TRC, 2015b).

Along with incorporating critical pedagogies in classrooms, children must hear the voices of the individuals who are the experts in Indigenous knowledge. Godlewska et al. (2010) emphasize that “many Aboriginal People are desperately trying to communicate with Canadians” (p. 437). Ontario curriculum writers need to connect and communicate with teachers and leaders from the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Wyandot Nations -among other Indigenous communities- when constructing provincial curriculum. As Battiste (2002) argues, “Canadian educational institutions should view elders, knowledge keepers, and workers who are competent in Aboriginal languages and knowledge as living educational treasures” (p. 22). However, it is important to note that Indigenous leaders and educators should not bear the weight of educating all Canadian children and youth. Rather, this has to be part of comprehensive, integrated educational reforms. Such reforms require deep ideological shifts, equitable funding, and meaningful partnerships between Indigenous nations and federal, provincial and territorial governments.

It is clear that racialized ignorance in the Ontario curriculum has been perpetuated across generations, as little has changed since I was a student. As Allan and Smylie (2015) powerfully state, “it is time for stories to change: change in how we imagine, develop, implement and evaluate ... services and education, change in how we talk about racism and history in this country” (p. 44). Educational institutions are principal sites for the socialization of future generations in Canada; consequently, changes in our collective narratives of Canada need to begin here.

Epilogue

(Hayley Clausing, 2013 March 4).

“We stand on guard for thee”
 Implies Canadians are to protect the country.
 But what is truly being protected?
 The truth.

The children are protected from the truth
 Other nations are protected from the truth
 The individuals who call themselves Canadian are protected from the truth
 Who knows the truth about Canada?
 It’s out of sight, out of mind
 We stand on guard for thee
 Who do you stand up for?

I’m not demanding perfection, but it all starts with the person in your reflection.

Turn the out of mind and out of sight
 Into in your thoughts and always present
 Now stop right now. And think.
 Think about yourself.
 Think about your sense of being, sense of self, sense of identity.
 How would you feel if someone came into your thoughts and took them right now?
 How would you feel if someone told you that you could never speak your language?
 How would you feel if someone stole your house?
 How would you feel if someone took your family away and you never see them again?
 How would you feel if your neighbours didn’t know you existed?
 How would you feel if someone told you that your home and your neighbours would rather keep you out of sight than give you rights and call you a person?

I’m not demanding perfection, but it can start with the person in your reflection.

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