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MOTHERS OF THE NATION
MANITOBA WOMEN AND MATERNAL NATIONALISM

by

Shauna Wilton, B.A. (Hons.)

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts in Political Science

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

July 6, 1998

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acceptance of the thesis,

**MOTHERS OF THE NATION:
MANITOBA WOMEN AND MATERNAL NATIONALISM**

submitted by

Shauna Wilton, B.A. Hons.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

Chair, Department of Political Science

Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
August 13, 1998

ABSTRACT

Existing theories of nationalism are unable to explain nationalisms in settler societies and the participation of women in them. This thesis contributes to the study of nationalism through the creation of a new ideal type of nationalism, which I call maternal nationalism. Maternal nationalism resulted from the combination of maternal feminism and British-Canadian colonial nationalism. Maternal nationalists actively participated in colonial nationalism, not merely as symbols or reproducers, but as agents of socialization and creators of the symbols of the British-Canadian nation. They used the symbolic role ascribed to them as "mothers of the nation" to create space for themselves in the public sphere where they could put their maternal qualities to better use building the Canadian nation. In doing so, they were also able to advance the interests of British women. This thesis explores the concept of maternal nationalism through a study of the participation of the Manitoba branches of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) in British-Canadian colonial nationalism between 1900 and 1920.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RISE OF MATERNAL NATIONALISM

If we are not to be confronted with a disintegrated state then the stranger within our gates must be taught our ideals, traditions and institutions until he experiences within himself that spiritual consciousness which is our soul life and feels no longer an alien but a patriot, ready to die, if need be, to maintain that life against the world.¹

There are two subjects which continue to mystify political science: nationalism and women. In this thesis, I explore both through a study of women's participation in British-Canadian² colonial nationalism. I argue that the first wave of the British-Canadian women's movement and the ideas behind British-Canadian colonial nationalism were inextricably linked, resulting in a unique combination of feminism and nationalism I call *maternal nationalism*. Maternal nationalism empowered British-Canadian women to enter the public sphere and advance their interests while working to build a better British Canada through their work in the areas of immigration and education. Maternal nationalists took advantage of a perceived threat to the British nature of Canada and the resulting belief in the need to empower British Canadians, including women, to offset the growing numbers of non-British in Canada, to advance the interests of British

¹ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 33, File 18. Mrs. George H. Smith, *Empire Building: A Review of the Educational Work of the National Chapter of Canada, IODE* (c. 1918).

² The term "British-Canadian" refers to people of British descent who settled in Canada. "English-Canadian," on the other hand, is often used to refer to all English speaking people in Canada, many of whom are not of British ancestry.

Canadian women. In this thesis, I explore the concept of maternal nationalism in Canada through an investigation of traditional, male-centred theories of nationalism and feminist theories of nationalism. I then explore the manifestation of maternal nationalism in Manitoba between 1900 and 1920, focusing on the work of the Manitoba Branch of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and the Winnipeg Branch of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC). Manitoba is an ideal place to study maternal nationalism in Canada. As I discuss later in the chapter, it contained similar ethnic divisions as Canada and, as the frontier and the destination of large numbers of immigrants, it was seen as very susceptible to the threats ethnic diversity posed to British dominance.

In this chapter, I establish the context and relevance of my project through four main points. I begin by stating my thesis and exploring the contribution it makes to political science and to the study of women and nationalism. Second, I explore the Canadian context out of which both colonial nationalism and maternal feminism arose. Third, I introduce the Manitoba case study and explain its relevance to Canadian politics. Finally, I explain my methodology and introduce the following chapters.

Statement of the Problem

Nationalisms are playing an increasingly important role in the world today, partly as an opposing force to globalization. For the purposes of this thesis, I define nationalism as a movement which is based on a shared identity, the

assumption of a common past and/or future, and a sense of community or belonging, and which seeks increased political autonomy or power. Often this identity takes the form of a united national or ethnic group and involves a challenge to existing symbolic and political borders. It may be state-seeking, as with many European-nationalisms, or it may be seeking greater autonomy within the state, as in the case of Indigenous nationalisms. It may seek to overthrow colonial state structures, as with anti-colonial nationalisms, or, as was the case with colonial nationalisms, it may seek greater autonomy and, simultaneously, stronger relations with the imperial power.

European discourse dominates discussions of nationalism, placing Europe at the centre and making European experience the norm. Post- or anti-colonial theories of nationalism have begun to challenge the hegemony of the European discourse. Benedict Anderson, for example, has argued that nationalism did not originate in Europe, but in the American colonies which rebelled against their European homelands.³ These theories, however, are unable to explain the rise of colonial nationalism in some settler societies, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which did not rebel against the imperial power. Moreover, most theories of nationalism have ignored the active participation of women in nationalist projects. They have focused on the actions of men and deemed politics and nationalism part of the public sphere, theoretically separating them

³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd Edition (1991) 47-65. These theories are discussed in further detail in Chapter Two.

from women. Women appear, in discussions of nationalism, infrequently, as mothers or as symbols of the nation. Even most feminists considering nationalisms have only focused on women as biological reproducers and symbols, ignoring the active roles women have played in the creation and reproduction of some nations.

Maternal nationalists in Canada at the turn of the century, however, were anything but passive reproducers and symbols. Meeting in church basements, sitting rooms and halls, the members of the IODE and NCWC developed strategies to "Canadianize" new immigrants and created symbols and materials to prepare the nation's children for the duties that accompany citizenship in Canada and the British Empire. At public lectures, in magazines and newspapers, maternal nationalists promoted a vision of Canada that aimed to preserve the dominance of British culture, symbols and citizens in Canada. Current theories of nationalism, however, cannot account for the active role of women in British-Canadian nationalism.

In this thesis, I demonstrate that British-Canadian maternal nationalism is the product of a combination of the push for social reform, coming from both the social gospel movement and women's movements of the early twentieth century, and colonial nationalism, a by-product of Canada's status as a British settler society.⁴ The goal of the first wave of the British-Canadian women's movement was "the broadening of women's influence beyond the home - at least to those

⁴ See John Eddy and Deryck Schreuder, *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), for a discussion of colonial nationalism.

areas which could be viewed as maternally related.”⁵ It was based on maternal feminism⁶ which argued that the same skills women used to manage a home and raise children could be used to manage a community or nation and raise its future citizens. At the same time as the reform movement and the first wave of the women’s movement were growing in strength, British-Canadian colonial nationalism was also emerging as British-Canadians began to assert their identity and the interests of British Canada within the British Empire. Unlike the American colonies studied by Anderson, which rebelled against their European counterparts, colonial nationalists worked to advance Canada within the framework of the British Empire. They strongly believed that they could take the best of Britain and transplant it in Canada.⁷ The British Empire and Canada were inseparable in the minds of colonial nationalists; what was good for one was ultimately good for the other, and their nationalism sought to bridge the differences between their two “homes”.

⁵ Nancy Sheehan, “Women’s Organizations and Educational Issues, 1900-1930,” *Canadian Women’s Studies* 7:3 (Fall 1986) 90.

⁶For a discussion of maternal feminism see Kealey (1979), and Roberts (1979). This is discussed later in the chapter in more detail, see pages 20-25.

⁷ Carl Berger in *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) discusses the movement for Imperial Federation in Canada in the late 1800’s. This movement aimed for the “closer union of the British Empire through economic and military cooperation and through political changes which could give the dominions influence over imperial policy” (3). This movement is one stage of colonial nationalism in that it saw Canada’s interests and future as tied to the British Empire’s and desired to see Canada’s interests advanced within the framework of the Empire.

British-Canadian women actively took part in colonial nationalism and the ideology of maternal feminism shaped the form their participation took. Building on their “natural” role as mothers, they used the recent increases in the education level of women, and their large scale entrance into the new women’s professions of teaching, nursing, missionary, and social work, to gain credibility and influence in the public sphere. Once there, they used their influence to promote a “better” British Canada and to ensure that all children and non-British immigrants were educated in the values, traditions and responsibilities of British citizenship.⁸ As part of this process, they actively created and transmitted symbols of British-Canadian nationalism. Maternal nationalists used maternalism to justify their role in British-Canadian nationalism and used the nationalism to advance the interests of British-Canadian women, creating a unique form of nationalism which I call *maternal nationalism*.

Contribution of this Project

This thesis contributes to political science in a number of ways. The study of nations, nationalisms, the state and citizenship is at the root of modern political science. In this thesis, I explore an important but often neglected aspect of nation-building; an aspect which can help illuminate the current competition among nationalisms central to Canadian politics. I argue that British-Canadian

⁸ This thesis focuses on British-Canadian women and British-Canadian colonial nationalism. While I recognize the importance of looking at Aboriginal women, French-Canadian women, immigrant women, and their relationship with Canadian nationalisms, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to do so.

women actively assisted the efforts of British-Canadian men to exclude French-Canadians, Aborigines, and immigrants from the nation-building process and from full citizenship. In doing so, I address the omissions of many political scientists when studying this phenomenon; namely, the importance of gender, race, and place in the construction of British-Canada. As I demonstrate, issues of race were integral to the process of nation-building in Canada as British-Canadians sought to protect their interests and dominance in the Dominion; a process which included the dispossession of its original inhabitants, and continuing efforts to limit the autonomy of French Canadians. The importance of bolstering the numbers of British in the colonies led male elites to accommodate the demands of British-Canadian women in order to gain their support. British-Canadian women understood the importance of "Britishness" in Canada and used the power their national identity gave them to advance the issues of "women" along with the issues of the nation. In doing so, they played an influential part in the creation and dissemination of national symbols, a role often overlooked in the study of the politics of Canadian nationalisms. Central to issues of race and gender in the study of British-Canadian nationalism is the issue of place or location; both geographic location, including Canada's place within the Empire and its proximity to the United States, but also the position of people within social space, including the division between the public and private spheres of society, and hierarchies of race, class, and gender. This study will also address the interconnectedness of issues of race, gender and place in the study of colonial nationalism. By exploring the interaction of these identities in colonial nationalism

I am exploring the roots of Canada's national identity and, therefore, our national identity crisis.

My thesis challenges the hegemony of "English-Canadian" nationalism, revealing the British ethnicity, culture and political institutions at its roots. Most political scientists in Canada have focused on Quebec nationalism, ignoring the presence of other, competing nationalisms and identities. When people speak of nationalism in Canada they are generally referring to Quebec nationalism or, perhaps more recently, aboriginal nationalism. British-Canadian nationalism, which has achieved hegemonic or civic status over the past century,⁹ is generally not considered. Philip Resnick is one of the few Canadian political scientists who have studied English-Canadian nationalism. In *The Land of Cain* (1977), he argues that English-Canadian nationalism does exist, pointing to its attempts to remain distinct from the United States, although it is different from the standard example of a colony striving for liberation.¹⁰ He does not, however, clearly distinguish between English-Canadian nationalism and pan-Canadian nationalism. In *The Masks of Proteus* (1990), he argues that whereas in Quebec

⁹ Micheline de Sève, in her presentation of "Nationalism, Feminism and Anti-Racism: Stressful Calls to Re-Ground Canada" presented at the McDougall Symposium: *New Voices in the Study of Nationalism* (Ottawa: Carleton, 1997) argues that civic nationalisms (generally identified with the values of the state) are in fact ethnic nationalisms which have gained hegemony in a state. She asserts that labeling a nationalism "civic" ignores the ethnic origins of its institutions, values and culture. This is a very important point when considering Canada, where "British-Canadian" nationalism has become "Canadian" nationalism, the hegemonic status of the values erasing their ethnic roots.

¹⁰ Philip Resnick, *The Land of Cain* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1977) 13-19.

the sense of nationhood preceded Confederation, in English-Canada the sense of nationhood developed out of the state.¹¹ This reinforces the myth that In Canada "English" is a language, not an ethnic group. My thesis challenges this assumption by revealing the British ethnic roots at the basis of "English-Canadian" identity and nationalism.

Not only does my thesis challenge traditional understandings of Canadian nationalism; through my concept, *maternal nationalism*, I have created a new ideal type to assist the study of nationalism and women. This concept represents the first step towards creating a new typology of nationalisms. This new typology would incorporate context, location, gender, class and race into its understanding of nationalisms; viewing them as part of a larger, interconnected system of power relations.¹²

The Rise of Colonial Nationalism in Canada

Between 1880 and 1920, Canada built a nation. For most, that nation was to be British in outlook as well as in character. The highest level of citizenship was based on love and loyalty to Canada

¹¹ Philip Resnick, *The Masks of Proteus: Canadian Reflections on the State* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's U. P., 1990) 207.

¹² This thesis is part of a larger project and, in many cases, the ideas and subject matter introduced here cannot be explored fully. For my Ph.D. dissertation I plan to expand upon this research and, through an exploration of both other situations in which maternal nationalism may exist and the changing nature of women's participation in English-Canadian nationalism, tie up many of the loose ends which exist here.

and to the British Empire; the two were inseparable.¹³

In Canada, at the turn of the century, existing conflicts between European fragments¹⁴ for dominance, and aboriginals, were exacerbated by rapid and diverse immigration. These conflicts led to the development of colonial nationalism in British Canada. British-Canadian colonial nationalism promoted ties between Canada and Britain while advancing the distinct interests of British-Canadians. Colonial nationalisms are nationalisms which exist in some of the British settler societies and which reflect the ties of the dominant group of settlers (in Canada's case the British) to both the imperial power and to the new territory.¹⁵

Settler societies are distinguished from European states and other colonies by Daiva Stasiulus and Nira Yuval-Davis who define settler societies as ones in which "Europeans have settled, where their descendants have remained politically dominant over indigenous peoples, and where a heterogenous society

¹³ Barbara Roberts, "'A Work of Empire': Canadian Reformers and British Female Immigration," *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s*, ed. Linda Kealey (Toronto: Women's Press, 1979) 186.

¹⁴ Hartz explains Canadian political culture as a product of the European fragments that settled here, in particular the French and British fragments. The concept of fragments is useful here because it accurately reflects the ties of British and french Canadians to Europe and their desire to see the culture and traditions of their group instilled in the Canadian culture. It also differentiates these two groups from immigrant groups that immigrated to Canada later. (Bell 1992, 16-20)

¹⁵ See Eddy and Schreuder, 1988.

has developed in class, ethnic and racial terms.”¹⁶ Anderson argues that in some of the settler societies, for example the United States and Brazil, nationalism developed among the creole class who rebelled against the European metropole nations.¹⁷ These nationalisms developed earlier and are distinct from both European and anti-colonial nationalisms in that they were led by a class of people “who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought.”¹⁸ Colonial nationalisms emerged in the British settler societies of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, all of which were settled during a much later period of colonial expansion and which took on the role of children in relation to Britain. Colonial nationalisms differed from the creole nationalisms which revolted in an effort to achieve independence from the Imperial power; however, they also differed from nationalisms in colonies of conquest, such as India, where the nationalism was generally anti- or post-colonial and aimed to sever ties with the Empire. They are distinct from other forms of nationalisms because they were a product of the British settlers who embraced the empire and aimed to foster a stronger relationship with Britain.¹⁹

¹⁶ Daiva Stasiulus and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Unsettling Settler Societies* (London: Sage, 1995) 3.

¹⁷ Anderson, 47-50.

¹⁸ Anderson, 47.

¹⁹ For a discussion of colonial nationalisms see Eddy and Schreuder (1988). See Anderson (1991) for a discussion of creole nationalisms and Chatterjee (1993) for anti-colonial nationalisms. For a broader discussion of nationalisms in settler societies, see Stasiulus and Yuval-Davis (1995).

Colonial nationalisms in Canada arose out of the struggle for domination between the British and French European fragments and Indigenous peoples. For British settlers the presence of the French colony was a continual threat to the dominance of British values and institutions in Canada. By the late-nineteenth century relations between French and British Canadians were very strained. Three major events which exacerbated the tensions between the British and French fragments were the Rebellions of 1837, Lord Durham's *Report*, and the Red River Rebellions and hanging of Louis Riel.²⁰ In 1837, Louis-Joseph Papineau led French-Canadians in an armed rebellion against British rule. In response to this, Britain appointed Lord Durham, Governor-General of all British-America, to determine the cause of the "insurrections" and prescribe solutions to ensure that it would not happen again. In his *Report* (1839), Durham recommended that Upper and Lower Canada be united under a single government with a limited franchise and "responsible" government. He believed that the numbers of British would grow through immigration giving them a majority which could be used as part of a general policy to assimilate French-Canadians and obliterate their culture.²¹ Ironically, French-Canadians used their initial majority to further protect their language and institutions, deepening the divide

²⁰ The history presented in the following section is necessarily brief and does not do justice to the events discussed. The purpose of this section, however, is not to explore these events, but to provide a general context for the rise of colonial nationalism.

²¹ Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers) 40-1.

between British and French Canada.²² The feeling of marginality that French-Canadians experienced in response to the *Durham Report*, was reasserted by the hanging of Louis Riel in 1885 for treason which they "tended to see as an expression of English-Canadian hatred for all French-speaking Catholics."²³ The inability of British-Canadians to dominate Canadian politics and culture completely led to a feeling of insecurity which increased as immigration to Canada diversified.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, extremely high levels of immigration to Canada contributed to British-Canadian nationalism as colonial British-Canadians strove to protect the predominance of their identity within the new country. Between 1901 and 1911 over 1.5 million people immigrated to Canada. This represented a huge leap in immigration from only 250 thousand immigrants between 1891 and 1901. Immigration continued at extremely high levels for the next ten years with another 1.4 million people immigrating between 1911 and 1921.²⁴ In the first twenty years of the twentieth century, Canada's population had increased by 3.4 million people. Not only had Canada's population and immigration increased dramatically, however, it had also become much more diverse. Freda Hawkins (1991) shows that while close to one million

²² Kenneth McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity* (Toronto: Oxford U. P., 1997) 5-9.

²³ McRoberts, 18.

²⁴ Statistics Canada, "Population and Growth Components," www.statcan.ca/english/pgdb/people/population/demo03.htm

were from Britain and over three-quarters of a million from the United States of America, more than half a million originated in continental Europe, primarily from Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Russia and the Ukraine, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Poland, including a large Jewish contingent.²⁵ This marked a new stage in the diversification of the Canadian population. Of these two and a half million immigrants, more than one million arrived in the Canadian Prairies and British Columbia between 1901 and 1911. By 1918, 58% of Manitobans were of British heritage; the remaining 42%, however, were comprised of 38 different nationalities.²⁶

Although many contemporary texts describe this period of immigration as forming the basis for Canada's policy of multiculturalism, in fact the British-Canadian majority response was one of assimilation. Howard Palmer describes this policy as Anglo-Conformism, which he describes as demanding that immigrants renounce their ancestral culture and traditions and adopt the behavior and values of British Canadians.²⁷ He states that "it was the obligation of the new arrivals to conform to the [British] institutions of Canadian society which were

²⁵ These statistics are provided by Freda Hawkins in *Critical Years in Immigration: Canada and Australia Compared*, 2nd Edition. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill and Queen's U. P., 1991) 3-4.

²⁶ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P4333, No. 4, *Bulletin* (November 1918) 30.

²⁷ Howard Palmer, "Reluctant Hosts: Anglo-Canadian Views of Multiculturalism in the Twentieth Century," *Readings in Canadian History: Post-Confederation*, ed. D. Francis and D. Smith, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1990) 192-3.

already fixed.”²⁸ British-Canadians, concerned that the new immigrant population would pose a further threat to British-Canadian hegemony, determined to adopt a policy of Anglo-conformism in order to assimilate the “New Canadian” into British culture, thereby increasing the numbers and strength of British Canada. This was particularly important considering the delicate balance between the French and British in Canada and in Manitoba.

Many theorists attribute Canada’s policy of Anglo-conformism to strong ties between the colony and the British Empire; the economic, social and political predominance of the British ethnic group in Canada; and the use of British symbols, institutions, and values in nation-building.²⁹ It was also founded, however, on a strong belief in the racial superiority of northern peoples and on social Darwinism.

Many American and English-Canadian intellectuals thought that North America’s greatness was ensured so long as its Anglo-Saxon character was preserved. Writers emphasized an Anglo-Saxon tradition of political freedom and self-government and the ‘white man’s’ mission to spread Anglo-Saxon blessings.³⁰

British Canadians saw the waves of increasingly diverse immigration, following the threats from the French and Métis, as a challenge to the privileged position of

²⁸ Howard Palmer, “Mosaic Versus Melting Pot?: Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada and the United States,” *A Passion for Identity*, ed. D. Taras, B. Rasporich, and E. Mandel, 2nd ed. (Scarborough, ON: Nelson Canada, 1993) 165.

²⁹ See Palmer “Mosaic Versus Melting Pot?” and David Bell, *The Roots of Disunity: A Study of Canadian Political Culture*, revised ed. (Toronto: Oxford U. P., 1992) 71-80.

³⁰ Palmer, “Mosaic Versus Melting Pot?” 165.

their ethnic group and its values, institutions and traditions in Canada. They viewed Britain and its Empire as the epitome of civilization and culture, believing that no other culture offered the same benefits to its citizens. This belief was grounded in myths of the racial, cultural and moral superiority of the British. These myths were initially used to justify the appropriation of aboriginal land, the process of colonization, and later the assimilation of immigrants. They were based on assumptions about the racial superiority of Britain, the inferiority of Aboriginal people and culture, and the white man's burden.

Why Manitoba?

While it may seem strange to choose a sub-state case study within which to explore nationalism, Canada has never had a nationalism which transcended all of its internal borders. Manitoba is an excellent site to explore British-Canadian colonial nationalism because, at the beginning of the twentieth century, it reflected the traditional conflicts and diversity of Canada as a whole. By studying Manitoba, its ethnic conflicts, gender politics, nationalisms, and solutions we can better understand the dynamic of competition among nationalisms in Canada. As well, by choosing a smaller case study (a province as opposed to a country) I was able to explore in greater detail the relationships among groups and identities.

The divisions that existed between the British-Canadian settlers, the French-speaking settlers (mostly Métis), and other aboriginal groups in Manitoba

epitomized the divisions that existed in Canada. When Manitoba was created in 1870, French and English Canadians resided there in almost equal numbers³¹ leading to the *Manitoba Act of 1870* entrenching French language rights. By the late nineteenth century, however, British-Canadians, threatened by the Métis Rebellions led by Louis Riel in 1869 and 1884, struggled to assert their dominance both politically and culturally in Manitoba. The actions and experiences of the Métis had reverberated across the country stirring strong, although opposing, feelings in Ontario and in Quebec where French-Canadians clearly identified with the Métis cause.³² The huge waves of diverse immigration to Manitoba at the turn of the century further threatened the tenuous dominance of British-Canadians in Manitoba and created the environment for British-Canadian maternal nationalism to assert itself.

The use of French in Manitoba Schools is an excellent example of the changing attitude in Manitoba towards the French-speaking community. In the *Manitoba Act of 1870* official status was granted to French and English and to denominational schools. In 1890, fear of political Catholicism and the feeling that because of its heterogeneous population a uniform nationality should be developed through the schools, led the provincial government to abolish the dual school

³¹ McRoberts, 15.

³² McRoberts, 18. People in Quebec saw it as a French-Canadian cause, not an aboriginal cause.

system along with the official use of French.³³ The *School Act of 1916* was the culmination of this policy, creating a secular, English school system in Manitoba.

At the turn of the century, Manitoba, and the Canadian West generally, were viewed by British-Canadians as an agrarian paradise where British values and traditions could be transplanted, free from the problems of England.³⁴ This vision was threatened by the presence of large, fractious Aboriginal, French, and later non-Anglo-Saxon immigrant communities. Canadian immigration policy at the turn of the century was driven by the desire to settle the West. Federal Liberal Minister Clifford Sifton wanted to "settle the West with farmers, experienced farmers from the American Middle West and Britain (if available), peasant farmers from Europe, or simply people who had been born on the land, preferably in northern regions, and who were accustomed to a pioneering life."³⁵ The aim of this policy was to encourage a specific type of immigrant to Canada - one who would complement the large number of British-Canadian people from Ontario moving there and that would be able to be quickly assimilated into their culture. This policy of Anglo-conformism was felt to be necessary in order for British-Canadians to increase their numbers and strengthen their position, especially against the threat of the French-Canadians. In this sense, English-

³³ W. L. Morton, "Manitoba Schools and Canadian Nationality, 1890-1923," *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*, ed. D. Jones, N. Sheehan and R. Stamp (Calgary: Detselig, 1979) 3-5.

³⁴ Barbara Roberts, 199.

³⁵ Hawkins, 5.

Canada would be the creation of a policy of Anglo-conformism.

The city of Winnipeg has been described as the “storm centre” of the problem of immigration and assimilation for Canada.³⁶ As the gateway to the West, it provided a stopping place for many immigrants and settlers and was probably the most booming and diversified city in Canada. This led to Winnipeg becoming a centre for British-Canadian nationalist sentiment as the local elite and middle classes began to feel their dominance was threatened by the Métis, Francophones and the New Canadians. Stopping immigration was not an option for Canada, especially in the sparsely populated western provinces; nor was restricting immigration to British citizens an option. Canada’s elite needed people to immigrate and Britain alone could not fill this demand. Instead, colonial nationalists focused on assimilating the immigrants into British-Canadian culture. Manitoba women, as I will discuss in the next section, played an integral role in the process of “Canadianization,” or enforced Anglo-conformism, through their involvement in education and their efforts to promote patriotic feelings. The perceived need to promote the British-Canadian culture in the face of numerous threats meant that male elites largely welcomed the efforts and active participation of women in the nationalist project. The feeling among British-Canadian men, that British women were better than non-British men, opened doors for British-Canadian women to participate in the public sphere. British-Canadian women took advantage of this opportunity to advance the interests of

³⁶ J. W. Sparling, “Original Introduction to *Strangers Within Our Gates*, J. S. Woodsworth (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 7.

their ethnic and gender group basing their claims of the foundation of women's "special role" in society, articulated through maternal feminism.

Maternal Feminism

The nationalist sentiment expressed by middle-class, British-Canadian women at the turn of the century was very much tied to their gender role in society and to movements for social reform. Concerned about the changes occurring in Canadian society, maternal feminists saw industrialization, modernization, urbanization and increasingly diverse immigration as leading to the degradation of Canada. Maternal feminism, however, was only one strain of first-wave feminism. The competing type of feminism espoused an equal rights approach to women's issues. Carol Bacchi describes these feminists as advocating the right to equal opportunity, as opposed to equality of condition.³⁷ Most equal-rights feminists advocated the use of the state only to remove the most obvious of barriers to equality.³⁸ A few others, generally those on the left, criticized the capitalist system. Overall, equal-rights feminists believed British women had a right to vote to protect themselves and their interests. Maternal feminists, on the other hand, grounded their cause in biological arguments about

³⁷ Carol Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) 44.

³⁸ Bacchi, 44-6. Bacchi criticizes these early feminists for being self-interested and elitist. She argues that most suffragists felt they deserved the right to vote not out of a belief in democracy but as part of a system of meritocracy where those women who were intelligent, educated and owned property were entitled to vote in order to protect these interests (49-50).

the nature of women and used their reproductive capacity (whether they were mothers or not) to justify their claims to political and social rights.³⁹

In the late nineteenth century, middle-class, British-Canadian women began to mobilize in response to what they viewed as a national crisis. Newly formed women's groups joined the movement for social reform. "Women were especially welcome in reform for their 'womanly' qualities of nurturing, selflessness, and their skill in household management."⁴⁰ Reform work differed from the charitable work that women had traditionally done in that it rejected individual failure as the cause of contemporary problems and poverty and looked, instead, to institutional and social causes.⁴¹ Settler colonies offered British-origin women a unique opportunity to use their influence in the public sphere because of the lack of established public institutions to provide necessary services in their communities.⁴² Andrew argues that, whereas in Europe, the state, churches, and unions provided the foundation that became the welfare state, in Canada, women's organizations performed this duty.⁴³

³⁹ Mariana Valverde, "'When the Mother of the Race is Free': Race, reproduction and Sexuality in First Wave Feminism," *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*. Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 3.

⁴⁰ Linda Kealey, Introduction to *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880's-1920's* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1979) 6.

⁴¹ Kealey, 2.

⁴² Caroline Andrew, "Women and the Welfare State," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 17:4 (1984) 667-683.

⁴³ Ibid.

The participation of women in social reform in the public sphere was founded on their role as mothers and their belief that the nation was merely a larger home. Therefore, the same skills needed to manage a home and a family could be used to manage nations and governments. This type of feminism is generally labeled *maternal feminism*. This term reflects the dominance of a domestic ideology and "refers to the conviction that woman's special role as mother gives her the duty and the right to participate in the public sphere."⁴⁴ Maternal feminists used the privilege accorded to the womanly 'qualities' attributed to middle and upper class British-Canadian women as a springboard into the public sphere where they advanced the interests of British-Canadian women and the British-Canadian nation.⁴⁵

Maternal feminists believed the public sphere, from which they traditionally had been excluded, needed to change. The increased education of women and their increased participation in the paid work force, especially in the areas of teaching and nursing, also contributed to the movement for social reform.⁴⁶ These educated and relatively affluent British-Canadian women began to use their professional expertise and authority, combined with their expertise as mothers, to reform society. They felt that a woman's pure touch was necessary in public life

⁴⁴ Kealey, 7.

⁴⁵ It is important to note that while maternalism gave British women entry into the public sphere, it also restricted their activities once they were there.

⁴⁶ For a discussion on the roots of the first wave of the women's movement see Bacchi (1983), Kealey (1979), or Strong-Boag (1976).

and that, as women and mothers, they had unique nurturing qualities which would benefit the community and the nation. They set out to mother a growing nation and its citizens into maturity. The maternal feminist "proposed not only to rock the cradle for the world, but to rock the world for the cradle."⁴⁷ By working together, women believed they could ensure that the moral character of Canada and the home were preserved in the face of the threat of modernity and immigration.⁴⁸

Jane Errington describes these middle-class, educated women as being "propelled out of the isolation of their homes by a sense of religious duty and a spirit of expanding opportunity, which combined with their growing apprehension about the state of Canadian society and their special place within it."⁴⁹ These women believed that their special nurturing skills (given by God to all women whether or not they actually had children), combined with British values and notions of hard work, had the potential to fix society. Their maternal skills made it their duty to take their abilities outside of the home and apply them to society. "They believed that it was absolutely essential to infuse the public world with a

⁴⁷ Wayne Roberts, "Rocking the Cradle for the World': The New Woman and Maternal Feminism, Toronto 1877-1914," *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880's-1920's*, ed. L. Kealey (Toronto: Women's Press, 1979) 18.

⁴⁸ Veronica Strong-Boag, *The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man Mercury Series, National Museums of Canada, 1976) 30.

⁴⁹ Jane Errington, "Pioneers and Suffragists," *Changing Patterns: Women in Canada*, ed. S. Burt, L. Code and L. Dorney, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993) 73.

domestic female [British] morality."⁵⁰

Maternal feminists held a position in society ridden with contradictions. They were British, middle and upper-middle class, Christian, women. Their ethnic, class and religious identity gave them a privileged position in the hierarchies existing in Canadian society; but as women they were marginalized.⁵¹ The conflicting identities held by members of the British-Canadian women's movement were reflected in their activities. On the whole, they held a rather privileged position in society which led to them espouse the values of British-Canadian society, while at the same time promoting the concerns of the "Canadian" woman. Most of the concerns they chose to advance, however, were the concerns of their ethnic and social group despite the fact that they often targeted women and children from lower classes and non-British women. By participating in the social reform movement, these first wave feminists had the power to shape the direction Canadian society would take and to instill their values, traditions and customs in the structure of society. Their goal was not to radically transform society, but to improve it by reinforcing and returning to the traditional values of middle-class British women.

⁵⁰ Errington, 75.

⁵¹ It is important to note that first wave feminism was not a single, unified movement. It was influenced by many different ideologies, the predominant of which were the maternal feminists and the equal rights feminists. As well, different women's groups focused on different issues, such as immigration, temperance, working conditions for women, or suffrage. For example: the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Girl's Friendly Society, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, the National Council of Women of Canada, Homes of Welcome, the YWCA, and the British Women's Emigration Society.

Mothering the Nation

First wave British-Canadian maternal feminists believed that “the building blocks of this nation were to be her people, her families, and her homes” and that “all were best British”.⁵² They saw their primary responsibility to the nation as inextricably tied to their role as mothers. Their job was produce members for the nation and to teach them the culture, traditions and values of the British race; to use the “natural” bond between mother and child “to create loyalties, identities, rights and responsibilities, inclusions and exclusions.”⁵³

The significance of the participation of first-wave maternal feminists in British-Canadian colonial nationalism stems from a change in their roles from symbols and reproducers (roles that women play in many nationalisms), to being active, autonomous participants in nationalist projects.⁵⁴ British-colonial nationalism needed the active support of British-Canadian women. Maternal nationalists used their work in nation-building as a tool to gain advances for

⁵² Roberts, 186 and 201.

⁵³ Jill Vickers, “At His Mother’s Knee: Sex/Gender and the Construction of National Identities,” *Women and Men: Interdisciplinary Readings on Gender*, ed. Greta Hoffman Nemiroff (Np: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1990) 483.

⁵⁴ From the moment of their arrival in Canada British women played an important symbolic role in the creation of the British Canadian nation. Sylvia Van Kirk (1980) describes their arrival as the arrival of a beautiful, delicate flower of civilization in a barren wilderness (192). British-Canadian women continued to mark the boundaries between British Canadians, French speaking Canadians, the Métis, aboriginal peoples, and immigrants. Stasiulus and Jhappan (1995) argue, that their arrival also signaled “a sharp rise in racist sentiment and heightened class-consciousness within fur-trade society” (103).

British women, including the right to vote.⁵⁵ The fact that Manitoba women were the first to receive the right to vote provincially, I would argue, reflected the precarious position of British dominance in the province and the need for the electoral support of British-origin women. By extending the franchise to mainly British-Canadian women, British-Canadians men ensured that their interests would be represented at the polls.

This participation of women in nationalism was largely based on their traditional, gendered role in society which they had extended into the public sphere. British-Canadian women used their influence in the social reform movement and their social, political and economic privilege to reproduce their values and identity in other women and in other women's children, as well as in their own. This was reinforced by their presence in the new women's occupations, especially teaching, nursing, home-mission and social work. These professions increased women's awareness of other people's families while giving them increased access to those families and the authority to promote British-Canadian values within them.

The reform movement and colonial nationalism were closely affiliated. In fact, I argue that social reform was a tool of British-Canadian colonial nationalism. Not only was the language of reform nationalistic, the projects of reformers often aimed at securing the position of Britishness and reinforcing the values of the

⁵⁵ The franchise was first extended primarily to British women; Aboriginal women and Asians were excluded. As well, women in Quebec did not receive the provincial vote until 1940.

British Empire in Canada. An example of how the efforts of reform and nationalism coincided can be seen in the area of immigration, in which both reformers and colonial nationalists were concerned about the arrival of vast numbers of non-British immigrants in Canada and the potential effect of this diversity on the British nature of Canada.

Maternal Nationalism

The example of British-Canadian women's participation in colonial nationalism reveals the necessity for a complex, situated analysis when studying women and nationalism. Maternal feminists in Canada actively participated in colonial nationalism. They used the symbolic role ascribed to them as mothers of the nation to create space for themselves in the public sphere where they could put their "natural" maternal qualities to better use building the Canadian nation. At the same time, however, British-Canadian colonial nationalism needed women's activism in nation-building projects. This made space for women eager to enter the public sphere and for the advancement of "women" in Canada, although initially only British-Canadian women exercised these rights. Maternal nationalism was the unique combination of maternal feminism and colonial nationalism that existed in Canada at the turn of the century and which allowed British-Canadian women's interests to be advanced along with the interests of the nation. By locating the activities of maternal nationalists within a social, historical and political context of race and gender relations, I contribute to theoretical

understandings of women's relationships with nationalism, and the ethnic and cultural roots of English-Canadian nationalism.

The Case Study

My project in this thesis is to show that the concept of maternal nationalism helps explain the participation of majority women in some settler society nationalisms, where other theories of nationalism have been unable to. I will do this through the application of the framework of maternal nationalism to the participation of Manitoba women in British-Canadian colonial nationalism. I examine the activities of the Manitoba Branches of two Canadian women's groups between 1900 and 1920: the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC).

During the first wave of the women's movement in Canada many women's groups developed which focused on building a better, British Canada. The activities of first-wave women's groups, such as the IODE and the NCWC, were overtly political and nationalistic despite their focus on the home and community.⁵⁶ The activities of these women reformers challenged the boundaries that had previously existed and created a new space in which women could organize for change. In doing so they "stopped short of actual rejection of their

⁵⁶ Jill Vickers, in *Reinventing Political Science* (1997), argues, by employing a broader conception of politics, the activities of women that have traditionally been viewed as women's 'good works' and separate from politics can now be seen as political and social movements for change (66-7).

middle-class values,"⁵⁷ and instead, worked to instill these values in others and share their benefits with them. The IODE and NCWC were two of the most influential first-wave national women's organizations, both in Manitoba and in British-Canada as a whole. Although they had different goals and mandates, both organization were proponents of maternal nationalism. Concerned about rising levels of increasingly diverse immigration and the effect it would have on the future of the nation, the members of these two women's groups worked to secure the strong, moral future of Canada. Their efforts are distinguished from other nationalists by the framework of maternalism within which they took place.

The IODE, formed in 1900, was an intensely patriotic organization of British Empire women organized so that women, in time of need, could provide effective assistance to the Empire. Their primary goals were the fostering of ties among women in the British colonies, and the promotion of Britishness in Canada. Between 1900 and 1920, the IODE undertook a number of campaigns aimed at assimilating immigrants into (British) Canada and ensuring that future generations were properly educated to fulfill their duties as British subjects. The IODE is a prime example of the intertwined love of Canada and the Empire that characterized colonial nationalism.

The NCWC, formed in 1893, was an umbrella organization of women's groups in Canada founded on the principle that women, through cooperation, could improve their neighbourhoods, communities and country. The NCWC, with

⁵⁷ Kealey, 8.

its connections to many different countries through the International Council of Women, presented itself as a more inclusive organization. I argue, however, that despite its claims to diversity, both in Manitoba and in Canada generally the Council was a British, protestant organization that aimed to instill its British values in Canadian society. Unlike the IODE, the primary goal of the NCWC was not the promotion of patriotic feeling but bringing together women with similar concerns to reach common solutions. Council leaders and members strongly felt that activities were an important part of the nation-building process in Canada, however, justifying their inclusion in this case study.

The activities of these groups promoting British-Canadian nationalism in Canada are a reflection of the relationship between British maternal feminists and British-Canadian colonial nationalism in the country at large. Just as Manitoba is a microcosm of the competing nationalisms that existed in Canada at the time, these women's groups present an accurate picture of maternal feminism. From this case study we can better understand the relationship between the two movements. This case study shows that for British-Canadian maternal nationalists, their nationalism and feminism were irrevocably intertwined and that it is sometimes possible, although not always, for one group of women to use a nationalist movement to advance their feminist cause.

Methodology

Most nationalisms are directly attached to a specific place and time, although nationalisms evolve over time. In this thesis I use a located approach to

place women, their activities and their nationalism within the social, historical, economic and political context in which they occurred, arguing that an understanding of the context from which the nationalism arose is necessary to understanding that nationalism and the role of women within it. In advocating a located approach to understanding women's politics I am continuing the work begun by Pauline Rankin and Jill Vickers (1998) who argue that a framework for locating women's politics must be women-centred, sensitive to differences among women, and must assume that place matters.⁵⁸ Rankin (1996) argues that:

By expanding our analyses of women's movements to consider not only the geographical spaces in which women's activism is pursued, but also the social, economic and political processes that shape the locations of movements actors within their environments, women's movements can be more fully contextualized and compared.⁵⁹

By using a located approach, I hope to avoid the problems associated with dichotomous understandings of nationalisms which characterize them as either good and progressive or bad and oppressive for women, refusing to limit the potential of nationalist projects and asserting the existence of many possible relationships between women, women's movements and nationalist projects.

As part of my effort to develop a located understanding of women's participation in British-Canadian colonial nationalism, I focus on the IODE and

⁵⁸ L. Pauline Rankin and Jill Vickers, "Locating Women's Politics," *Women and Political Representation in Canada*, ed. Manon Tremblay and Caroline Andrew (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1998) 343-5.

⁵⁹ Pauline Rankin, "Experience, Opportunity and the Politics of Place: A Comparative Analysis of Provincial and Territorial Women's Movements in Canada." Ph.D. Thesis. (Ottawa: Department of Political Science, Carleton University, 1989) 68.

NCWC in Manitoba because, as I argue earlier, Manitoba in a microcosm of the ethnic and nationalistic divisions which existed in British-Canada at the turn of the century. I also often draw parallels, however, between the actions of Manitoban maternal nationalists and the national counterparts. In doing so, I position IODE and NCWC members within the community in which they live, making it easier to explore the events and ideas which shaped their nationalism, without removing the ability to generalize their experiences and relationships with other groups in the community.

In using a historical case study as the basis for my theorizing about maternal nationalism, my research has been shaped by the availability of archival material and the focus of the historical records. Both the National Archives of Canada and the Provincial Archives of Manitoba contain a large number of files on the IODE and NCWC. These collections include publications, meeting minutes at the national, provincial and local level, newspaper clippings, and personal correspondence. Despite the considerable amount of information available, however, I found that this information did not necessarily answer the my specific questions. In both the IODE and the NCWC, the information was largely focused on the group and not the individual members. It was also focused on goals achieved, rather than the processes involved in setting goals and determining the best way to achieve them. As well, the Minutes of the Winnipeg Council of Women tended to be a record of attendance listing affiliated groups rather than a record of discussion. This, to an extent, determined that in this case study I focus primarily on passed resolutions, public actions, and publicized

successes.

Despite the existence of extensive files on the IODE and the NCWC in Canada's national and provincial archives, relatively little feminist work has been done on them. For my chapter on the IODE, I am indebted to two theses from Carleton University: Marcel Dirk's Canadian Studies thesis "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War: Combining Imperialism and the Cult of True Womanhood for the War Effort" (1987), and Lisa Gaudet's History thesis "Nation's Mothers, Empire's Daughters: The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1920-1930" (1993). For the chapter on the NCWC, I am indebted to Naomi Griffiths excellent and detailed history of the organization, *The Splendid Vision* (1993), created to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the National Council, as well as Veronica Strong-Boag's *Parliament of Women* (1976). These sources provided me with a broad understanding of the workings of the IODE and NCWC and I have used them to supplement my archival research.

Design of the Thesis

In the next chapter, I explore existing theories of nationalism and their ability to explain nationalisms in settler societies and the unique participation of women in them. I argue that most European and post-colonial theories have failed to take into account the integral participation of women in nationalist movements. I also argue that these theories do not explain nationalisms in settler societies, and in particular the British settler societies of Canada, Australia and

New Zealand, where colonial nationalisms emerged which aimed to strengthen ties with the Empire while simultaneously strengthening the country. I suggest that, although feminist theories of nationalism begin to explain and understand the role of women in nationalism, they fail to address the participation of women in British colonial nationalisms. I conclude by developing my concept, maternal nationalism, which attempts to remedy the omissions of previous theories by combining British colonial nationalism with maternal feminism. This leads, in the case of Canada, to British women using the nationalist movement to advance their interests.

In Chapter Three, I explore maternal nationalism through the Manitoba case study. I apply the nationalist activities of the Manitoba IODE, and NCWC to European and post-colonial theories of nationalism, arguing that these theories are unable to explain the relationship between British-Canadian women and British-Canadian nationalism. I then explore the case study within the framework of maternal nationalism in order to show that this concept is a better tool for understanding the interaction between women and nationalism in this context.

I conclude this thesis by placing my findings within the context of contemporary Canadian politics and our identity crisis. I also discuss some of the questions which this research raises and suggest areas which require further study. If we are to understand the role that women play in different nationalisms we must challenge theories which treat women as bearers of the seed of men or relegate them to symbolic roles. The concept of maternal nationalism contributes to political science and the study of nationalism by applying the actual practices of

women in nationalist movements to theories of nationalism.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPLORING GENDER AND NATIONALISM

Within the British settler societies of Canada, New Zealand and Australia, a distinct form of national identity was created which Eddy and Schreuder (1988) call colonial nationalism. This type of nationalism was distinct from the nationalisms of other settler societies, such as those in the United States and South America, because the settlers chose to maintain ties to Britain. Within Canada, colonial nationalism provided a unique opportunity for British women to advance their interests within the context of building a British Canada.¹ Their participation constitutes a new form of nationalism which I call maternal nationalism. This thesis will attempt to explore the interaction between women and nationalism within the context of British-Canadian nationalism.

Women have always participated in nationalisms, albeit in different ways; and, although nationalisms have always been gendered, mainstream theories on nationalism have not addressed issues of gender. European explanations of nationalism have become hegemonic. These theories attempt to explain all nationalisms, regardless of their context and relationship to colonialism, through the European experience. Anti- or post-colonial theories of nationalism have arisen in response to this further attempt at colonization. Partha Chatterjee argues that if colonial states cannot even imagine themselves as new nations

¹ Further research needs to be done to determine if similar interactions between colonial nationalism and first wave feminism also occurred in Australia and New Zealand.

which are distinct from the European experience, they will be forever colonized.² Most hegemonic and anti-colonial theories of nationalism, however, also ignore the presence of women and gender in nationalisms or have relegated to women to a purely symbolic role. Similarly, these theories ignore the existence of multiple, competing nationalisms present in some countries, including Canada. Feminist theorizing about nationalism, in contrast, has tended to focus on the exploitation of women in nationalist movements ignoring the examples of women's autonomy and agency in nationalisms.

In this chapter I argue that just as there is not one type of nationalism that fits all contexts, neither do women play only one role in nationalisms. I begin this chapter with a critical review of the literature on nationalism with particular emphasis on the omission of women, gender relations, and settler societies. I explore conventional understandings of nationalism and their inability to explain the participation of British women in Canadian colonial nationalism. In the second section, I focus on the feminist critiques of nationalism and theoretical efforts to place women and their activities within a framework of nationalism. I conclude by creating the framework of maternal nationalism which, I argue, provides an entry point into the study of women and nationalism in British settler societies.

Contextualizing Nationalisms

At the end of the twentieth century, nationalism is increasingly important

² Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1993) 4-5.

within political debates. Within our increasingly globalized world, the future of the nation-state system is being reassessed.³ While we are increasingly becoming part of larger collectivities through globalization, there is also a trend towards fragmentation. Borders are being broken down to create new multi-state units, such as the European Union, while at the same time states are being divided along the lines of ethnic and national communities who, in an effort to protect and/or promote the identity and values of their collectivity, attempt to create symbolic and political borders which differentiate them from "others". These movements towards national liberation are neither recent nor are they restricted to the developing world or post-Soviet states. In the second half of this century, Quebec and Aboriginal communities in Canada have adopted the language of nationalism to promote their interests within the larger Canadian state.

Nationalist projects in Canada have not been limited to marginalized groups, but have also been a tool of British-Canadian nation-building, used to promote and protect the privileged position and hegemony of the British colonizers and their descendants. As the rhetoric of nationalisms come to play a more central role in our politics, the struggle to define and understand nationalist projects becomes more important.

³ For a discussion of this see Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall, *After the Nation-State: Citizens, Tribalism and the New World Order* (London: Harper Collins, 1994)

European-Centred Theories of Nationalism

European theories of nationalism fail to explain both the complexity and nature of nationalisms in settler societies and the unique participation of women in them. By focusing on the European experience they are unable to understand many of the features of colonial nationalisms in the British settler colonies, including the relationship between love of empire and love of country, the existence of competing nationalisms from other founding groups and aboriginal peoples, the presence of diaspora nationalisms, the lack of a common history among all the peoples, and the presence of a diverse population. European-centred theories also ignore the tremendous participation of majoritarian women in Canada who utilized the fragmented nature of the state and the existence of competing nationalisms to advance their concerns within a framework of nation-building.

Nira Yuval-Davis, in *Gender and Nation*, distinguishes between two understandings of nationalism that, she argues, dominate the European literature. The first, adopted by the majority of European theorists, views the state as a product of modernity and specific European developments.⁴ The second approach naturalizes the nation and the power structures within it by seeing them as an extension of family structures which are viewed as part of the “natural” order of things.⁵ In the past few decades, the first approach has become

⁴ Nira Yuval-Davis, Gender and Nation (London: Sage, 1997) 11.

⁵ Yuval-Davis, 15.

dominant as nations and nationalisms have come to be seen as social constructions as opposed to organic entities.⁶ At the same time, ethnic or organic nationalisms containing a primordial character have increasingly been viewed as oppressive and irrational.⁷

Some European theorists point to the existence of historical communities which underpin the modern nation, for example Anthony Smith argues that "ethnies" pre-existed nations.⁸ The focus of most European theories has been on the constructed nature of nationalisms. This discourse, put forward by theorists such as Ernest Gellner (1983, 1998) and Eric Hobsbawm (1990),⁹ relies heavily on Anderson's concept of nations as "imagined communities," but argues that nationalisms are inventions of Europe created in response to the ideas of modernity, bourgeois society, the Enlightenment, and colonialism. Nationalism is viewed as a "theory of political legitimacy"¹⁰ which predates the existence of

⁶ Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, "Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation," *Becoming National* (New York: Oxford U. P., 1996) 7.

⁷ Eley and Suny, 4-5.

⁸ Anthony Smith (1996) argues that prior to modern nations there existed "ethnies" had many cultural characteristics of nations but lacked their unified education, economic and/or legal systems; for example, the Normans, the Persians, and the Jewish people (111-17). Smith argues that ethnies, united by common myths, symbols, memories and values, "help to create and preserve the networks of solidarity that underpin and characterize nations" (112).

⁹ See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (New York: New York U. P., 1998); and E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth Reality*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1990).

¹⁰ Gellner, 1.

nations. "Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way around."¹¹ In this vein, Hobsbawm (1990) argues that there are no objective or definitive criteria for nationhood.¹² He does, however, put forward a number of criteria for the construction of nationalisms. Specifically, he argues that nations are a product of modernity and cannot exist without a minimum level of technological and economic development. Hobsbawm also suggests that nationalisms are constructed around a standard national language which is taught in a national education system.

These criteria become problematic when applied to the Canadian context where the state boundaries do not correspond to the boundaries of the nations that exist within it. Nor has the Canadian state ever had a standard "national" language. Moreover, the existence of federalism in itself suggests a variance from the simple "nation-state" formula. Historically, Canada has had two dominant nations (the Aboriginal nations have only recently been incorporated into Canadian politics), and two official languages and cultures, the English and the French. As well, because the *Constitution Act of 1867* gave the provinces jurisdiction over education, Canada has never had a "national" education system which could enforce one of the dominant languages at the expense of the other. As we see in Manitoba and Quebec, however, the provinces have used this power to promote the language of the dominant national group within their

¹¹ Hobsbawm, 10.

¹² See Hobsbawm, 9-13.

borders at the expense of the other. The theories presented above also ignore the active participation of majoritarian women as nationalist educators and agents of assimilation. In British-Canadian colonial nationalism, however, the nationalist project would not have been viable without the participation of these women.¹³

The European-centred discourse relies heavily on some of the arguments presented in Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*¹⁴ (1991), in which he argues that nationalisms are neither inherent nor eternal but communities based on imagined commonalities. Theorists who have taken the European experience of nationalism to be the definitive one, focus on Anderson's definition of the nation as an imagined political community which is constructed as both inherently limited and sovereign. Linking nationalisms in Europe to the printing press, Anderson argues that the development of mass media gave elites the ability to create imagined communities of people. The invention of the printing press and mass education systems "made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways."¹⁵ This linked people together as could not be done previously, allowing

¹³ Cheri Rauser (1991) argues that the response to the call to assimilate the foreigner was greatest among Protestant, middle-class women who felt that it was their moral and religious responsibility to instill their domestic ethic in foreign women, thereby ensuring the nature of the next generation.

¹⁴ Anderson's book, despite its influence on European theories of nationalism, is a study of Asian post-colonial nationalisms.

¹⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd Edition (London: Verso, 1991) 36.

for the melding of popular movements and the rule of dynasties through the construction of nations or communities.¹⁶ These imagined communities gave people a sense of belonging to something larger than themselves and the people they knew personally, moving beyond the realm of the family and providing an alternative to religious communities.

In *Imagined Communities*, however, Anderson argues that the European experience of nationalism described above was neither the first nor the definitive experience of nationalism. He finds the first example of nationalism in the United States and South American colonies in the eighteenth century, arguing that nationalism was invented as a result of the rise of a class of Creole elite.¹⁷ This group was neither European nor American, and their contradictory position marginalized them and prevented them from attaining power within Imperial structures outside of the colonies. This led to the development of a form of "American" nationalism which Anderson distinguishes from European nationalisms, policy-oriented official nationalisms (for example in Russia), and more recent anti-colonial nationalisms.¹⁸ While Europe and the rise of modernity have been credited with the creation of nationalism, Anderson convincingly argues that the idea was initially developed by creole nations.

¹⁶ Anderson, 83-7.

¹⁷ Anderson, 47-65.

¹⁸ Anderson calls these nationalisms "colonial nationalisms" (114). For the purposes of clarity, however, I have referred to them as anti-colonial nationalisms so that they will not be confused with the concept of colonial nationalism as developed by Jebb, and Eddy and Schreuder.

Anti-/Post-Colonial Theories of Nationalism

Anti-/post-colonial theories of nationalism explain nationalism as a rejection of the European/colonial power and model of nationhood, attempting instead to frame theories of nationalism around the colonial experience. In Canada, two forms of anti-colonial nationalisms have arisen in response to English-Canadian nationalism: Quebec and Indigenous nationalisms. Quebec nationalists argue that the Québécois nation and culture is overwhelmed and threatened by English-Canadian culture and that greater autonomy is needed in order to advance and protect the interests of their group. Aboriginal nationalisms, on the other hand, are asserting themselves against the colonizing influences of both English Canada and Quebec. These anti-colonial nationalisms are different from colonial nationalisms because they aim to reject or expel the imperial power, rather than cement their relationship.

Gerald Alfred, in his study of Mohawk nationalism, offers an excellent discussion of the rejection of European theory and experience that lies at the root of aboriginal anti-colonial nationalism in Canada. Alfred criticizes dominant, European understandings of nationalism for their assumption that nations and nationalisms both originate in Europe and reflect the values and practices of the western tradition. He rejects the view of nationalism "as the development of institutions specific to the western context or their imposition through European colonization in various parts of the world."¹⁹ He argues that while nationalism was

¹⁹ Gerald Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto: Oxford U. P., 1995)

a tool of European societies in the combined projects of imperialism and colonization and was used to assert their dominance and superiority, aboriginal nations existed prior to colonization and aboriginal nationalisms take a different form. He makes a convincing argument for the inability of hegemonic, European conceptualizations of nationalism to incorporate the experiences of communities or nations which are reacting to political and cultural hegemony, as opposed to trying to enforce it.²⁰

Anderson argues that anti-colonial nationalisms have arisen in response to both imperialism and the dominance of the nation-state within the world system in the twentieth century, and generally take the form similar to European nationalisms.²¹ He compares them to the rise of new nationalisms in the American colonies in the eighteenth century, drawing attention to a number of similarities, such as the keeping of the colonial borders. He also emphasizes the creation of an intelligentsia who belonged to the colonized group but received a western education which, in turn, marginalizes them from both the colonialists and the colonized.

In *The Nation and Its Fragments* (1993), Partha Chatterjee objects to the argument presented by Anderson which frames anti-colonial nationalisms as

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²⁰ Alfred, 9. An example of this is belief of the Mohawk that their nation is primordial and fixed, as opposed to a construction of the state.

²¹ Anderson, 113-14.

modeled on European experience.²² Chatterjee argues that:

if nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain "modular" forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall be only perpetual consumers of modernity. ... Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized.²³

Instead, Chatterjee argues that anti-colonial nationalisms have taken on a distinct form. This distinct form of nationalism divided the social world into two spheres: the material and the spiritual.²⁴ The material domain is equated with the influences and activities of the West, and includes state institutions, the economy, science and technology. The inner domain is the spiritual domain and this is where the national culture resides. It is here that the nation "launches its most powerful, creative and historically significant project: to fashion a 'modern' national culture that is nevertheless not Western. If the nation is an imagined community, then this is where it is brought into being."²⁵

As with hegemonic theories of nationalism, women have been given a marginal role to play within most theories of anti-colonial nationalism. Western theorists discussing anti-colonial nationalisms,²⁶ tend to view women (when they discuss them) as passive participants in nationalisms, often exploited at the hands of the colonizing power. Not only does this ignore the active participation

²² Chatterjee, 4-5.

²³ Chatterjee, 5.

²⁴ Chatterjee, 6.

²⁵ Chatterjee, 6.

²⁶ For example, Enloe (1989) and Pettman (1997).

of women in anti-/post-colonial nationalisms,²⁷ it also fails to explain the experiences of majoritarian women in Canada who participated in the construction of the nationalism and used nationalism to advance their interests.

Chatterjee, however, recognizes the importance of women in this project. He argues that anti-colonial nationalisms create new forms of patriarchy within which women have a new, distinct role. The woman belonging to the national group was to be a symbol of the modernity that was a product of colonialism, while clearly stating that this modernity was essentially different from that of the Western world.²⁸ In order to achieve this, she would have to display the signs of the traditional, national culture which would distinguish her from Western women. The division of the world into the material and spiritual spheres, however, also represented a division of social space into the home versus the larger, material world. Women were identified with and responsible for the home which was to be the site of the reproduction and maintenance of the national culture.

The home was the principle site for expressing the spiritual quality of the national culture, and women must take the main responsibility for protecting and nurturing this quality. No matter what the changes in the external conditions of life for women, they must not lose their essentially spiritual (that is, feminine) virtues; they must not, in other words, become essentially Westernized.²⁹

By removing women from the material world, or public sphere, nationalists were removing women, and therefore the national culture, from colonial relations.

²⁷ For examples of this see Lois West, ed., *Feminist Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1997).

²⁸ Chatterjee, 116-19.

²⁹ Chatterjee, 126.

In examining the autobiographies of educated women, Chatterjee notes that women were more than symbols; they also took an active role in nationalist projects.³⁰ This active role of women in anti-colonial nationalisms is more fully explored in the work of Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (1986), and in the collection of essays edited by Valentine M. Moghadam, *Gender and National Identity: Women and Politics in Muslim Societies* (1994). Both books agree with Chatterjee's argument that women were used by anti-colonial nationalisms to symbolize the unique combination of modernity and traditional culture which characterized these nationalisms.³¹ Moghadam goes one step further, arguing that because women's relationship with nationalism is focused on their role as symbols of the culture and reproducers of the nation, the nature of the nationalism determines the ways in which they can participate in it.³² Therefore, while one nationalism may advance a national culture that allows very little room for the advancement of women's concerns, within other nationalisms this may be possible.

Many of the chapters in *Gender and National Identity* tell a story of women making sacrifices and assisting the nationalist movement in the belief that

³⁰ See Chatterjee, 135-57.

³¹ Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986), and Valentine M. Moghadam, ed., *Gender and National Identity: Women and Politics in Muslim Societies* (London: Zed Books, 1994).

³² Moghadam, Introduction to *Gender and National Identity: Women and Politics in Muslim Societies*, 4-5.

women's interests would be better served by the nation, than by the colonial power. Doria Cherifati-Merabtine, for example, describes the rise of women's organizations in the form of charitable organizations in Algeria as tied to the nationalist movement. She argues that by creating flexible forms of action and organization suitable for Algerian society, these organizations were able to mobilize the participation of women in the nationalism.³³ This particular example seems at first to bear a striking resemblance to the participation of majoritarian women in British-Canadian colonial nationalism. In the example of Algeria, however, the participation of women did not lead to permanent advances. The participation of women in other anti-colonial nationalisms, such as Aboriginal and Quebec nationalisms, suggests that this is not always the case.

Settler Societies, Colonial Nationalisms and Canada

Unsettling Settler Societies (1995) differentiates between colonies of exploitation and those colonies where a permanent population settled. Within settler societies, however, we have witnessed several different types of nationalism. Lipset (1963) distinguishes between settler societies which revolt against the imperial power, such as the United States (the first "new" nation), and states, such as Canada, which continue to value their connection with the mother country. He argues that the "failure of Canada to have a revolution of its own"

³³ Doria Cherifati-Merabtine, "Algeria at a Crossroads: National Liberation, Islamization, and Women," *Gender and National Identity*, ed. Valentine M. Moghadam (London: Zed Books, 1994) 46.

and the immigration of the American loyalists had a strong impact on the development of the Canadian state and its enduring ties to Britain.³⁴ One type of nationalism which arose in the non-revolutionary British settler societies is colonial nationalism. Colonial nationalism is characterized by the absence of a war of liberation and the continuing strong attachment to the Empire. These two interrelated factors distinguish colonial nationalisms from the creole and anti-colonial nationalisms which were behind many independence movements. Within some colonial nationalisms, such as Canada, women played a central role in the development of the symbols of the nation and the assimilation of others. In Canada, British women used this role to strengthen their position within society and demand recognition and rights - this is maternal nationalism.

Theories of colonial nationalism attempt to explain the unique relationship between the new territory and the Empire within many of the British settler societies. They do not, however, address the participation of women despite the fact that it was essential to the success of the nationalist project in Canada, and perhaps also Australia and New Zealand. Nor do theories of colonial nationalism address the existence of competing nationalisms, aboriginal nationalisms, or diaspora nationalisms in the settler society. Colonial nationalisms, the focus of this thesis, occur only in British settler societies and are the expression of the white, settler populations who do not attempt to revolt against the "mother country." They can be differentiated from the nationalisms of other settler

³⁴ Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, 1963) 86-7.

societies and anti-colonial nationalisms by their love of the Empire from within the new landscape, as opposed to a rejection of imperialism.

The term colonial nationalism, first coined by Richard Jebb in his influential work on Britain's colonies *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* in 1905, refers to the nationalisms of the majority, white populations in states settled by imperial powers.³⁵ Because colonial nationalisms are a product of the dominant settler group within a state, they are not state-seeking; rather they seek to imprint their national identity on the new state. The colonial nationalisms of settler states, such as Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, reflect the influence and strong ties to the imperial power as well as the influence of the new land, existing aboriginal peoples, and, later, diverse immigration. It is neither a full continuation of the nationalism of the 'mother' country, nor is it a full rejection of it; rather, I would argue, it is a form of nationalism unique to itself.

John Eddy and Deryck Schreuder, in *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism*, summarize colonial nationalism as referring to "not only the assertiveness of local autonomy and interest, the sense of cultural identity and of environment, but also to the desire for self-rule and self-respect within a changing set of connections to the empire."³⁶ Colonial nationalisms are "a love of one's own" where one's own

³⁵ Richard Jebb, *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905). In Canada, I would argue that British-Canadian nationalism is a colonial nationalism, whereas French-Canadian nationalism is an anti-colonial (anti-British) nationalism.

³⁶ John Eddy and Deryck Schreuder, *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988) 7.

"began in the colony as a new society, and drew in a sense of identity with empire as world state."³⁷ Colonial nationalists were very aware of their enduring connections, in British Canada's case to Britain,³⁸ and the two identities were often inseparable.

Colonial nationalism in Canada was inherently racist. Eddy and Schreuder describe the experience of colonial nationalism as something experienced largely by political and social elites. They present colonial nationalism and nation-building as the product of a small group of upper class, white men cementing and exercising hegemony over civil society. Their analysis, however, ignores the presence of aboriginal nations, diaspora nationalisms of other immigrant groups (such as the Ukrainian community in Manitoba) and, most significantly for my research, women.

Canadian colonial nationalism was founded on myths of the racial and moral superiority of the British people.³⁹ The British felt they were morally superior to other "races", with this moral superiority came a duty and obligation to civilize other races and to give them the benefit of the best of the British empire.

³⁷ Eddy and Schreuder, 7.

³⁸ For example, the IODE's mandate initially was to promote the connection between Canada and the Empire, and between women in British colonies; the goal of which was to ensure that the ties were never severed.

³⁹ Later, the myths underpinning Canadian nationalism changed to include French-Canadians in myths of "Two Founding Nations" revolving around the duality that has characterized white Canada. Examples of this argument can be found in Cook (1995), and McRoberts (1997). This understanding of Canada and its history focuses on the English/French divide ignoring the pivotal roles of aboriginals, immigrants and women in the processes of nation-building.

This involved the importation of British institutions, morals, values, political culture, traditions and social norms into settled territories. Underpinning both of these myths was the myth of northernness or nordicity which linked the land and climate in northern Europe to perceived traits and characteristics of the peoples originating from these lands.

In the rhetoric of the day, Canada was the "Britain of the North", "this northern kingdom", the "True North" ... "Canada is a young, fair and stalwart maiden of the north." "The very atmosphere of her northern latitude, the breath of life that rose from lake and forest, prairie and mountain, was fast developing a race of men with bodies enduring as iron and minds as highly tempered as steel." ⁴⁰

The idea of the superiority of the northern, white races was inbuilt in imperialism as it justified colonization through the idea that the northern peoples should bring order and liberty to the southern peoples.⁴¹ The image of Canada as the "Britain of the North" did not just suggest the superiority of Canada as another northern country, it also reflected the belief that people who lived in northern climates developed specific character traits: "The result of life in northern latitudes was the creation and sustenance of self-reliance, strength, hardness - in short, all the attributes of a dominant race."⁴²

The belief that British people were part of the dominant race, and as such

⁴⁰ Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free" *Nationalism in Canada*, ed. Peter Russell (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1966) 4-5.

⁴¹ Berger, 17.

⁴² Berger, 5. Ironically, this theory did not apply to Aboriginal or Inuit Peoples, who also lived in northern climates, but was instead used as a justification for the assimilation of the Indigenous peoples into British culture.

were morally and culturally superior to the Indigenous peoples who inhabited the territories,⁴³ was used to justify the dispossession of aboriginal peoples in the western provinces and the creation of the *Indian Act* in 1869, and later, the attempts to assimilate French-Canadians and immigrants. Canadian colonial nationalism was not only built upon the foundation of these myths but, in turn, perpetuated them. Colonial nationalism was the cautious assertion of a new Canadian identity that was still very British in nature. As the colonies became increasingly self-interested they discerned that British policies, while in Britain's best interests, were often not in Canada's best interests. This resulted in Canadian colonial nationalism asserting its economic and military independence of Britain.⁴⁴ Colonial nationalism, however, did not take the form of a rebellion against Britain; rather, it was a gradual movement towards greater autonomy.

Women and British-Canadian Colonial Nationalism

The role of women is a glaring omission in the study of colonial

⁴³ Stasiulus and Yuval-Davis, 20-22. See also, Stasiulus and Jhappan (1995).

⁴⁴ Following the Boer War Britain called upon the white settler societies to help Britain carry some of the burden of protecting and running the empire, specifically through greater colonial military involvement and the suggestion of tariff reform which would increase economic inter-relationships in the empire. Canada reacted strongly against such an arrangement which it felt was not in its best interest as it would be prevented from developing trade outside of the British empire. The developing sense that Canada's interests were not always the same as the Empire's led to colonial nationalism; however, it is important to stress that Canadian colonial nationalism was not a rejection of British culture, values or identity, but the embracing of a British Canada (Eddy and Schreuder, 1988).

nationalisms. Women are not mentioned as participants in the processes of colonization and nation-building, not even in their traditional roles as biological and cultural reproducers, or as symbols of the nation. I will demonstrate, however, that British women in Canada actively participated in colonial nationalism, playing a central role in the process of building a British-Canadian nation. Because of the precarious position of British-Canadians, women were needed to bolster the ranks. This enabled the women's movement in Canada to organize and advance women's issues within the framework of colonial nationalism. British women in Canada justified suffrage through their role in nation-building and the need for more British voters. This need, in part, led to white, Canadian women being among the first in the world to be granted suffrage. Manitoban women were the first to win the vote in Canada in 1916 and white Canadian women won the federal vote in 1918.⁴⁵

For British-Canadian women, winning the vote was only one part of the nationalist project. As my study of the IODE and NCWC shows, women willingly responded to the perceived need to assimilate "others" and actively participated in education and immigration reform in order to achieve this goal. They used colonial nationalism to advance the goals of British-Canada while advancing their

⁴⁵ White, Canadian women were granted the right to vote in federal elections in 1918. Manitoba women were able to vote provincially in 1916, followed later that year by Albertan and Saskatchewan women. Women in New Zealand were the first in the world to be granted voting rights in 1893, followed by European Australian women in 1902. In Britain, women over 30 were able to vote after 1918, and in 1928 all women over 18 were given voting rights. American women won the right to vote in 1919. French women won the vote in 1945. (Morgan, 1984)

own interests at the same time, arguing that the best way to protect the nation was to empower its mothers. This intertwining of feminist and nationalist goals within a framework of maternalism is the cornerstone of maternal nationalism. In the next section, I discuss some feminist theories of nationalism which provide an entry point into understanding the role that Canadian women played in nation building and deconstructing versions of Canadian history which relegate women to the sidelines.

The Feminist Challenge to Hegemonic Nationalist Discourse

Many feminist theorists argue that traditional conceptualizations of nationalism render women invisible and hide the gendered nature of both nationalism and colonialism. Even in the more recent texts on nationalism women are not discussed; they are invisible.⁴⁶ Anne McClintock maintains, "nations have historically amounted to the sanctioned institutionalization of gender difference ... Yet ... male theorists have seldom felt moved to explore how nationalism is implicated in gender power."⁴⁷ Nationalism is conceptualized as something male elites create and manipulate, and is clearly placed within the

⁴⁶ For example, the first line of Gellner's latest book, *Nationalism* (1997), is: "Men have always been endowed with culture" (1). In the Oxford Reader on nationalism edited by Smith and Hutchinson (1994), gender is relegated to a section entitled "Beyond Nationalism."

⁴⁷ Anne McClintock, "'No Longer in a Future Heaven': Gender, Race and Nationalism," *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nations and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 89.

boundaries of the political and public sphere, from which women have traditionally been excluded. Vickers (1994) demonstrates that women's activities in the private realm also contribute to the creation of the nationalism. Even if women in a specific country are not active creators of national symbols, they are still the transmitters of cultural values and symbols to their children and play a role in choosing what knowledge to pass on.⁴⁸

The project of feminists studying nationalism has been threefold:

1. to uncover the ways in which women participate in nationalisms;
2. to understand and critically analyze their participation; and,
3. to explore the gendered nature of nationalisms, including how nationalisms construct women and their participation.⁴⁹

Even among feminist understandings of nationalisms, however, the unique relationship between some majority culture women and their colonial nationalisms is not addressed. Like their male counterparts, feminists have tended to focus on European and anti-/post-colonial nationalisms, and the negative use of women and their limited, passive participation in nationalisms. Once again, some settler society contexts may provide a different understanding of the ways in which women participate in nationalisms. My thesis seeks to expand upon the work of other feminists by exploring British-Canadian women's participation in British-

⁴⁸ Jill Vickers, "Notes Towards a Political Theory of Sex and Power," *Power/Gender*, ed. H. Lorraine Radtke and Henderikus J. Stam (London: Sage, 1994) 174-193.

⁴⁹ See Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989), de Sève (1997), Enloe (1989), Ng (1993), McClintock (1993, 1997), Peterson (1996), Pettman (1997), Vickers (1990), and West (1992, 1997).

Canadian colonial nationalism.

Uncovering and Understanding Women's Participation in Nationalisms

Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis' book, *Woman-Nation-State* (1989), first piqued my interest in the study of women and nationalism. Their work provided an initial framework for uncovering women's participation in national and ethnic collectivities. Anthias and Yuval-Davis argue that women generally participate in five key areas:

- a. As biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities;
- b. As reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups;
- c. As participants in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture;
- d. As signifiers of ethnic/national differences - as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories;
- e. As participants in national, economic, political and military struggles.⁵⁰

This framework is a very useful and helpful tool for understanding women's participation because it looks at the variety of ways women have participated in national movements, while validating their participation and allowing for the complexity of women's positions in nationalisms to be seen. As I began to apply it to the participation of British-Canadian women in colonial nationalism, however, I realized that their framework focuses solely on how states structure women's participation. They do not account for women acting autonomously within

⁵⁰ Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, Introduction to *Woman-Nation-State* (London: MacMillan, 1989) 7.

nationalisms or creating their own roles and symbols, as they did in British-Canadian colonial nationalism. In her later work, however, Yuval-Davis in *Gender and Nation* (1997) does recognize that women both affect and are affected by national and ethnic processes."⁵¹

Feminists have also begun to try to understand and critique the relationship between women and nationalism. Cynthia Enloe and Jan Pettman, for example, argue that nationalism is a masculine process that results in the objectification and oppression of women as symbols of the nation and the biological reproducers of its members.⁵² Based on their research of women in colonial or post-colonial contexts, they argue that women are generally passive or complicit in nationalisms which do not advance their interests. Enloe (1989) argues that "nationalism has typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope,"⁵³ suggesting that for colonized men becoming a nationalist often "requires a man to resist the foreigner's use and abuse of his women".⁵⁴ This view provides a striking contrast to the stories of women's active participation told by Moghadam (1994) in which women participated in militarily in nationalist liberation movements, as well as assisting

⁵¹ Yuval-Davis 1997, 26.

⁵² See Cynthia Enloe, "Nationalism and Masculinity," *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989) 42-64; and Jan Pettman, *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics* (London: Routledge, 1996) 48-63.

⁵³ Enloe, 44.

⁵⁴ Enloe, 44.

the nationalist project in many other ways.

Pettman (1996) also focused on the uses made of women in nationalisms, when she writes that “interrogating nationalism means recognizing women’s roles and *the uses made of them* in both constructing and reproducing nationalism.”⁵⁵ Focusing on the use of familial and gendered language in nationalisms, she highlights the representation of the nation as a woman and mother which can be raped or violated and the restrictions (as opposed to the power) that reside in being the symbols and mothers of the nation.⁵⁶ Pettman concludes that a feminist nation (or nationalism) is probably a contradiction.⁵⁷

By focusing on the passive role of women and the damage nationalisms have done to them, however, these feminist accounts ignore the examples of women’s positive experiences of nationalism. For British-Canadian women, for example, colonial nationalism empowered them to enter the public sphere and take action to secure their interests. As Enloe points out, the participation of colonizing women in nationalisms has been as part of a privileged group, and their participation being oppressive to women and men in the society who are marginalized on the basis of race and class. This does not mean, however, that we should ignore the positive relationship between the nationalism and some women, just as we should not ignore the negative impact of this partnership on other women. As I will argue below, the key is to analyze all of the possible

⁵⁵ Pettman, 45 (my emphasis).

⁵⁶ Pettman, 48-51.

⁵⁷ Pettman, 63.

relationships between women and nationalism.

Other feminists have attempted to demonstrate a positive relationship between women and nationalisms. In *Feminist Nationalism* (1997), Lois West argues that feminism and nationalism often intersect in ways that are positive for women, pointing to situations, such as contemporary Quebec, where the liberation of women and the liberation of the nation are intertwined. Using a women-centred approach, which she equates with standpoint theory,⁵⁸ West argues that by beginning with women's viewpoints from their everyday lives women's participation in nationalism can be better understood through the concept of feminist nationalism, which she defines as "social movements simultaneously seeking rights for women and rights for nationalists within a variety of social, economic, and political contexts."⁵⁹

Lois West (1992, 1997) is one of the few feminists to attempt to create a typology of feminist nationalisms by elaborating on three ideal types of feminist

⁵⁸ Standpoint theory assumes that by focusing on the experiences of an oppressed group, namely women, objective truth can be realized. For example, Nancy Hartsock, in "The Feminist Standpoint" (1987), argues that the masculine vision of society is partial, whereas women, because of the sexual division in society have a unique insight into patriarchy and are free from the partial vision that men have. Marlee Kline (1989) argues that this approach "is not sufficiently attentive to the complexity of women's experience" (Kline 37), and instead focuses on the issues and concerns of privileged, middle-class, white women at the expense of marginalized women. Yuval-Davis (1997), also critiques standpoint theory, arguing that all perspectives are partial and that it is only through sharing our experiences and understandings that a more complete story or truth can be told.

⁵⁹ Lois West, *Feminist Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1997) xxx.

nationalist movements.⁶⁰ The first ideal type of feminist nationalism is historical liberation movements which seek liberation from colonialism. In this type of feminist nationalism women often worked to expand their roles in society. Gender issues, however, generally played a secondary role within the nationalism. The second type represents contemporary identity rights movements where majority or minority women struggle for increased political rights within the framework of nationalist movements. The success of the nationalist and feminist demands are seen to go hand in hand. West uses the Quebec feminist movement and the struggle of Palestinian women for land rights as examples of this type of feminist nationalism. Neo-colonial nationalisms are the third ideal type of feminist nationalism. These occur in colonized states still under the control of the colonial power. West's typology does not, however, explain the participation of women in some colonial nationalisms where the rights of women are not a priority for the nationalism but women do play a central, active role and are able to use the nationalism to advance the interests of British women.

Whereas, Enloe and Pettman make the mistake of ignoring the positive experiences of women included in the nation, West makes the mistake of ignoring the negative experiences of women who belong to groups excluded from the nation as a consequence of the nationalism. Neither analysis is satisfactory; it is not this simple. By theorizing all women's participation in nationalisms as

⁶⁰ Lois West, "Feminist Nationalist Social Movements," *Women's Studies International Forum* 15 (1992) 567-9.

either oppressive to women or positive and feminist, these theorists leave no room for the possibility of a specific nationalism being liberating for one group of women and oppressive to another, as was the situation within settler societies such as Canada. Pettman, while focusing primarily on women's symbolic role in nationalisms, does argue that in addition to attempting to understand patterns and similarities between women's participation in nationalisms we need to recognize the importance of specificity and context in any discussion of nationalism.⁶¹ While these two approaches make for an interesting opposition, often providing critiques of each other, and reveal the diversity within feminist work, what is needed is an understanding of women's participation in nationalisms which allows for conflict, uncertainty and diversity.

Towards A Gendered Understanding of Nationalisms

Other feminists have put forth theories which attempt to understand the gendered nature of nationalisms. This often includes two projects: locating and contextualizing the participation of women in nationalisms and deconstructing the ways in which nationalisms construct women and gender relationships. Anne McClintock (1993, 1995), Angela Gilliam (1991), and Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) argue for an approach that investigates the gendered formation of the state and nationalism, the ways in which women participate in them, and the systems of racial, ethnic, gender and class power that exist within the nation and the state.

⁶¹ Pettman, 48.

Gilliam, in particular, articulates the importance of location or context arguing that to remove the nationalism from its context disassociates it from the economic, political and historical factors which led to its development.⁶²

Although these three authors approach the study of nationalism from different places⁶³ they all recognize the importance of what Yuval-Davis calls the "the positions and positionings of women."⁶⁴ In other words, they recognize the interconnectedness of race, gender, economics and politics in nationalist movements and the importance of using a located approach. A located approach to understanding gender and nationalism recognizes the importance of physical place and time as well as the variety of positions women and men hold in the society and the relationships between these positions. "Gendered, racialised and classed identities are fluid and constituted in place -- and therefore [are constituted] in different ways in different places."⁶⁵ As Yuval-Davis points out, women often experience conflicts between their different roles and positions in society; for example in settler societies, majority women may experience conflicts between their privileged economic and ethnic position, and the marginality they experience as women. We need to understand, therefore, women's role and

⁶² Angela Gilliam, "Women's Equality and National Liberation," *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres. (Indianapolis: Indiana U. P., 1991) 216-7.

⁶³ McClintock's work is focused on South Africa, Gilliam's is on the United States, and Yuval-Davis' is primarily on Israel and Palestine.

⁶⁴ Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*, 1.

⁶⁵ Geraldine Pratt and Susan Hanson, "Geography and the Construction of Difference," *Gender, Place and Culture* 1:1 (1994) 6.

situation both as individuals and as members of collectivities.⁶⁶

McClintock's work on South Africa illustrates that neither nationalism nor feminism are set, transhistorical concepts, stressing the importance of considering the racial, ethnic, class, gender and colonial aspects of the nationalism. She suggests that some nationalisms and feminisms can be beneficial to each other. Feminisms are a response to gender conflict and oppression in politics; by addressing gender oppression within the nationalism the 'nation' as a whole will benefit. She also suggests that progressive and liberatory nationalisms can benefit feminism by relating feminist struggles to other liberatory movements.⁶⁷ As Vickers (1997) argues, nationalisms, feminisms, and their interrelationships are multiple and vary over time and space.⁶⁸

As part of the process of contextualizing the study of nationalism and exploring women's participation in specific nationalist projects feminists have attempted to uncover the gendered nature of nationalisms. This encompasses many different projects, including: the study of the regulation of sexual relations between classes and ethnic groups, the language used to describe nations and nationalisms, and the myths that underpin the community, and the study of women as symbols and boundary markers, as mothers and cultural reproducers,

⁶⁶ Yuval-Davis, 22.

⁶⁷ Anne McClintock, "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism, and the Family," 77.

⁶⁸ Jill Vickers, "Changing the Gender of the Nation: Women, Globalization and Nationalisms in English Canada." Presented at the McDougall Symposium: *New Voices in the Study of Nationalism*. (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1997) 3.

and as citizens. By focusing specifically on a colonial nationalism, I show the importance of gender in the construction of the nation and state and the significance of majoritarian women's active participation.

Women and Colonial Nationalisms

Preliminary feminist research on the role of British women in settler societies reveals the many omissions in the study of nationalism. British women in settler societies were not merely symbols of British civilization, rather they used this symbolic power to gain actual power in the politics of the colony. Male colonial nationalists in Canada needed women to convey British culture to their children and, in the public sphere, to immigrants and their children. They also needed them at the polls in order to ensure that British interests were represented in government as the base of Canadian democracy expanded. British-Canadian women were not passive participants in the process of nation-building. Rather, they organized, lobbying government and education officials, as part of their goal of "Canadianizing" immigrants, and they demanded the vote in order to promote the interests of women and their ethnic group at the polls and to represent these interests in political office.

Ann Stoler argues that "European women in [the] colonies experienced the cleavages of racial dominance and internal social distinctions very differently than men precisely because of their ambiguous positions, as both subordinates in

colonial hierarchies and as active agents of imperial culture in their own right;⁶⁹ however, race and class divisions also existed between Europeans. For example, British-Canadian women attempted to exert their influence and assimilate or "Canadianize" all non-British peoples including Aboriginal peoples, French-Canadians, and eastern and southern Europeans. As the IODE and NCWC case study shows, their activities were an eclectic combination of advocating for women's rights and oppressing non-British women, and fighting for the rights of immigrant women while promoting a racist vision of Canada.

Aamir Mufti and Ella Shohat argue that the concept of home, which they define as a "set of material, communal and emotional securities,"⁷⁰ is central to the constructions of nationalisms. Home becomes a location (real or imaginary) that carries with it a sense of belonging, security and shared identity. The centrality of a concept of home in British colonial nationalisms was partially embedded in the centrality of the British Victorian family and home as the moral foundation of the British civilization. For British-Canadians home was both Britain and their actual home - *both* of which involved feelings of security, pride and kinship. Colonial nationalisms attempted to cement and reify the imported concept of home and family, and the power relations within it and to use this as a

⁶⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in Twentieth-Century Colonial Cultures," *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nations and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 344.

⁷⁰ Aamir Mufti and Ella Shohat, Introduction to *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nations and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 1.

model for power relations within the new state.⁷¹ The power invested in the home in British colonial nationalisms was also an investment in British women. In Canada, they used this power to justify their movement into the public sphere.

Maternal Nationalism

The theories presented here begin the work of exploring a gendered understanding of nationalism. They present a serious challenge to traditional work on nationalism which either obscures or ignores the participation of women as active autonomous citizens, as mothers and as symbols and border markers. By stressing the importance of location, and social and political systems these authors move beyond a limited, dichotomous understanding of nationalism. Feminist theories of nationalism, however, as with hegemonic and post-colonial theories, are unable to explain the unique, active participation of women in some settler society nationalisms.

First-wave feminists in Canada actively participated in British colonial nationalism. They used the symbolic role ascribed to them as mothers of the nation to create space for themselves in the public sphere where they could put their "natural" maternal qualities to good use, and in doing do, advanced the concerns of majority women and increased their political and social rights.

⁷¹ McClintock (1997) adds to this discussion, noting the presence of the concepts of home in the language used to talk about nations and nationalisms. (90) An example of this appears in the Canadian national anthem: "O Canada, our *home* and native land/ true patriot love in all our *sons* command" (emphasis mine), or, as some people say, "Our home *on* native land."

Studying their actions from the perspective of colonialist and nationalist movements, and considering the class, race and gender systems of privilege which existed, allows for a greater understanding of the dynamics of first wave feminism and colonial nationalism.

The participation of women in nationalisms is varied and does not follow a single pattern. The combination of the multiplicity of positions of women in society, and the nationalisms and feminisms they can construct and participate in, defies a simple analysis. My concept of *maternal nationalism* is a beginning point for understanding the participation of British women in Canadian colonial nationalism, and, potentially, in other settler society nationalisms, in a way which integrates the position of these women and their actions and goals with a social and historical context of race and gender relations.

The concept of maternal nationalism places the participation of these women in nationalism within a social, historical, political and economic context. Maternal nationalism is a product of the combination of British colonial nationalism and maternal feminism. Maternal nationalists carry a very specific class, ethnic and gender identity which focuses on the value of women's maternal nature. The combination of maternal feminism and British colonial nationalism led to women participating in the British-Canadian nationalist movement by building on their traditional gendered roles and the value ascribed to them by the colonial nationalism. Maternal nationalism empowered majority women to enter the public sphere and advance their interests in the interest of building a British Canada. The creation of this new type of nationalism and feminism is helpful for

understanding the nature of women's participation, its place within a broader context of racism, imperialism, gender oppression, colonization and Anglo-conformism, its effect on other women in Canadian society, and the nature of the identity being created, cemented and reproduced.

In the next chapter, I explore women's participation in nationalism through a case study of maternal nationalism in Manitoba. I examine the activities of the Manitoba Branch of the IODE and the Winnipeg Council of the NCWC, focusing primarily on the intersections between their feminism and nationalism and their participation in nationalism in the areas of education, immigration, and the war effort.

CHAPTER THREE

MANITOBA WOMEN AND MATERNAL NATIONALISM

At the turn of the century, Manitoba was the destination of an overwhelming number of immigrants from increasingly diverse backgrounds. They arrived in a province already divided along ethnic and linguistic lines and quickly became targets for the assimilation efforts of the dominant British majority. At the forefront of this project of assimilation were women's groups such as the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC). Concerned about the increasing numbers of foreigners in their communities and convinced that, through the authority invested in their maternal role, they could "Canadianize" new immigrants through education, these women's groups were the epitome of maternal nationalism in Canada.

In this chapter, I explore the relationship between British-Canadian colonial nationalism and the feminism of the IODE and NCWC, a hybrid I have conceptualized as maternal nationalism. The first section tells the story of the IODE. I begin by exploring the creation and structure of the national and provincial IODE, the composition of the membership of the IODE, and what positions IODE members held in their communities. Next, I examine how the IODE participated in British-Canadian colonial nationalism, specifically activities related to immigration, education and the War. The second section explores maternal nationalism in the NCWC. The NCWC, an umbrella organization which attempted to distance itself somewhat from the Empire as a Canadian

organization, and spoke of inclusion and diversity, provides a contrast to the IODE. In this section, I will explore the development of the Council and its activities, particularly in the areas of immigration and political activism, within the framework of maternal nationalism. Throughout this chapter, I argue that both the IODE and the NCWC used nation-building and maternalism to advance the interests of British-Canadian women and "Britishness" in Canada. I also argue that they were able to do this because of the political and demographic situation in Canada which required the activities and political support of British women to offset the presence and perceived threats from French-Canadian, immigrants and Aboriginal peoples.

DAUGHTERS OF THE EMPIRE

In this cosmopolitan country, especially in the North West where every nationality is represented in our schools, we cannot be too earnest or too patriotic. [This] is not the merely waving of flags and talking of what we should do, but living up to the principles of that true freedom and justice which everyone who lives under this "Union Jack" is entitled to and which has been handed down to us intact.¹

In 1900 Margaret Polson Murrey founded the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire on the foundations of Patriotism, Loyalty and Service and called on prominent women to organize branches of the IODE in their communities.²

¹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5491, File 3, *Minutes of the Provincial Chapter* (October 27, 1916).

² *The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire: Golden Jubilee Book, 1900-1950* (Toronto: T. H. Best Printing Company, 1950) 1.

Polson Murrey was a Scottish immigrant, feminist and journalist. Upon her marriage to Clark Murrey of Montreal, Polson Murrey continued to use her own name.³ In the records of the IODE, however, she is recorded as Mrs. Clark Murrey, reflecting the more traditional nature of the organization. When calling upon the women of Canada to organize, Polson Murrey also called upon the mayors of provincial capitals to "persuade prominent women in their cities to organize as Daughters of the Empire and collect comforts for the troops. ... The IODE was nation-wide within twelve months."⁴

The IODE was not organized around the issues of suffrage and social reform, as were most women's organizations of the day; but, rather, with a "vision of patriotism and a spirit of service."⁵ The Order was founded in direct response to the Boer War and the desire of British-Canadian women to assist with the war effort. One original purpose of the IODE was to care for the graves of soldiers who had made the "supreme sacrifice" for nation and Empire.⁶ Over the next twenty years, however, IODE women found their role in Canadian society greatly expanded to include: the fostering and promotion of British-Canadian colonial

³ Jill Vickers, "Changing the Gender of the Nation: Women, Globalization and Nationalisms in English-Canada," Presented at the McDougall Symposium: *New Voices in the Study of Nationalism* (Ottawa: Carleton University, March 1997) 19.

⁴ McKenzie Porter, "The Empire's Dutiful Daughters," *Maclean's* (August 15, 1952) 37.

⁵ Lisa Gaudet, "Nation's Mothers, Empire's Daughters: The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1920-1930," M.A. Thesis, (Department of History, Carleton University, 1993) 22.

⁶ *Echoes*, June 1915.

nationalism, the education of the nation's children, and the "Canadianization" of new immigrants.

Comparing the IODE to other women's groups of that period, Nancy Sheehan notes similarities in organizational structure, the composition of membership from the British-Canadian middle and upper classes, and the focus of the IODE on one specific issue - patriotism.⁷ Dirk notes, however, that the IODE differed from other women's organizations at the time in a number of significant ways: they were organized later; they chose not to focus on social reform but on patriotic work; and, perhaps most significantly, they initially saw themselves as an Empire-wide organization (as opposed to a national one) and, early on, focused much of their energy at the national level on building international links.⁸

The overall aim of the IODE was to promote patriotism and ties to the Empire and among women and children in the British colonies. Unlike other women's organizations of the time, such as the National Council of Women of Canada whose stated goal was to promote community and achieve common goals through the cooperation of women,⁹ the project of the IODE was to build a strong Empire by building a strong British-Canadian nation. These women felt the

⁷ Nancy Sheehan, "Women's Organizations and Educational Issues, 1900-1930," *Canadian Women's Studies* 7:3 (Fall 1986) 90.

⁸ Marcel Dirk, "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War: Combining Imperialism with the Cult of True Womanhood for the War Effort," M.A. Thesis (School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1987) 15.

⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P3586, "Councils of Women in Canada: Aims and Objectives", n.d.

British Empire offered an unprecedented and unchallenged level of freedom and liberty of action to its citizens. "We of the British Empire have the most glorious traditions to uphold. An Empire that contains people of every race, every colour and every religion [and] has been given freedom and liberty of action enjoyed by no other nation."¹⁰ This broad goal of strengthening Empire and nation encompassed the following aims and objectives:

To provide an efficient organization by which prompt and united action may be taken by the women and children of the empire when such action may be desired.

To promote in the Motherland and in the Colonies the study of the History of the Empire and of current Imperial questions; to celebrate patriotic anniversaries; to cherish the memory of brave and heroic deeds and last resting places of our heroes and heroines, especially such as are in distant and solitary places; to erect memorial stones on spots that have become sacred to the Nation; ...

Members are pledged to promote unity between the Motherland, the sister colonies and themselves; to promote loyalty to King and Country; to forward every good work for the betterment of their country and people; to assist in the progress of art and literature, to draw women's influence to the bettering of all things connected with our great Empire, and to instill in the youth of their country patriotism in its fullest sense.¹¹

In 1920, two new goals, focused on the ties between women and children and reflecting a growing awareness in the IODE of women's issues, were added.

They pledged IODE women:

To stimulate and give expression to the sentiment of patriotism which binds the women and children of the Empire around the throne and the person of their Gracious and Beloved

¹⁰ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5491, File 1, *Minutes of the Provincial Chapter*, April 2, 1914.

¹¹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P4333, File 4, "Chief Aims and Objects of the Order," *Bulletin* (November 1918) 30.

Sovereign.

To supply and foster a bond of union amongst the daughters and children of the Empire.¹²

The aims and objectives of the IODE reflect an intense, unwavering, and almost unthinking support of the British Empire and its Colonies.¹³ The language they use reflects the romanticism of the times and sounds idealist and naïve to the more distanced and cynical reader of the late twentieth century. Their aims recognize the interconnections between Monarch, Country, and Empire which were the basis of colonial nationalism. In the aims of the IODE, both Britain and *her* colonies are gendered; the *sisterly* ties believed to exist among them mirror the ties of sisterhood that were believed to exist between women and children in the Empire. It was seen as the duty of patriotic women British women in the Empire, not only be the centre for their families and to foster and protect the ties that bound them together but, also, to bind together the diverse groups that comprised their nations, and the diverse nations that comprised the British Empire.

The aims and objectives of the IODE encompassed the war work that was at the foundation of the organization while at the same time providing space for their work in times of peace. The major peace-time projects of the IODE, at both the federal and provincial level, focused on the education of Canada's future citizens and on the "Canadianization" of the "New Canadian." These projects

¹² Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P4333, File 4, "Aims and Objects of the Order," *Bulletin* (March 1920) 9.

¹³ Dirk also comments on the lack of discussion or critical debate in the IODE on imperialism, 12.

were underpinned by the imperialism and nationalism of the IODE, however, in many ways, they also took on an aspect of social reform in that they attempted to remedy what they saw as society's ills through the education and socialization of Canadians in British values and norms. Dirk and Gaudet argue that the IODE can be distinguished from other women's groups at the time by their focus on Empire building as opposed to the social reform efforts of groups such as the Council of Women or the Women's Christian Temperance Union.¹⁴ I will argue, however, that, although the goal and the focus of these groups may have differed, the IODE shared the ideology of maternalism and the belief that by imposing a feminine morality on the public sphere they could affect change. The IODE took this approach one step further, believing that this feminine morality underpinned the growth and development of a strong "Canada" [read British Canada] and British Empire. They based their nation-building activities and their participation in the politics of the public sphere on their maternal role in society. In return, they were able to promote British women's interests, such as suffrage and education, in the name of nation-building. It is this unique interaction between nationalism and feminism that constitutes maternal nationalism.

The Development of the IODE

Following Margaret Polson Murrey's call for the women of Canada to organize IODE branches, the first branch of the Daughters of the Empire was organized in Fredericton, New Brunswick on January 15, 1900. This was quickly

¹⁴ See Dirk, 11-15; and Gaudet, 8-9.

followed by a branch in Montreal made up primarily of upper-class, Anglo-Saxon women who were acquaintances of Polson Murrey, although one, Marie Caroline Choquet, had a French-Canadian husband. The organization was quickly taken over by a group of Toronto women in October of 1901. Toronto was felt to be a more appropriate home for this imperial organization, than French Quebec and Montreal.¹⁵ Ironically, the women of Montreal disagreed and incorporated the Federation of the Daughters of the Empire as a society under Quebec civil law in order to stop the transfer. The Toronto Branch bypassed the actions of the Montreal women and created a new organization, the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire.¹⁶

The IODE was organized hierarchically with power centred on the national executive and the annual meeting.¹⁷ Below the national executive were the provincial chapters, below them the municipal and primary or local chapters. Policy was made primarily at the national level at the annual general meeting. Local and provincial councils, however, often passed resolutions for actions specific to their own communities or proposed resolutions and issues of wider interest to be addressed at the national meetings.

Dirk argues that, although the IODE was open to women of "all creeds and classes," it appealed to a very specific creed and class of women.¹⁸ IODE

¹⁵ Dirk, 32.

¹⁶ Dirk, 25-32.

¹⁷ Sheehan 1986, 91.

¹⁸ Dirk, 30.

chapters were Anglo-Saxon and most members were patriotic, Protestant, British-Canadian women from the middle and upper classes concerned about the welfare of their nation and community and devoted to all things British. Their nationalism reflects this privileged position in Canadian society.

Daughters of Empire, tried and true, of high and worthy aim,
Yours is the work of nobleness, yours a beloved name;
Yours a work of selflessness, of honour through and through;
Daughters of Empire may you live and may our God bless you!¹⁹

The Development of the IODE in Manitoba

In 1909, the IODE arrived in Manitoba with the creation of four primary chapters: two in Winnipeg, and one each in Brandon and Portage la Prairie. The first chapter to be created was the Fort Garry Chapter in Winnipeg which led the others, not only in organization, but also in membership and activities.²⁰ By the time the provincial branch was created, also in Winnipeg, there were seventeen chapters and over two hundred members of the IODE in Manitoba. By 1915 the organization had grown considerably: Manitoba women now belonged to forty primary chapters, one municipal chapter, two children's chapters, and the provincial chapter of the IODE.²¹ By 1920, following the end of the war, participation in the IODE had peaked and Manitoba had eighty-four chapters and

¹⁹ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, vol. 29, file 10. Fred Yates, "Daughters of Empire," *Souvenir* (Manitoba Provincial Chapter IODE, 1916) 54.

²⁰ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 2499, File 2. Nan Moulton, "At the Sign of the Maple," *Canadian Courier* (March 25, 1911).

²¹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5491, "Third Annual Report," *Minutes of the Provincial Chapter 1912-1915* (April 22, 1915).

3,536 members.²²

The provincial branch of Manitoba was created December 3, 1912 under the supervision of Mrs. Minnie Campbell, founder and Regent of the Fort Garry chapter of the IODE in Winnipeg. A friend of Campbell's and a fellow IODE member, Mrs. Wilson-Smith provides an excellent character reference for Campbell in a letter between the two women. She writes to Minnie Campbell:

You ask my candid opinion re: the Regency of the Provincial Chapter -- Well, to my mind, you are the only one suitable from any point of view. You have the cause at heart, the diplomacy most necessary, knowledge of the work and conditions both here and in the East, the executive ability and the confidence and affection of all the members.²³

Campbell was successfully elected president at the first meeting of the Manitoba Chapter.

Minnie Campbell, the daughter of a doctor, was born in Ontario where she was educated at Wesleyan Female College in Hamilton. Like many "new women," she taught at the Ottawa Ladies College from 1881-82, before marrying Colin H. Campbell and moving to Manitoba. Colin Campbell was a prominent Winnipeg lawyer who, in the course of his career, served on the Winnipeg City Council, was a Conservative Member of the Legislative Assembly and Minister of Education and Attorney-General and later Minister of Public Works. He served on a number of boards for charitable organizations, was a board member of the Manitoba College, and taught Sunday School. Together Campbell and her

²² Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Seventh Annual Meeting, p 16.

²³ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P2499, File 3. Letter from Mrs. Wilson-Smith to Mrs. Campbell dated January 12, 1912.

husband were presented to King Edward VII in 1902, to the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1908, and were present by invitation at the Coronation of King George and Queen Mary in 1911.²⁴

Membership in the Manitoba IODE

The women who belonged to the Manitoba Chapter of the IODE were, like Mrs. Campbell, married to influential male members of the community who were lawyers, doctors, Members of the Legislature, and prominent business men.²⁵ The participation of Manitoba's and Canada's British social and political elite, including Lady Aikens, Lady Schultz, Lady MacMillan, and Lady Cameron, suggests the influence of the IODE in Manitoba's social circles. IODE women were educated and many, such as Campbell, had had careers before marrying. They had the free time and resources to be able to attend meetings and engage in work stemming from those meetings. They were not as interested in improving their social position in Canada or Manitoba as they were in protecting the privilege accorded to them by their membership in the dominant ethnic group as

²⁴ Charles G. D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, eds. *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography: The Canadian Who Was Who*, Vol. 1 (Toronto: Trans-Canada Press, 1934) 85-6.

²⁵ It seems ironic to characterize and describe the women members of the IODE based on what is known of their husbands. This is hard to avoid, however, as the stature of their husbands determined to a large extent these women's stature in their communities. Also, the IODE records refer to women by their husbands names, for example as Mrs. Colin Murrey, Mrs. Colin Campbell or Mrs. George Hughes, further obscuring the identity of the individual woman within the identity of her husband. This is ironic considering that the creator of the IODE didn't use her husband's name.

its preeminent members. "The Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle-class background of the women matched that of governing and educational officials and ensured better understanding of their goals."²⁶ It must be stressed that although these women were marginalized by their gender, overall they held privileged social positions in Manitoban society on the basis of their ethnicity and class.

The ethnic and cultural origins of the IODE were reinforced at every encounter. According to Polson Murrey's wishes at the inception of the Order,²⁷ every branch of the IODE was named after a historical place, battle or hero of the Empire as an expression of the nationalist sentiment of the organization. While many Manitoba chapters chose strictly British names, such as the Prince Alexander of Teck Chapter (Brandon), the Earl of Meath Chapter, the Queen Victoria Chapter, and the Victoria Patricia Chapter, the British-Canadian element of their nationalism was evident in chapter names, such as the Prairie Gateway Chapter (Brandon), and the General Sam Steele Chapter (Souris).

The organization of meetings of the IODE was established by the National executive and set out in the members handbook. Each chapter had a standard bearer who carried the Union Jack. The meetings would begin with the saying of a prayer created for the IODE which reflected the binding of women to the Empire and the desire of members to "labour loyally for the welfare of [their] country."²⁸

²⁶ Sheehan 1986, 93.

²⁷ Dirk, 30-1.

²⁸ *Golden Jubilee*, 2.

The meetings would generally conclude with the singing of "God Save the King" The chapters encouraged the singing of other nationalist songs or recitations of nationalist poetry during the meeting. They also organized meetings around certain speakers; for example Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Mitchell addressed the Chapter on "Canada and the Daughters of the Empire," and Lieutenant-Colonel F. W. MacQueen spoke on "Canada."²⁹ The structure of the meetings reflected the ethnic and religious origins of the members. The recitations and songs reinforced these identities. I would speculate that these rituals also acted to ensure that members shared these values and worked to exclude those who did not.³⁰

The Maternal Nationalism of the Manitoba IODE

From the inception of the Provincial Chapter the influence of colonial nationalism on the agenda of the Manitoba branch of the IODE was apparent. At the first meeting of the Provincial Chapter of the IODE on April 2, 1913, the members expressed views that the immigrant community was a threat to the advantaged position of Britishness in Manitoba and aspired to promote actively the British Empire and Canadian nationalism. Two examples of this sentiment

²⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P2499, File 5. Personal Correspondence of Minnie Campbell. 1914.

³⁰ There is no evidence which suggests that this was a conscious act on the part of the membership. In the Winnipeg Council of Women, however, as is discussed later in the chapter, the structure of the meeting and its inclusive or exclusive nature was an issue for the members and one the group attempted to address.

appear in the minutes of the first meeting. First, they passed a resolution encouraging railway stations to fly the Union Jack every day of the week to remind foreigners they are living in a new land, under a new flag and to teach them to "love and revere the flag of our country under whose protecting care they live."³¹ This was followed by a resolution which aimed to prohibit showing the American flag in moving pictures shown in Canada.³² The focus of the Manitoba chapter on national symbols suggests that their focus was on something larger than their individual communities. This is an interesting response to the threat of American culture and symbols overshadowing Canadian ones and shows that these women were aware of who their cultural competitors were. Not only were Manitoba IODE women interested in promoting a homogenous, British Canadian culture and eliminating internal threats to cultural and ethnic homogeneity, they also aimed to remove external threats to the British nature of Canadian culture and identity.

Over the next seven years the efforts of the Manitoba IODE came to focus on three primary areas: immigration, education, and the war effort. In the next sections of this chapter I will focus specifically on these three areas.

Immigration and the IODE

In the March 1920 edition of the *Bulletin* is a one page article describing

³¹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5491, File 1, Minutes of the Provincial Chapter, April 2, 1913.

³² Ibid.

Canada's "Melting Pot of Nations" and asking what Canada will look like in one hundred years.³³ It suggests that Canada's recent immigration trends are threatening the nature of Canada. The map is white, representing the white population (Anglo-Saxons of British and American origins), upon which dark spots have been drawn representing the population and distribution of "foreigners"; specifically, French-Canadians, Austrians, Germans, Russians, Scandinavians, and Doukhobor or Mennonites. The article states that, in 1915 there were 8,075,000 people in Canada constituting 53 different nationalities and eighty-five dialects and languages. It gives Manitoba's population in 1916 as 553,860 of which 42% of the total population and one-third of the male population are "foreign." At the end of the article is this appeal:

This is the psychological moment for the Daughters of the Empire in Canada to formulate a Canadianization policy and to launch a Canadianization campaign that shall aim -

- (1) To propagate the gospel of British Ideals and Institutions among the foreign-born.
- (2) To abolish from the map of our country those dark spots in which foreign sympathies and to a great extent, foreign thought and feeling are still maintained.
- (3) To banish the old world point of view, the old world prejudices, old world rivalries and suspicions.
- (4) To make our New Canadians 100% British in language, thought, feeling and impulse.

The sentiment behind this appeal is devout nationalism and pride combined with fear and racism. The policy behind it is Anglo-conformism. This passage reveals the fact that for British-Canadians, being Canadian was very much tied to being

³³ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P4333, No. 4, "The Melting Pot of Nations," *Bulletin* (March 1920) 39.

British. For IODE members in Manitoba, this was particularly important as they felt themselves to be threatened not only by rapid and diverse immigration but also by the presence of large French and aboriginal communities.

The language used to encourage the launching of a national Canadianization campaign reflects the nationalism of the IODE. British ideals and institutions are called "gospel" removing any doubt of their value or authority. Immigrant communities are described as "dark spots" suggesting something which can be bleached, clean up, or removed. French Canadians were viewed as "traditional" and "backward." They were also viewed as immigrants despite being one of the founding European fragments. The article represents "foreigners" as dark spots racializing immigrant groups, despite the fact that most were "white." This is resonant of the evil commonly associated with darkness at the time.³⁴ Finally, in banishing "the old world point of view ... prejudices ... rivalries and suspicions," the article separates British-Canadians from European ties and suggests that Canada is free of prejudice, rivalry and suspicion; a claim which appears ridiculous considering its context.

As I argued earlier, British-Canadians felt threatened by the large populations of French-Canadians and Métis who continued to oppose British domination and refused to be assimilated. Because the British people were not a

³⁴ Valverde (1992) argues that Europe was often equated with light and morality while Africa was associated with darkness which in turn was associated with sin (19). This, as Anne McClintock argues in *Imperial Leather* (1995), led to "inferior" groups of "white" people, such as the Irish, being racialized as "black." "The rhetoric of race was used to invent distinctions between what we would now call *classes* ... At the same time, the rhetoric of *gender* was used to make increasingly refined distinctions between the "*races*." (McClintock 1995, 54-5)

clear majority of the population, their dominance was perpetually precarious. Policies of Anglo-conformism were adopted to attempt to create allies among immigrant populations. Nonetheless, IODE loyalties were to British interests. Some maternal nationalists believed that it was in the best interests of building a British-Canada to give British women the right to vote. The IODE, however, never took a formal position on suffrage, perhaps, as Dirk suggests, because of the divided opinion of the Order's members.³⁵ When approached by the Conservative Party during the formulation of the *Wartime Elections Act*, however, the IODE stated that "it was in favour of doing what it could to help the men at the front, even if this meant giving the vote only to soldier's relatives and withholding it from foreign born women."³⁶

Minnie Campbell's book, *Souvenir* (1916), reflects the conflicted position of IODE women on the issue of enfranchisement. Campbell points out that giving the vote to women would mean the enfranchisement of foreign-born Canadians and non-English speaking women as well. She writes that "while a man has to have certain probation before he can become a naturalized citizen, a women on the other hand, if she marries, becomes a citizen of the country without any probationary safeguards."³⁷ Rather than viewing this as an impediment to giving women the vote, however, she advocated raising of the status and education of

³⁵ Dirk, 72.

³⁶ Dirk, 73.

³⁷ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5514, Minnie Campbell, *Souvenir* (Winnipeg: Bulman Bros., 1916) 45.

the foreign-born Manitoba woman voter. Many British women felt that if foreign men had the right to vote, they should certainly have the right to vote as well. The *Wartime Elections Act* best suited the IODE's purposes because it gave them the right to vote, at the least replacing the votes of British soldiers if not increasing the number of British voters, while excluding foreign-born women.

Education and the "Canadianization" of the New Immigrant

The IODE felt that the best way to deal with the threat of immigration to the British nature of Canada was through patriotic education and the "Canadianization" of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants. Using the authority invested in their maternal role in society and the traditional designation of the education and socialization of children as a women's responsibility and part of the private sphere, the IODE worked to ensure that Canadian schools educated children on the history, culture and greatness of the British Empire. In doing so, they hoped to ensure the British character of future Canadian citizens.

In 1916, in order to achieve these goals, the IODE established an educational secretary in each province. Mrs. C. C. Hearn, the Educational Secretary of the Manitoba chapter, defined the education policy of the IODE as follows:

The Educational policy of the IODE, broadly speaking, may be said to be the dissemination of knowledge of the British Empire, its glorious traditions, its ideals, and the privileges of its citizenship, particularly among the children of today (who will be the men and women of to-morrow), and most especially to try and reach the new

Canadian children who *must* be imbued with our national spirit.³⁸

She describes the work of the IODE as “the making of loyal, patriotic, and right-thinking citizens of the British Empire.”³⁹ She suggests that while their husbands and sons were overseas fighting for Britain, IODE members could fight for Britain at home by setting an example (for “people only strive to imitate what they admire”), and making Canada stronger through the assimilation of foreigners.⁴⁰

The Manitoba Chapter prided itself on its excellent working relationship with the Provincial Department of Education. They worked with the department to encourage British-Canadian women to teach in the foreign districts and produced, nationally and locally, aids to help educate children about Canada and the British empire. Under the coordination of the Provincial Education Secretary, an number of initiatives were undertaken; these included the establishment of curriculum guides, the touring of a set of patriotic pictures, *British Historical Pictures* for the schools, and perhaps most significant the *Historical Books for Foreign Pupils* campaign.

When looking at the education efforts of the IODE, it is important to remember that although a large amount of their effort was aimed at foreigners, they also felt that it was important to promote patriotism and knowledge of British

³⁸ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5514. C. C. Hearn, “Manitoba Educational Work” in *Echoes* (June 1919) 19.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

history and values among British-Canadian children. By the end of World War One, the content of the IODE's educational aids had shifted from a purely imperial focus to including more Canadian content. This could be partially attributed to a growing sense of Canada's identity as separate from Britain's due to the Canadian experience during the War.⁴¹ This is in keeping with colonial nationalism which was a manifestation of love and loyalty for the Empire within the context of the new state. Colonial nationalists saw Canada as their home. Their sense of Canada, however, was inextricably tied to their identity as citizens of the British Empire.

As part of their campaign for British education in Canadian schools, the IODE produced a great number of curriculum guides which were given to teachers as a guideline for an "imperial education." These patriotic programs contained monthly assignments which aimed to educate children about Canada and the Empire. They asked questions about the histories of the colonies and provinces, and recommended appropriate readings and songs.⁴² For example, one such program asked what imperialism means and what benefit Canadians derive from it. Another focused on the natural resources of Canada, reflecting their importance to the nation-building project in Canada, with each month devoted to a different resource, for example: wheat, dairy, farming, fruit, or

⁴¹ Philip Resnick, *The Masks of Proteus: Canadian Reflections on the State* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1990) 210-11

⁴² National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 33, File 28, *IODE Patriotic Programs - For Use in Schools*.

minerals.⁴³

Along with the distribution of patriotic programs, the IODE also distributed miniature Union Jacks and flag charts. On Empire Day 1915, every school in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, and Dauphin was visited by an IODE member and in Winnipeg alone 6,000 Union Jack flags were given to school children by the visitors.⁴⁴ In addition to giving away flags, the IODE also produced flag charts outlined the history of the Union Jack which were distributed to schools and children's organizations such as the Girl Guides and Scouts.⁴⁵ The IODE viewed the Union Jack as one of the greatest symbols of the British Empire and firmly believed that knowledge of the Flag would lead to respect for it and the empire it represented.

Following the success of the series of historical pictures of Britain which had made prints of paintings of British historical events and important historical figures and authors available for purchase by individual chapters, the IODE, in coordination with Fine Arts Publishing Company of England, made available a set of twelve prints of famous pictures illustrating significant events in Canadian history for purchase by IODE chapters. This reflects the progress in the nationalism of the IODE from being solely focused on British history and images,

⁴³ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 33, File 28, *IODE Patriotic Programs - For Use in Schools* (October 1908 - January 1909).

⁴⁴ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5491, "Third Annual Report" *Minutes, 1912-1915* (April 22, 1915).

⁴⁵ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 29, File 6. Minnie Campbell, "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire. The Provincial Chapter of Manitoba" (1933) 2.

to recognizing and promoting images of Canada. Each chapter would donate the print or prints to a local school to increase knowledge of Canada among school children. Of the twelve prints, Manitoba made available a set of three for sale; the first set of which was purchased by the Manitoba Minister of Education.⁴⁶

This set included: "The Death of Wolfe" depicting the battle on the Plains of Abraham, British Victory over Quebec, and man's willingness to die for the Empire; "The Indian Chief, 'Joseph Brant'," depicting the "loyal Indian"; and, "the Sailing of the 1st Transports," indicating Canada's willingness to come when the Empire calls. By 1919, the Manitoba Chapter had established a collection of sixty-three British Historical Pictures which had been circulating through Winnipeg Schools for the past year. A number of the pictures were also framed and presented to schools.⁴⁷

The IODE strongly believed that the visual presence of the Empire would influence students and instill them with respect, and that they in turn would transmit this respect and love the empire to their families. By including Canadian themes and images, the IODE hoped to build an identity among children that was both British and Canadian. The term they used to describe the process of assimilating foreigners, "Canadianization," suggests that they were not trying to instill a purely British identity in newcomers, but a British-Canadian identity that reflected both the British roots and culture of the dominant group, and also the new landscape within which they lived.

⁴⁶ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, "Manitoba Educational Work," 23.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 21.

Citing the existence of a great many schools in Manitoba where the British-Canadian component of the student body was twenty percent or less, the IODE firmly believed that the students needed to be reminded of the achievements of the Empire and the values underpinning them. The IODE did not question the presence of non-British children in Canada, rather they viewed them as a valuable resource who, with proper education and training, could be molded into good British subjects. The Historical Books for Foreign Pupils Campaign targeted the foreign population specifically. This campaign, which was incredibly successful in Manitoba, strove to provide IODE libraries for schools with large foreign populations. These libraries contained fifty books written in simple language. "They [were] not only historical books of the British Empire, but [included] biographies of the men and women who have helped to make Britain a great empire."⁴⁸ The libraries would "Canadianize" foreign children by teaching them the history, values and traditions of the British empire and her prominent citizens. They would help assimilate immigrants into British-Canadian culture and encourage them to become dutiful and patriotic citizens. The inclusion of women's histories in the libraries is another example of the interaction between feminism and nationalism in the IODE's activities and shows how they also used nation-building projects to advance women in Canadian society.

Referring to the placement of libraries in foreign-majority schools Mrs. Hearn, the Educational Secretary, stated that "Empire building was the first

⁴⁸ Provincial Archives of Manitoba P5501, Scrapbook. "Historical Books for Foreign Pupils" (n.p., n.d.).

principle of the Order, and with the endorsement and cooperation of the Department of Education the IODE had done a great work in the inculcating of patriotism into the foreign-born children of our land."⁴⁹ From May 1917 to May 1918, Manitoba chapters of the IODE raised funds to purchase sixty-seven libraries and a further thirty libraries were donated by IODE chapters outside Manitoba.⁵⁰ The donation of libraries from outside the province reflects the fact that Manitoba was part of settlement frontier and that issues of Canadianization and immigration were particularly urgent there. This is also seen in the installation of ninety-seven libraries in Manitoba's public schools that year which exceeded any other province. By June 1919, a total of 164 IODE libraries were in Manitoban schools attended by large numbers of immigrant children.

In addition to promoting the Empire in public schools, the Manitoba IODE also rewarded students interest and academic potential. Prizes and medals were regularly given by IODE members and chapters to school children for essays on imperial subjects and/or as a reward for scholastic achievement. The creation of the National War Memorial Fund at the end of the first World War ensured that the IODE would continue to support worthy students. The War Memorial Fund was the result of IODE fundraising efforts totaling \$500,000 and included an endowment for university scholarships and funds for historical pictures and IODE libraries to be placed in schools.

⁴⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5491, vol. 1916-1919. "Sixth Annual Meeting Provincial Chapter Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Fourth War Session, April 4th and 5th, 1918," 2.

⁵⁰ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 4333, File 4. *Bulletin* (Nov. 1918) 11.

The education work of the IODE was directly tied to their gendered role in society. In the early twentieth century in Canada, children and their care and education were considered to be women's responsibilities.⁵¹ This belief and the need for teachers opened up the teaching profession, particularly the teaching of younger children, to educated British women. IODE women claimed the right to influence the education of children through a combination of children being considered a women's responsibility and their new found authority as teachers. The Manitoba IODE chapters sought to increase the legitimacy of their claims and their influence in the schools by encouraging teachers to become members.⁵² The prominent position of IODE women in the community also allowed them a degree of authority and often gave them access to the classrooms where they could distribute imperial knowledge and propaganda through educational aids, such as historical pictures, libraries, and flags.

Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) argue that in many cases women have traditionally been keepers of the culture, responsible for ensuring that future generations learn the values of their cultural or ethnic group. IODE women took this role seriously, working to ensure that children in schools were being taught the British culture. They moved well beyond this traditional role, however, as they became intimately involved in creation and decimation of the symbols of the

⁵¹ See Caroline Andrew, "Women and the Welfare State," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 17:4 (December 1984) 670-1.

⁵² Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5491, vol. 1916-1919. "Sixth Annual Meeting Provincial Chapter, April 4th and 5th, 1918," 3; and, "Manitoba Educational Work," 19.

British-Canadian nation. This role in British-Canadian colonial nationalism gave IODE women tremendous influence, and even power, which they used to instill a British-Canadian identity in immigrant and British children. They also used it, however, to promote women through the inclusion of women's histories in IODE libraries and essay contests on the subject of women activities and roles.⁵³ By combining overt nationalist activities with their understanding of women's maternal nature and its value, the educational activities of the IODE are an excellent example of maternal nationalism in Canada.

The War Effort

World War One provided the IODE with the opportunity to fulfill their goals and prove the worth of women during a national crisis. Minnie Campbell, in her President's Report at the Second Annual Meeting of the Provincial IODE in April 1915, commended IODE women for their efforts.

Nowhere... could 1500 women be found who had done more for their country during the present crisis, but the work had just begun. Behind every khaki uniform is a mother, a wife, a sister or a daughter ... one and all must be prepared to sacrifice themselves and go on and on with the thought that it was for the Empire, the flag.⁵⁴

Campbell's address illustrates the maternalism at the roots of the nationalism of IODE women. She reinforces the connection between members' roles as wives,

⁵³ Dirk gives examples of feminist essay topics, such as "Women's Part in the War and her Status After the War" (183).

⁵⁴ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5491, "Minutes from the Second Annual Meeting, April 29-30, 1915" (April 1915).

sisters and daughters, and their role in the development and protection of the nation. Members of the IODE used the maternal role society gave them as women to justify and frame their participation in the war effort. As women, they took on the job of caring for soldiers and their families in the name of nation and empire. Just as "their men" were making the ultimate sacrifice for their nation and the empire in the front lines, they had to make sacrifices at home. The division between public and private became increasingly complicated. While there was a definite division between men's work as soldiers and women's work at home; the work of Canadian women was increasingly taking place in the public sphere even though this work continued to reflect the work of the home and women's assumed maternal nature. In other ways, however, the war created more space for women in the public sphere and gave IODE women the opportunity to break free of their traditional role and occupations. This is particularly evident in regard to the political gains for women as they gained the provincial vote and then the federal vote, first as the relatives of soldiers and later as citizens in their own right.

The changing role of women is also very evident in the tremendous fundraising efforts carried out by the IODE during the war. On the second day after the outbreak of World War One, the IODE called on all women's groups to raise funds for a Hospital Ship. While the Winnipeg Council of Women was responsible for raising funds in Winnipeg, the IODE was responsible for fundraising in all outlying areas in the province. Within one week they raised \$6481.48 for the hospital ship fund. Across Canada \$282,857 was raised in a

few weeks. Of this, \$100,000 was spent on motor ambulances and the remainder was used to create the Canadian Women's Hospital.⁵⁵

The fundraising efforts for the hospital ship give an indication of the fervour with which the IODE and other British-Canadian women approached their war work. Between 1914 and 1918, Manitoba IODE women participated in many different projects. Some of their work is indistinguishable from the work of other women across Canada; for example, they donated over 2000 pairs of blankets, over five dozen pairs of field glasses, and raised money and a car filled canned goods for Belgian refugees. They also provided the battalions in Winnipeg with sheets, pillows, pillow cases, socks and other comfort items.⁵⁶ Much of their work, however, moved beyond the efforts of other wartime women's organizations, as the IODE women did everything within their power to assist the Allies with the war effort. These efforts included visiting sick soldiers and on February 19, 1915 opening the first Convalescent Soldiers' Home in Canada which, by the end of the war, had ministered to thousands of soldiers returning from the war. They also established the first Soldiers' Memorial Plot in Canada to help Canadians remember the heroic actions of those who has made the "supreme sacrifice." They also opened the first IODE Home for Soldiers' children and orphans in Manitoba, showing that although much of the IODE's efforts were focused on the front they also remembered those women and children they had left behind. It

⁵⁵ *Golden Jubilee*, 26.

⁵⁶ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5514. Minnie Campbell, "Reminiscences of Manitoba Provincial Chapter War Work," *Echoes* (June 1919) 55.

was this sentiment which also led the IODE to establish a memorial card service whereby sympathy cards were sent to women who had lost a son or husband overseas.⁵⁷

At the end of the war Minnie Campbell again praised the efforts of the Manitoba IODE: "You have a proud record of work second to none in Canada to your credit. You have met every emergent need, you have cooperated with every war working agency, and initiated much valuable work in the province and in Canada."⁵⁸ In the course of the war the Manitoba chapters had raised \$260,000 for the war effort.⁵⁹ Across Canada, the IODE had raised and spent over \$5.5 million dollars on the war effort.⁶⁰

At the end of the war the IODE, as a whole, created the National War Memorial Fund in Canada in memory of "our Fallen Heroes, Soldiers, Sailors, Aviators, and Nurses. An estimated \$500,000 was raised nationally in the next few years, of which the provincial chapter of Manitoba contributed \$58,000."⁶¹ The memorial consisted of three parts: the purchase of 20,000 patriotic pictures

⁵⁷ Information of these activities was taken from: Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 4333, "Some War Work Initiated by The Daughters of the Empire in Manitoba, 1914-1918," *Bulletin* (March 1920) 33; and, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5491, vol. 1912-1915, "Third Annual Report," (April 22, 1915).

⁵⁸ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P5491, *Seventh Annual Meeting* (1919) 16.

⁵⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 5514, "Women of the West Work to Support Our Boys in the Trenches," *Bulletin* (March 1918) 31.

⁶⁰ *Golden Jubilee*, 30.

⁶¹ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 29, File 6, *Manitoba: Drafts of a History of the IODE in Manitoba* (n.d.) 11.

for Canada's schools which would show Canada's and the British Empire's participation in the War, bursaries and scholarships for university studies, and the establishment of Overseas Scholarships for study in Britain.⁶² Interestingly, considering the nationalist passion with which the IODE had approached the War, they purchased the pictures "in the hope that rising generations would come to abhor the method of settling international disputes by mortal combat."⁶³ This conflict in the attitude of the IODE towards the war reflects the conflict that existed between their maternalism and their nationalism. Their nationalism demanded they protect the British Empire against external threats and their maternalism demanded they care for those affected by the war; it also, however, led them to hope for peace in the future.

After the war, the IODE continued with their patriotic efforts. The War Memorial Fund and the Canadian Historical Pictures are products of post-World War One IODE efforts. The "Daughters of the Empire wanted to play their part in post-war reconstruction by shaping the values upon which the Canadian nation and its evolving nationalism were to rest."⁶⁴ Their desire to see British values entrenched in the Canadian identity did not change after the war. An example of their continuing focus on this issue in the years just following the war is their attendance at the Conference on Canadian citizenship in Winnipeg in 1919, a conference which aimed to create a new social order in the image of British-

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Golden Jubilee*, 30.

⁶⁴ Dirk, 204.

Canada's elite.⁶⁵ Mrs. George H. Smith, the National Education Secretary of the IODE participating in the conference, declared it the "psychological moment for launching a great Canadianization movement" which would ensure Anglo-conformity within Canada with every citizen adopting "one viewpoint, one thought, one feeling, one impulse."⁶⁶ The participation of the IODE at the conference and Mrs. Smith's words suggest that the primary beliefs and goals of the IODE did not undergo a major shift following the war. As time passed, however, membership and nationalist fervour dropped significantly and the IODE turned its attention away from issues of Empire and more towards issues of child welfare and education.⁶⁷

For the IODE, their maternal role in society was inextricably tied to their nationalism. Tom Mitchell points out that "the contributions of women to the war effort at home and abroad made untenable the ongoing refusal to grant women the vote and opened the doors for women to transform their subordination through direct access to the state."⁶⁸ This is a perfect example of how women's maternal nationalism enabled them to gain political power and legitimacy. To a large extent this role also shaped the direction of IODE activities and policy.

⁶⁵ For a discussion of this conference, see Tom Mitchell, "'The Manufacture of Souls of Good Quality': Winnipeg's 1919 National Conference on Canadian Citizenship, English-Canadian Nationalism, and the New Order After the Great War," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31:4 (Winter 1996-7) 5-28.

⁶⁶ Mitchell, 19.

⁶⁷ See Gaudet (1993).

⁶⁸ Mitchell, 10.

IODE women focused their peace time work for nation and empire on children and focused their war time work on activities traditionally given to women: caring for the sick and providing comfort and entertainment for the soldiers and their families. This unique combination of maternalism and fervent nationalism in the IODE make it a prime example of maternal nationalism.

THE WINNIPEG COUNCIL OF WOMEN

As the individual woman gives to her home all the love, sympathy and understanding within her, so can a group of women give these priceless qualities to their community, which is nothing but a collection of homes, and their nation, still a larger collection of homes.⁶⁹

The creation of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) in 1893 was an expression of maternal nationalism. In creating a Canada-wide women's organization, the founders of the NCWC hoped to advance the concerns of women and promote national unity. They would do this by introducing diverse groups of women from all parts of Canada to each other and showing them that they shared the same concerns and that a consensus based approach to finding solutions was possible.⁷⁰ In the first section of this chapter, I

⁶⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, "Aims and Objectives" (1928) 5.

⁷⁰ Although the NCWC presented itself as a "nation-wide" organization from its inception it was very much a British-Canadian organization and its members were trying to include non-British women in their (British) Canada. As such, it never managed to recruit many French-Canadian women (understandably) and never established a branch in Quebec outside of Montreal.

will focus on the creation, development and membership of the Council. This will be followed by an examination of their activities, particularly those related to immigration, their efforts to win the vote, and how these activities fit within the framework of maternal nationalism.

The Feminism of the NCWC

Council women were maternal feminists. As such, they believed that their maternal role in society entitled them to a voice in the public sphere, and they intended to use this voice to strengthen Canadian families and the Canadian nation. As the quotation at the beginning of this chapter suggests, Council women felt that the same qualities they used as mothers to nurture children could be used to nurture the British-Canadian nation into maturity.

Naomi Black, in *Social Feminism* (1989), argues that maternal feminism is the simplest version of social feminism, a type of feminism characterized by its focus on the values and experiences of women.⁷¹ According to Black, for maternal feminists, "having a womb becomes almost a guarantee of virtue, of finer feelings and unselfish commitment to service to one's own children or future children and thus to all of humanity."⁷² Although I agree with Black's definition of maternal feminism, I argue that when combined with the colonial nationalism of turn of the century Canada, some women's organizations, such as the IODE and NCWC, came to play a central role in nation-building. Their maternalism became

⁷¹ Naomi Black, *Social Feminism* (Ithaca: Cornell U. P., 1989) 1.

⁷² Black, 65.

a tool which empowered them to enter the public sphere of society and participate autonomously through women's organizations in nation-building projects. Colonial nationalism, at the same time, in a context of sparse imperial populations, creates space for the advancement of the issues and concerns of these women. This relationship transforms maternal feminism into maternal nationalism; the feminism and the nationalism of maternal nationalists can not be separated - they are inextricably linked.

Lady Aberdeen, founder and president of the NCWC, in a public meeting in 1896 described the maternal nationalism of the Council of Women in the following way:

You tell us that we are queens of our homes -- you tell us that you believe that in the strength of the homes of Canada lies the strength of the nation -- you grant that home is strongest where love reigns supremest. We are acting on that principle, but are asking to be allowed to take it a few steps further. ...we claim that it is our mission as women to do what we can thus to apply it in any practical ways we see open to us.⁷³

The belief that a strong home and strong women who were active in the public sphere would provide the basis for a strong nation is visible throughout the work of the NCWC until the end of World War One.

The Creation of the NCWC

In 1893, a group of twenty-two Canadian and British women, including Dr. Emily Howard Stowe, Emily Willoughby Cummings, and Lady Ishbel Aberdeen,

⁷³ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 25, Vol. 151, File 5, *What the National Council of Women Has Done* (Ottawa: Thorburn & Co., 1896) 11.

returned to Canada from the first meeting of the International Council of Women created at the World Exposition in Chicago. Inspired by the vision of international sisterhood present at this meeting, the women returned home intent on forming a national affiliate in Canada which would further the goals set out by the International Council of cooperation between women for the welfare of society. Within one year they had succeeded. At a mass meeting held in Toronto on October 2, 1893 the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) came into existence. Lady Aberdeen, the newly arrived and reform-minded Scottish wife of Canada's new Governor-General, had been elected President of the International Association in Chicago. In 1893 in Toronto, she became the founder and president of the new Canadian women's organization. Lady Aberdeen, in her opening remarks put forward the following motion: Be it resolved:

That this meeting do heartily endorse the formation of a national council of women of Canada, believing that by means of such a federation a more intimate knowledge of one another's work will be gained, which will rely in large mutual sympathy, greater unity of thought, and therefore, in more effective actions, especially in matters that may arise from time to time which command a general interest.⁷⁴

As Lady Aberdeen's remarks suggest, the Council came into being in order to facilitate the greater cooperation of women and women's groups in Canada. The need for women to work together and the belief that it would be to the benefit of their communities and nation is reflected in the first article of the constitution of the NCWC, which reads:

⁷⁴ N. E. S. Griffiths, *The Splendid Vision: Centennial History of the National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1993*. (Ottawa, Carleton U. P., 1993) 22.

We, Women of Canada, sincerely believing that the best good of our homes and nation will be advanced by our own greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, and that an organized movement of women will best conserve the highest good of the Family and State, do hereby band ourselves together to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom and law.⁷⁵

The first article of the Council's constitution not only sets out the goal and purpose of the organization but also reflects their maternal nationalism. The good of family, community and nation are seen as interconnected. Council women "found that there was a definite need for 'mothering' in the community life as in the home life. ... The human touch was present in everything they did - the activities of all groups were based upon Woman's traditional interests, although transferred to larger spheres."⁷⁶ As with the IODE, Council women legitimized their actions and their beliefs through their roles as women and mothers. Although they did not believe that women should be restricted to, or by, their role as mothers, they did believe that the moral authority which accompanied this role could be transferred to the public sphere and used for the good of family and state, as well as for women's advancement.

The NCWC was an umbrella organization which aimed to bring together women's groups across Canada in order to find solutions to their common problems and to strive together towards common goals. Following the first national meeting, Canadian women set out to form the local councils which would form the grass roots of the organization. The local councils were also umbrella

⁷⁵ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, "Councils of Women in Canada: Aims and Objectives," n.d.

⁷⁶ "Aims and Objectives" (1928) 7.

organizations containing local branches of national Canadian organizations as well as purely local women's groups as members. Over the next year, seven local Councils were created including the Winnipeg Council of Women in March of 1894. By the second Annual Meeting in Toronto, nine more local councils had been organized and every major urban centre in Canada now contained a Council of Women. By 1900, the local councils played a central role in setting the agenda for the NCWC, identifying the problems of their communities and referring them for consideration by the National Council.⁷⁷ In this way, shared local concerns could be identified and national committees struck to address them.

The Winnipeg Council of Women was organized on March 27, 1894. Lady Schultz, the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, was elected the first president. She held this position until 1895 when she retired because of the poor health of her husband. She was succeeded by Lady Taylor who later became president of the NCWC in April of 1900.⁷⁸ At the organizational meeting of the Winnipeg Council, ten women's groups became members of the local council representing a wide range of interests in the community. These initial members were: the All Saints Ladies Aid, the Children's Home, the Free Kindergarten, the Hospital Aid Society, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Lady Aberdeen Society, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Central

⁷⁷ Griffiths, 100.

⁷⁸ Lady Taylor (born Margaret Vallance) was the daughter of a Scottish immigrant who became a justice of Queen's Bench in Ontario. She was the second wife of Thomas Wardlaw and moved to Manitoba in 1889 when he became the Chief Justice of the province. (Griffiths, 85)

Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the South End Women's Christian Temperance Union. The aim of the new local, like the dominion Council, was to bring women and women's groups into a closer working relationship and to further work of common interest.⁷⁹ With the strength on their growing numbers and the political connections of their membership, the Council quickly became a lobby group bringing the concerns of women to politicians.

By participating in social reform, Council women had the power to shape society and ensure that their morals and values were transmitted to others thus maintaining their relatively privileged position in Canadian society. As Veronica Strong-Boag argues, "NCWC'ers were determined that social improvements would guarantee social control."⁸⁰ While I agree with Strong-Boag's statement, I would argue that their desire for social control was neither as negative nor self-serving as she suggests. Council women sincerely believed what they were doing was for the good of other women and the nation, and many of their works were objectively good. Council women desired to raise the status of poor and immigrant women by teaching them their ways. From their perspective, this was an admirable and generous act. From the perspective of their "students", however, their actions were problematic. As I argue in the next section, the actions of Council women reflected their specific location in Canadian society and were part of their general goal of building a British Canada.

⁷⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, "Constitution of the Winnipeg Council of Women."

⁸⁰ Strong-Boag, 6.

Diversity in the NCWC

The NCWC had, from its inception, expressed a desire to include women of all types in Canada and the diversity of goals which would stem from this representation. Entrenched in the constitution of the National Council is the belief that all Canadian women should be allowed to participate, regardless of race, religion, class or political affiliation.⁸¹ This provides a startling contrast to the majority of women's organizations in Canada which were overtly focused on one religious, ethnic and/or political affiliation, the prime example of which is the IODE. The IODE's mandate, as discussed earlier, was to promote British homogeneity, as opposed to diversity, in Canada through its policies of Anglo-conformism. An examination of the membership and executive of the NCWC, however, reveal that they were neither as tolerant nor as diverse as they purported to be.

The majority of members of the NCWC were white, Anglo-Saxon, educated, affluent, and Protestant, and the majority of associations affiliated with the Council represented the interests of this group of Canadian women. The founder of the organization, Lady Aberdeen, was not just a very progressive feminist, she was also a member of the British aristocracy and the wife of the Queen's representative in Canada. At the provincial level, the wives of the

⁸¹ The International Women's Council was extremely progressive on issues of representation. In Berlin in 1904 it struck a committee which was to address the question of political and racial equality on the Council which was to include addressing the issue of philosophically and historically defining a nation. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3598, *The International Council of Women: Resolutions from 1899-1973*, NCWC, 1973) 1.

Lieutenant-Governors were made Honorary Vice-presidents if they did not choose to take a more active role in the organization, as Lady Schultz, President of the Winnipeg Council of Women, did. Jill Vickers (1997) points out that the overwhelming Protestant and Anglo-Saxon nature of the Council naturally made Francophone women suspicious and unwilling to join the organization.⁸² Beyond the Montreal Local Council, which was dominated by affluent British-Canadian women, efforts to recruit French-Canadian women and form Councils were largely unsuccessful.⁸³ The participation of French-Canadian, as well as immigrant women, in the NCWC was unusual, and there is no evidence of the participation of Métis or aboriginal women.

The lack of representation of French-Canadian and immigrant women and organizations in local councils and the executive of the NCWC brings the ability of the organization to represent Canadian women in the political sphere into question. How could the Council act in the interests of all "Canadian women", speak for them or lobby the provincial and federal government of their behalf, when many women living in Canada were not represented within the organization? That the Council believe themselves to be acting on behalf of all Canadian women reflects their nationalism. As with the IODE, Council women felt their British values and beliefs were superior and that part of their role, as British women and as nationalists, was to instill their morality in the public sphere and other women. They mostly thought of Canada as British and reports of the

⁸² Vickers (1997), 17.

⁸³ Griffiths, 100.

local, provincial and national councils “reveal an unselfconscious acceptance of the idea that English-Canadian society had already established norms to which newcomers ... must adhere.”⁸⁴

The Winnipeg Council of Women was one of the few Councils to have a French-Canadian group affiliated with it. The presence of Catholic, French-speaking women first becomes apparent in 1896 when they begin to appear in the Minutes. In 1898, the Catholic women members of the Council moved that the opening of meetings be changed from the saying of the Lord's Prayer to silent, so that each woman can worship in her own way. This motion was carried, 24-7, showing a remarkable level of tolerance for difference within the group for the times.⁸⁵ In 1899, the Francophone and Catholic St. Boniface Ladies' Aid Society joined the Winnipeg Council ensuring the continuing presence of French and Catholic women.⁸⁶ This type of cooperation between French and English women in the Councils was very unusual, however, and in other councils the members were less willing to give up the British and Protestant rituals in order to be more inclusive.

Immigration and the NCWC

Griffiths ties the contradiction between the outward tolerance of the NCWC's constitution and their mostly intolerant policies to the large waves of

⁸⁴ Griffiths, 121.

⁸⁵ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, vol. 1, *Minutes* (July 26, 1898)

⁸⁶ Griffiths, 55.

immigration in Canada in the early twentieth century. She argues that immigration forced Canadians to consider the kind of society and culture that they wanted to build. For the majority of Council women, Canada was about peace, order and good government; therefore, "society was to be built and developed on the basis of beliefs about English values, and outside of Quebec, migrants were expected to assimilate and become part of 'English-Canada'."⁸⁷

Despite a few examples of the relative tolerance within the NCWC towards diversity, such as the acceptance of French women in the Winnipeg Council, overall its members were very concerned about the threat of increasing immigration to British-Canada. Their efforts focused on encouraging British women to emigrate⁸⁸ to Canada and providing them with a safe environment upon arrival, and ensuring that immigration overall was restricted to certain groups of people who would be easily assimilated in British-Canadian culture. As early as 1896, resolutions were passed in the Winnipeg Council recommending discrimination in Canada's immigration policy.⁸⁹ Strong-Boag argues that Western Canadian Councils were particularly concerned with the issue of immigration and the ability of Canada to assimilate immigrants and teach them

⁸⁷ Griffiths, 96.

⁸⁸ I find it interesting that when discussing British women moving to Canada, Council records describe them as emigrating, whereas when they discuss non-British peoples coming to Canada it is described as *immigrating*. This suggests a strong tie to Britain among these Canadian women and a sense that it is their home.

⁸⁹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, vol. 1, *Minutes* (March 26, 1896).

the qualities of desirable citizens.⁹⁰ This is not surprising considering that the prairies were the destination of many diverse groups of immigrants felt to be a potential threat to British hegemony. The Winnipeg Council, in cooperation with its counterparts across Canada, set out to encourage the “right type” of immigrants came to Canada, particularly in the case of women, through a number of projects including the establishment of Homes of Welcome and cooperative projects with emigration societies in England.

Part of the Winnipeg Council's desire to ensure the right kind of immigration stemmed from the shortage of servants. The NCWC has often been criticized for its preoccupation with issues related to servants as being a class-based preoccupation. Griffiths argues, however, that the need for servants was not just an elite issue as most households needed some hired help in order to manage the huge amount of work required to clean the home given the low level of technology available at the time.⁹¹ In Western Canada, the need for servants was particularly pressing in rural communities where Canadian girls were unwilling to go. As well, British-Canadian girls were becoming more educated and choosing to work in areas other than domestic service. The actions of the NCWC on the issue of domestic help reveals the conflict that existed for these women between promoting “women's interests”, as a group including workers and domestics, and the high demand for domestic help. Their stance on the immigration of women for domestic help, however, also reflects their nationalism.

⁹⁰ Strong-Boag, 247.

⁹¹ Griffiths, 37-8.

They preferred that women domestics be British; first because they generally lived with them, and, second, because in the prairies most domestics quickly married and had children. Ensuring immigrating domestic servants were British was one way Council women could ensure that British values would be reproduced in working-class children.

One of the first initiatives of the Council on the issue of immigration was the establishment of Homes of Welcome where single women could live in a safe and moral environment. The idea of establishing a Girls Home Of Welcome was first initiated in July 1897 at the Third Annual Meeting of the Winnipeg Council on the recommendation of Montreal's Women's Protective Emigration Society. This led to the creation of a Home of Welcome in Winnipeg, under the supervision and management of Mrs. Fowler of England, where girls or women arriving in Manitoba without acquaintance or who had no other place to go could stay until they found employment or suitable accommodation. Six months after the creation of the Winnipeg Home of Welcome approximately 55 women from Europe, twelve from Ontario, thirty-one from Manitoba, and forty-two transient women had stayed at the Home demonstrating the need for it.⁹² The creation of Homes of Welcome by the local Councils of Women was tied to the organization's larger goals of recruiting British women to emigrate to Canada and assimilating those that were not British. It also reflects, however, the Council members' understanding of unique concerns and experiences of single women immigrating to Canada and

⁹² Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, vol. 1, *Minutes* (January 29, 1898).

the Council's desire to ensure that these issues were addressed.

Over the next twenty years the Council of Women worked diligently with British associations, such as the Colonial Intelligence League and the British Women's Emigration Society, to ensure as many British immigrants to Canada as possible. Although the Council had initially focused on women domestics, by the end of this time British women emigrated to fill many positions in society which, because of high demand, were becoming open to women. By 1914, Mrs. J. H. R. Bond, the current president of the Winnipeg Council, affirmed that:

the Council had been instrumental in bringing out many of the right kind of immigrants and placing them in suitable positions. ... a committee of the local Council had been appointed to cooperate with the Colonial Intelligence League of London, England in regard to bringing out educated girls to Canada. Many applications were received and in 1913 it was reported that thirty educated women had been placed as teachers, hospital probationers, stenographers, domestic science teachers, and housekeepers.⁹³

Many of the lobbying efforts of the NCWC revolved around the issue of immigration. In September 1919, at the Conference on Immigration in Ottawa, the NCWC developed a series of resolutions aimed at creating minimum standards of work for household workers immigrating to Canada. The Councils voted to create a policy with Great Britain where workers would be selected based on a system of inspection, including mental and physical examinations at points of embarkation and arrival, and that the workers would be trained for the

⁹³ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, *Minutes from the Annual Meeting* (1914).

work they would be expected to undertake once they arrive in Canada.⁹⁴ The NCWC was also responsible for lobbying government to have female doctors appointed as medical examiners at the ports of debarkation in order to protect the women travelers. As with the IODE, the issues of immigration and education often overlapped in the policies of the Council. For example, they lobbied governments to legislate and enforce mandatory attendance in schools in order to get immigrant children into the school where they would be socialized and assimilated into British-Canadian culture. They also lobbied for domestic science programs in schools, arguing that "in such a school foreigners would learn our language and our way of living,"⁹⁵ and women could then pass that on to their children.

The actions of the NCWC surrounding of the immigration of domestic servants reveals the ethnocentrism of the organization. Because many of their actions in the area of immigration dealt with British women, it is difficult to ascertain whether they were acting to ensure the British nature of Canada , or to protect the rights of women, or both. Undoubtedly, they acted to protect British women because they were the future "mothers of the nation." Overall, their actions reveal an intense desire to keep Canada British, and to favour British immigration over all others.

⁹⁴ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, File 5, *Minutes*, September 20, 1919.

⁹⁵ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P3605, Newspaper clipping, "National Council of Women of Canada," July 25, 1908.

Made in Canada

One of the recurring nationalist efforts of the Winnipeg Council of Women was their participation in the Made in Canada campaign which built upon the urban woman's growing role and power as a consumer. This campaign was introduced by the Canadian Trade Commission to encourage Canadians to purchase goods made in Canada. In approaching women's organizations, such as the Winnipeg Council, the Trade Commission recognized the growing spending power of Canadian women, particularly in regard to the purchase of food, and goods for the home and family. This is an excellent example of the need for women's involvement in Canadian nationalism, and also how maternal nationalists used their role as managers of the homes of the nation as a power base within the nationalist movement. The response of the Winnipeg Council is extremely interesting. Instead of leaping at the opportunity to show their patriotism, the Council stated that it would only support the campaign if they were assured that the price of goods would not immediately increase and that the quality would be equal to that of other countries. If these conditions were met, however, "the Local Council of Women would be prepared to urge upon its members the patriotic duty of purchasing Canadian goods."⁹⁶

Winning the War

With the outbreak of World War One in Europe in 1914, the NCWC joined in the general public enthusiasm and many councils turned their attention to war

⁹⁶ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 3586, File 4, *Minutes*, April 30, 1919.

work. Mrs. Vincent Massey, the Convener of the Committee on Immigration, is an excellent example of this when, in 1918, she reports that all Council activities related to immigration had been postponed owing to the war but that she would continue to work towards a solution to the immigration problem in cooperation with the Minister of Immigration.⁹⁷

Griffiths argues that NCWC work during the war was divided in four main areas: caring for servicemen and their wives and families, raising money for war causes, the organization of supplies, and articulating support for Canada's participation in the war.⁹⁸ During the war, women's organizing increased and the Council was not an exception. Established organizations, such as the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, and new, war-related associations, such as the Khaki League, appeared and became affiliates of the Council during the war years. The national executive of the IODE and the majority of its local branches, however, chose to leave the NCWC due to the Council's affiliation with the International Council of Women which contained National Councils from the enemy nations of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria.

Winning the Vote

While Canadian women were helping Britain and her allies win the War, they were also winning the vote. The NCWC had been divided on the issue of

⁹⁷ National Archives of Canada, MG 28, I 25, vol. 67, file 3. Letter from Mrs. Vincent Massey to Mrs. Hamilton, May 28, 1918.

⁹⁸ Griffiths, 128.

women's suffrage and had only endorsed the struggle for the vote in 1910. During the war, the issue of federal suffrage continued to be one of contention. Before the federal election in December of 1917, the government passed two new electoral acts: the *Military Voters Act* which gave votes to soldiers overseas, and the *Wartime Elections Act* which took the right to vote away from new citizens who had immigrated from enemy nations. The Council of Women was divided in their support of women's suffrage. Many felt that a war was not the proper time to work towards suffrage, many more supported suffrage but disagreed over which women should get it. Griffiths argues that while the majority of the members disagreed with the partial enfranchisement granted in 1917, many of the executive supported it.⁹⁹ In 1918, the franchise was extended to most white, Canadian women over the age of twenty-one. Council women were now able to shift their lobbying efforts to reflect their new status as voters and citizens in their own right.

The National Council of Women was not as fervent in its expression of nationalism as the IODE, and its nationalism tended to focus more on the future of Canada, than on the British Empire. The organization, however, was also dominated by its British-Canadian and Protestant members beliefs. Council women used their clout as the umbrella organization of Canadian women's groups to represent the interests of "Canadian women" to all levels of government, lobbying for reform to immigration procedures and laws related to

⁹⁹ For a discussion of debate in the NCWC over the issue of suffrage see Griffiths, 136-7.

women and children. Their aim was to seek common solutions to common problems and they did this within a framework of maternal nationalism and with the ultimate goal of building a strong British nation.

Conclusion

The study of the participation of British-Canadian women in colonial nationalism in Manitoba challenges many of the assumptions about women's roles in nationalism raised in the previous chapter. Moving beyond their role as mothers of the nation and symbols of British culture and civilization, British-Canadian maternal nationalists actively participated in the process of nation-building in Canada. Through women's organizations they lobbied to influence immigration and education policy in order to ensure that the next generation would hold the values and beliefs which they believed were the foundation of British social and political culture and essential to Canada's strong growth. In doing so, they were able to advance the interests of British-Canadian women in the name of the nation. Their actions point to the need for a located analysis of women and nationalism which recognizes the specificity of both the women's movement and the nationalist project, and understands that what benefits one group of women and nation is quite often done at the expense of another.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between women and nationalism requires further study by political scientists. My concept of maternal nationalism represents one step in the development of an understanding of women's multiple roles in nationalist projects. Over the past few decades, the study of women has posed a serious challenge to the view of politics based on the experiences of white, affluent men and judges the actions of "others" by their behavior. In writing this thesis, I have attempted to take one small step towards creating an understanding of politics that takes into account the location of these "others" within society and the power relations that surround their actions and fuel their resistance.

European and Anti-colonial theories of nationalism have tended to omit the participation of women from their accounts. Even feminist analyses of nationalism have tended to view women as either biological reproducers or as symbols of the nation, ignoring the active participation of women. Through my investigation of British-Canadian colonial nationalism in Manitoba between 1900 and 1920, I discovered that British women played an important role in the project of nation-building in Canada. Furthermore, my analysis of two dominant women's groups in Manitoba at that time, the National Council of Women of Canada and the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, shows that British-Canadian women were able to use colonial nationalism to advance their own interests in the name of all women. They based their actions on an ideology of maternalism, arguing that as mothers they had the skills and the moral authority necessary to nurture the young British-Canadian nation into maturity. Maternal nationalism was the

interaction between maternal feminism and colonial nationalism. Maternal nationalists devoutly believed that the combination of British culture and the values of motherhood would ensure Canada's success.

In this thesis, I have argued that dominant theories of nationalism which fail to take into account the role of women - whether as symbols, as mothers, or as activists - are problematic. Certainly, they cannot explain the essential role of British women in Canadian colonial nationalism. I also outlined the theories, mostly feminist, which have addressed the relationship between women and nationalism. The participation of maternal nationalists can be distinguished from many of these other accounts by the interconnection between advancing women's rights and the good of the nation, as they saw it. British-Canadian maternal nationalists used colonial nationalism to justify their presence in the public sphere. As more women became professionally employed, the British-Canadian women's movement continued to extend their influence into Canadian politics. They lobbied governments on school curricula and immigration, and created symbols and tools aimed at assimilating the immigrant and French-Canadian population. With the extension of the franchise to most Canadian women by 1918, maternal nationalists were able to shift their lobbying efforts to reflect their increased rights as citizens and voters.

Exploring Canada's Identity Crisis

In writing this thesis, I have attempted to uncover some of the roots of Canada's identity crisis. This crisis is not the result of a recent rise of "identity

politics”; identity politics have always existed in Canada. Previously, many political scientists theorizing English-Canadian identity have done so in a way that ignores class, gender, location, and the ethnic origins of the dominant value system. Part of the project of this thesis is to rediscover those origins and to explore how they shape our present situation.

I argue that the women who belonged to the IODE and NCWC had very specific identities and locations within Canadian society. They were white, British, Protestant, educated, and affluent, and these identities accorded them a privileged place in their communities. They used the power that accompanied their position to preserve their privilege and the dominance of the British ethnic group in Canada. Their goal was to ensure that British-Canada and Canada were one and the same. Over the past century, British-Canada has become English-Canada as its ethnicity has gradually been erased. “English” no longer refers to an ethnic group, but to the language spoken by most Canadians outside of Quebec. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult to recognize the difference between English-Canadian and pan-Canadian identity and nationalism. This obfuscation is at the base of our identity crisis. Until English-Canada recognizes its ethnic roots, it will not be able to understand why Quebec feels threatened by them. I believe that by investigating the identities that were central to the building of English-Canada and challenging their values and assumptions, we can better understand our present political reality.

Areas for Further Research

I have, in researching and writing this thesis, touched on a wide variety of disciplines and subjects. I have questioned English-Canada's identity and the myths upon which it was built. I have also questioned the relationship between women and nationalism. I have discovered that British-Canadian women in the early twentieth century were active nationalists. Maternal nationalism, however, is only the beginning of an answer. Canada provides other instances where women's activism and nationalist movements intersect. The most obvious of these is the relationship between Quebec nationalism and the Quebec women's movement. Other examples can be seen within Aboriginal nationalisms, for example Mohawk nationalism. Also, we cannot ignore the role of women and women's organizations, such as REAL Women, in the construction of the New Right's vision of Canada. These relationships, and more, need to be explored.

We also need to ask the question of why there are so many instances in Canada of women's active participation in nationalist projects? One area which I hope to be able to explore further is the effects of women's participation in Canadian nationalisms on women who do not belong to the "nation." For example, what effect did British-Canadian maternal nationalists have on Aboriginal, immigrant and French-Canadian women beyond the initial findings of this study? Finally, within the study of Canadian politics, the evolution of the relationship between women's organizations and English-Canadian nationalism needs to be explored. As maternalism is replaced by the equal-rights feminism of the second wave how does this challenge the role of women in Canadian

nationalist projects? As women's groups begin to challenge the category women and recognize the diversity of experiences within it, how do they relate to the nation?

This thesis has also raised a number of questions about the relationship between women and nationalism beyond the Canadian context. The first pressing area for research is a comparative study which searches for evidence of maternal nationalism outside of Canada. Did it exist in Australia, New Zealand or South Africa? Does a similar relationship exist outside of British colonial nationalisms? I also believe, however, that we need to remain open to other types of women's movements and feminisms and the different ways in which they interact with nationalisms.

Feminists continue to challenge traditional political science to include women and their activities within the discourse. In this thesis, I argued, using the example of British-Canadian maternal nationalism, that women can and do play important roles in nationalisms. By continuing to explore the relationship between women and nationalism in a way which takes into account location and diversity, I hope to continue to explore the questions raised in this thesis and others.

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