The Otherings of Miss Chief : Kent Monkman's Portrait of the Artist as Hunter

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ABSTRACT

Kent Monkman's *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* (2002) is a narrative painting which prominently displays social perspectives in order to re-imagine marginalised identities. The imagery in the painting challenges normative histories of Native, queer and queer Native existence through visual discontinuities and re-appropriations of Euro-North American art of the nineteenth century. This is accomplished largely through the use of camp irony, a phenomenon associated mainly with the queer community.

It is through a re-imagining of identity that a space can be created for previously occluded voices. In *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* we can see how the post-colonial phenomenon of hybridity functions in ways which are harmonious with queer camp's ontological critique of the normative.

Critical texts on Kent Monkman's work are proliferating. Works such as *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* exemplify his understanding of contemporary pluralistic societies and the multiplicity of realities they represent, making it difficult to settle for a singular definition of the Aboriginal male, the queer man or the queer Native man.

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INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is a multi-layered account of Kent Monkman's painting, *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*. In this paper I examine the artist's multiple subject positions through a careful visual analysis of the work, combining Aboriginal studies, queer, post-colonial and post-modern theories. This interdisciplinary approach helps create an enriched view of the painting's social-political ramifications.

The first chapter describes how the painting refers to popular images of nineteenth century Euro-North American constructions of gender, sexuality and race. Chapter Two discusses Aboriginal and European gender and sexual constructs and the effects of their mis-translations. Chapter Three argues that the painting uses nineteenth century conventions to expose the limitations of twenty-first century constructions of masculinity, gender, sexuality and race through the lens of popular culture and camp sensibilities. The final chapter argues that *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a blueprint for a re-imagining of the categories discussed in this thesis to reflect a pluralistic, twenty-first century North American society.

The chapters are further sectioned by sub-titles and listed in a table of contents. These details reflect Monkman's imitation of the nineteenth century, since their form is modeled after George Catlin's book, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians* of 1866. The sub-titles also serve as expository phrases, little poetic distillations of the ensuing content.

Literature Review

In each chapter I draw on my reading of many researchers, historians and theorists whose work made it possible for me to shape my own arguments. First and foremost is my primary source, the artist Kent Monkman, who has proven very generous with his time in the interviews I conducted with him (2006 and 2007). It was his talk at the Musée des Beaux Arts in Montreal (2006), however, which proved most instructive, where he eloquently iterated and reiterated many points relevant to this research. Among the books I used to develop an understanding of nineteenth century Euro-North American society are E. Anthony Rotundo's *American Manhood* (1993), Andrew C. Isenberg's *The Destruction of the Bison* (2000), Melissa Dabakis's *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* (1999), Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1973) and Charles E. Roseberg's article "Sexuality, Class and Role in Nineteenth Century America" in *The American Man* (1980). Together with Norman Bryson's article "Géricault and 'Masculinity'" in *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation* (1994) and the chapter entitled "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in Laura Mulvey's *Visual and Other Pleasures* (1989), these have helped me establish nineteenth century antecedents to contemporary views on masculinity, sexuality and post-colonialism. For the different perspectives on the role of the historical "berdache" in understanding Native gender constructions, Harriet Whitehead's article "The Bow and the Burden Strap" in *Sexual Meaning* (1981) and Richard C. Trexler's *Sex and Conquest* (1995) were useful in outlining dominant anthropological debates on the subject, while Jonathan Ned Katz's *Gay American History* (1992) proved to be an excellent resource for European historical writings on the sexual and gender practices of the First Peoples. For information and

perspectives on contemporary Native gender constructions and the Two-Spirit category, Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas and Sabine Lang's anthology, *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality* (1997) as well as Will Roscoe's article "Living the Tradition: Gay American Indians" in *Gay Spirit: Myth and Meaning* (1987) were excellent sources of information. The interplay of queer, post-structural and postcolonial theory I used to discuss Monkman's historical re-constructions and re-imaginings is drawn from a number of sources. In terms of queer theory, Susan Sontag's foundational article "Notes on 'Camp'" in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (1966) was essential, while Judith Butler's article "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" and Sue-Ellen Case's article "Towards a Butch-Femme Aesthetic" in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (1993), as well as Moe Meyers' anthology *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (1992) and Micha Ramakers' *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality* (2000) give an updated interpretation of the identity of the sexual other. I owe much to post-structuralist theory such as Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (1990), Roland Barthes' article "Death of the Author" in *Image/Music/Text* (1977) and finally to post-colonial theory, in particular Homi K. Bhabha's article "Signs Taken for Wonders" in *The Location of Culture* (1994), Geeta Kapur's article "A New Inter Nationalism: The Missing Hyphen" and Sarat Maharaj's article "Perfidious Fidelity: the Untranslatability of the Other", both in Jean Fisher's anthology *Global Visions: Towards a New Internationalism in the Visual Arts* (1994).

CHAPTER 1

Portrait of the Artist as Hunter, pp 1 –
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Portrait of the Artist as Hunter

All seems peaceful in the Contemporary Arts section at the National Gallery of Canada. It is 2005 in the nation's capital and we are strolling through the museum where, eventually, we come to the First Nations gallery. Among the contemporary art works by Native artists hangs a small gilded frame containing an acrylic painting by Kent Monkman titled *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* (see figure 1). The painting contains the scene of a dry prairie landscape stretching out under an imposing blue sky. Massive cumulus clouds edged in gold majestically sail across the horizon. The left side of the canvas appears hazy with dust raised by the hooves of countless stampeding buffalo. In the foreground are the mounted instigators of the stampede: an Indian¹ chasing a lone cowboy with two other Indians in the middle ground who have their backs turned to us, concentrating their attention on the maddened herd. At first glance this piece hardly seems to fit with the large Carl Beam, Jane Ashe Poitras and other evocative works in the gallery. Erudite or vulgar visitors may sniff disdainfully at the little painting and walk by or wonder why it has not been placed, instead, in the nineteenth century collection, while others might pause to consider it more closely. It is the more curious who will discover

¹ Throughout this paper I shall be using the word 'Indian' when referencing Euro-North American constructions of the Aboriginal male. I will interchangeably use the terms Aboriginal, Native and First Peoples when I refer to my conception of the actual First Peoples of North America and their experiences. My choice to use these terms in this way comes from noticing how Kent Monkman used all four of these terms interchangeably.

that, as with most assumptions of stereotypes, not all is as it seems. This subtle inversion of expectations is just the first of a series of Kent Monkman's ironic juxtapositions.

Apart from the fact that the work is dated 2002, the curious will notice that the scene, which we recognize as the ubiquitous nineteenth century image of the buffalo hunt, contains representational discrepancies. The human figures astride their horses and the maddened herd of buffalo are all pictured moving from left to right... or almost. There is one lone buffalo to the far right who has turned and, with an almost human expression of surprise and shock, seems to realize that he is not the object of the chase, a foreshadowing of the increasing divergences in the work. The Indian in the foreground is in full regalia while the cowboy ahead wears typical Old West gear, or so it seems. While the cowboy is indeed sporting a cowboy shirt, gallon hat, cowboy boots and chaps, he is not wearing the typical dusty denim jeans of his occupation. In fact, he is not wearing any pants at all; his buttocks are bare and in full view, while his scrotum hangs pendulously between his legs as he coaxes his stallion onward – notice how the horse's sex has been clearly depicted – his blue shirt open and flapping in the breeze (see figure 3). The Indian is no less interesting and unusual, wearing full regalia unlike anything documented by Edward S. Curtis (see figure 4)². Instead of a tan-coloured buckskin loin cloth, this particular Indian brave is wearing yards of a sequined pink material which is streaming out from between bare legs like an extravagant pennant with feet not bare or shod in moccasins but in pink platform high-heeled shoes replete with mascaraed (or kholed)

² Edward S. Curtis, the famous photographer and author of *The North American Indian* project photographed portraits of, and photographically documented the traditions of Aboriginal peoples living West of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers from 1907-30. His work has been used as ethnographic material with controversy because he is known to have altered the appearance of his subjects to obtain a greater 'authentic primitivism', according to Euro-North American stereotypes of Native peoples. See Mick Gidley's "Pictorial Elements in Edward S. Curtis's Photographic Representation of American Indians", *The Yearbook of English Studies* (Vol. 24, Ethnicity and Representation in American Literature, 1994): 180-192.

eyes, lips rouged and – the crowning element – a ceremonial feathered headdress, atypically worn during a hunt, making for a magnificently flamboyant and gay appearance (see figure 2). How unusual and droll these two are. How suggestive and unexpected. The initial juxtaposition of meanings - contemporary vs. classic – is upset when the viewer notices these odd discrepancies from the expected, normalized image of the Far West. The reversals of power dynamics are surprising – the Indian is hunting the cowboy, and the butch cowboy is being pursued by the flamboyantly effeminate Indian, his butt exposed (a sign that he is to be dominated by his pursuant), his shirt open (further undressing him and signalling his desirability and vulnerability to sexual contact). Meanings and roles perform a series of flip-flops that leave our curious viewer feeling perhaps dizzy, perhaps amused and, hopefully, hooked into wanting to learn more.

Monkman appropriates European representations of the Native man and introduces his own experiences of multiple ‘otherings’ into the work.³ In so doing, he transforms the nineteenth century narrative of the buffalo hunt into a socially relevant commentary on the twenty-first century. The artist has identified the gender-bending Native man in the painting as a persona of himself, naming the figure Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle⁴ and identifies both himself and his alter-ego (see Figure 5) as queer.⁵ The artist's father is Cree and, while his mother is Irish, he identifies primarily with his Native roots. In conversation with me, Mr Monkman said that, as a child, he grew up in a

³ A working definition in this paper of the 'other' is that which is anything other than what is the most powerful group in any given society. In North America the other is anyone who is not White, male, heterosexual, middle class, middle aged, urban and married.

⁴ Kent Monkman, "I Placed My Alter-Ego In the Painting", *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*, accessed June 17, 2006, <http://cybermuse.beaux-arts.ca/cybermuse/docs/MonkmanClip9_e.pdf>; Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁵ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007. In this paper I will be using the word "queer" to denote a contemporary construction of non-heterosexual variability.

predominantly white neighbourhood and was identified by those with whom he came into contact as Indian; hence his primary identification is with his First Nations heritage.⁶ Miss Chief, then, is a representation of a cross-dressing, queer Native man, empowered and, evidenced by the interaction between her and the cowboy, sexually powerful, all of which are identifiers at odds with the dominant (i.e. white, middle-aged, middle-class, and heterosexual) male social ideal.

Images of sex between two men or even images of sexual pursuit, as in this case, where the apparently effeminate man is aggressively pursuing the apparently masculine one, are images our culture is largely unaccustomed to seeing. In fact, it is not so much the juxtaposition of Native/Euro-North American and gay sex that is shocking, but rather the fact that we can recognize these signifiers as functioning as one unit and make sense of the results. The painting communicates realities that have been traditionally occluded in Western society's dominant historical narratives. Fellow non-Euro Canadian artist Jin Me Yoon's comments about her own oeuvre apply very well to Monkman's work:

In paying attention to my life, I find that what may appear to be personal narratives in fact implicate larger social and historical considerations. Seen in this light, what I choose to recount is no longer about me as an isolated individual.⁷

Like Yoon, Monkman chooses to tell instructive stories in his work, using his subjective position to comment on a number of broader issues that coalesce in this single image.

Miss Chief and the Cowboy are a joining of multiple parts of society: Whites and Indians, men and masculinity, homosexuals, cross dressers and cowboys. The signifiers for each of these groups are readily recognizable. By creating a work of art like *Portrait of the*

⁶ Kent Monkman, written interview with the artist, August 14, 2006.

⁷ Jin-Me Yoon, "Jin-Me Yoon", *ArtSpots*, accessed June 11, 2006, <<http://www.cbc.ca/artspots/html/artists/jyoon/>>.

Artist as Hunter, Monkman is sending out into the public sphere his views. The public will recognise, if not all, at least some of the symbols, figures and actions used in the piece, and will build an understanding of the themes intended by the creator of the work according to their own levels of knowledge.

Portrait of the Artist as Hunter is based on a painting by nineteenth century painter John Mix Stanley entitled *Buffalo Hunt* (see figure 6). The buffalo hunt is a subject that has been taken up by many nineteenth century Euro-North American artists,⁸ an iconography of the Far West typical of this period, easily familiar to contemporary viewers. Paintings of the Western Frontier peaked in popularity in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, succumbing in popularity thereafter to the emerging modernist movement. It is ironic that the Western painting genre should have declined in favour because it claimed to document the traditions of what was believed to be a dying people, yet Aboriginal nations continue to thrive and develop while these paintings are now a nostalgic art form. One of the basic messages in Monkman's work is that these works document the perceptions of the nineteenth century Euro-North American male about himself.⁹ As a Native man, Monkman appropriates the Romantic Western genre and re-inserts this imagery into mainstream contemporary art to speak of topical issues. The transformation of meaning from John Mix Stanley's appropriation of Native representations in the nineteenth century into Kent Monkman's appropriation of *Buffalo Hunt* brings into question inherited assumptions about the relationship between cultures, gender expressions and sexualities. We shall begin, then, with an overview of the

⁸ A few of the nineteenth and early twentieth century artists who exploited the image of the buffalo hunt are: Albert Bierstadt, Charles Wimar, Peter Rindisbacher, Seth Eastman, Alfred Jacob Miller, Charles Marion Russell, Walter Shirlaw, Rosa Bonheur.

⁹ David Liss, "Kent Monkman: Miss Chief Returns", *Canadian Art* (Fall 2005; 22, 3): 80

motivations behind the creation of the buffalo hunt image as it relates to our discussion of masculinities and Native males in nineteenth century North America.

Everything Comes from Somewhere

The following is common in nineteenth century American Western imagery: astride his steed, among the clamour of attacking huntsmen and the bellows of desperate bison, the Indian brave cocks his arrow, his magnificent, taught muscles rippling in his arms and torso as he draws his bow, displaying a physique perfected in the noble quest to defend and provide food for his people. In the foreground, a defiant bison has bowled over another fine horse, throwing off its manly-limbed rider. A third athletically built Native man, his mount with muscles as oiled and fit as his owner's, looks on, circling. This cursory description of an 1873 engraving by W. W. Rice after an original work by Felix O.C. Darley entitled *Hunting the Buffalo* (see figure 8) could have described George Catlin's *Buffalo Chase, Bulls Making Battle with Men and Horses* (see figure 9) from 1844, or John Mix Stanley's *Buffalo Hunt on the Southwestern Prairies* (see figure 10) from 1845, or yet again Frederic Remington's *The Buffalo Hunt* (see figure 12) from 1890. While there are variations in the pictorial elements such as dress, levels of drama and the skill of the artist, the subject is the same. All of them depict the Indian man in mortal struggle with his quarry: the large, powerful, shaggy, wild, horned bison. In all of these works, the Indian – the typical Red Skin – moves as one with his steed, hands free to strike down the wild beast. This repetition of a common theme describes a period in history that has obscured the reality of the historical and contemporary Native man, a stereotype Kent Monkman seeks to undermine.¹⁰

¹⁰ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

The artists of the above-mentioned works visually described their interpretations of nineteenth century Victorian North America's idea of machismo by creating the image of the Indian man as a powerful being with his strong, perfect body, almost supernatural skill with the horse and his manful ability with the bow and arrow so deadly that he could fell a beast as massive and dangerous as the wild buffalo. These artists appropriated the image of the Indian male and presented him as a mysterious, exotic figure; the subject of romanticized notions of the Noble Savage, alluring and dangerous; a mythological creature constructed by Euro-North American ideas, egos and desires that persisted long after their hey-day.¹¹ In a book by Harold McCracken published in 1959 on the writing and paintings of nineteenth century artist George Catlin (whom we shall discuss intermittently throughout this paper) titled *George Catlin and the Old Frontier*, there is a chapter titled "The Magnificent Male",¹² which contains a description of the Aboriginal man and the buffalo hunt:

There was hardly an able-bodied tribesman throughout the whole Northwest who was not an enthusiastic hunter, as well as a bold and daring warrior, and a magnificent male on constant parade... Almost always astride a spirited horse's back, these red knights of the northern prairies took real delight in dashing at full speed into a stampeding herd of buffalo to sink arrows or spears into the side of a shaggy quarry...¹³

First Nations people are real individuals with real histories, living lives that exist outside the tales created by European storytellers such as McCracken. They are subjugated and cast as the 'other' by a dominantly European society that uses its own idea of itself as the model for a pure, idealized original against which all else is measured. As a storytelling medium and device, the powerful viscosity of the plastic arts, such as

¹¹ For a discussion on ancient European origins of the Noble Savage myth, see Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1973): 47-48.

¹² Harold McCracken, *George Catlin and the Old Frontier* (New York: Dial Press, 1959).

¹³ Harold McCracken, *George Catlin and the Old Frontier* (New York: Dial Press, 1959): 75

painting, make for a potent vehicle for transforming the perceptions of a society. It is the misinformation presented by such works as buffalo hunt paintings that can become entrenched as the truth. European artworks from North America have often been criticized as inaccurate, even by their contemporaries.

The longstanding controversy over artistic licence and historical accuracy in painting emerges in the case of nineteenth century American paintings of the Far West. American artists from Catlin on insisted that their works were meant to be factual before they were art. "Though frequently used as historical documents that convey information about newly discovered lands and native peoples, [Euro-North American] paintings ... are works of art – visual images based on firsthand observations but created by an individual making aesthetic as well as reportorial decisions."¹⁴ These artists had to deal with the contentious meeting of art and fact. Where the weight of Salon history and the idealization of reality influenced the artist, art won out.¹⁵ For example, another celebrated painter of the Far West, Albert Bierstadt, gained great success from his paintings of the Yosemite Valley. Take, for instance, *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, completed in 1863 (see figure 7). After 1869, once the railroad across the United States had been completed, Yosemite had become a tourist stop. Previous admirers of Bierstadt's work, expecting to see exactly the image the artist had painted, were outraged to note to what degree he had veered from the appearance of the actual location for the purpose of creating an epic landscape.¹⁶ As the art of the American West began to lose favour to

¹⁴ Nancy K. Anderson, "Curious Historical Artistic Data", in *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts* (New Haven: Yale University Press: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992): 5

¹⁵ By "Salon history", what I refer to here is the construction of the category of art along the lines developed by critical precedence which influence the reception of a work, of an artist's body of work, and how that effects the marketability of the artist's work. See Norman Bryson, "Géricault and 'Masculinity'": 256.

¹⁶ Nancy K. Anderson, "Curious Historical Artistic Data": 12

modernism early on in the twentieth century, these paintings continued to be used by other branches of scholarly interest such as history, anthropology and ethnography, responding to the need for records of early peoples.¹⁷ There are obvious problems in these disciplines of social studies adopting inaccurate images to define a people; these documents are not factual but aesthetic representations and further, appropriations, of the representation of First Nations peoples and traditions.

The pervasive presence of these portraits in North American culture, in particular in the form of the popular nineteenth century prints sold to the middle-class, may explain why the use of these portraits was deemed acceptable by early twentieth century anthropologists. Far more probable is that these anthropologists had not yet come to question the veracity of the myth of the Native man exemplified by these prints, therefore giving them the false status of 'historical records'. There is a lithograph by Louis Maurer published by Currier & Ives which dates back to 1858 titled *The Surprise* (see figure 13). In it, a Euro-North American trapper is chasing an Indian on horseback. The former is throwing a lasso over the Indian (who is much larger than the trapper). The Indian is doing his best to escape and, with an expression of dismay, glances up to see the rope coming down over his head. Although this could be interpreted as playful, humorous or satiric, other works of the same time period indicate that it is descriptive of similar types of events depicting the battle for domination of the lands of North America. The relationship established between Native and Euro-North American can further be witnessed in another work published by Currier & Ives, this one by Arthur F. Tait, entitled *The Hunters' Stratagem* of 1862 (see figure 14). In it, a trio of Euro-North American men in the foreground are looking down the barrels of their guns, fixing their

¹⁷ Nancy K. Anderson, "Curious Historical Artistic Data": 25-31

prey in their sights. They are not aiming at the plentiful buffalo but at a trio of Indians with tomahawks sneaking up on decoys which the hunters (presumably) have concocted to be mannequins of themselves. What does the title mean; who are the hunters and what are they hunting? A *stratagem* is a ruse, and in this instance the ruse is the decoys planned and made by the Euro-North American hunters to flush out the Indians; their prey is the Indian. Hunters hunt wild game – animals – not people.

Today these works are disturbing, especially with titles like this, *The Hunters' Stratagem*, and doubly so since the publishing house of Currier & Ives is considered to have been one of the premier producers of decorative lithographs in America in the late nineteenth century.¹⁸ The success of this firm is attributed to the great variety of subjects their prints covered and an apparent willingness to publish images that contradict each other's political positions. For example, while publishing various abolitionist tracts Currier & Ives also published a series of racist cartoons titled "Darktown".¹⁹ The apparent lack of moral consistency displays an "indiscriminate instinct for marketable themes."²⁰ In other words, what sold well was published, and there was a market for images such as *The Surprise* and *The Hunter's Stratagem*. These images display an objectification of the First Nations individual, disseminated in significant numbers to a Euro-North American populace who would have had little or no direct contact with Aboriginal peoples to develop their own opinions. The violence perpetrated by this kind of social conditioning is an act of desensitising the population to the humanity of Native peoples. If your enemy

¹⁸ Frederick G. Ruffner Jr., "Publisher's Note," *Currier & Ives: a Catalogue Raisonne*, Vol 1, Detroit, M.I.: Gale Research, 1984: v.

¹⁹ Bernard F. Reilly Jr., "Introduction," *Currier & Ives: a Catalogue Raisonne*. Vol 1, Detroit, M.I.: Gale Research, 1984: xxvii

²⁰ Bernard F. Reilly Jr., "Introduction," *Currier & Ives: a Catalogue Raisonne*: xxvii

is not human, then one can justify any kind of violence or injustice done to them, allowing the dominant group to carry out its plans without considering the fate of those under its domination. According to Richard Trexler, conceptually bestializing the enemy to justify his destruction appears to be an old human tradition, reaching back to antiquity.²¹ In North America, European expansionism was pursued at the expense of Aboriginal populations. For expansion to occur, the European nations invading the Americas acquired the land by defeating the Native inhabitants through war, disease, legislation and treachery. To be different from the conqueror, who has become the dominant social group, is to be cast into the role of the other, the deficient, and in this case, the non-Euro-North American.

As the conquered, the other is perceived as something to be controlled so that the dominant can proceed with its own development. What has to be controlled needs to be tamed. Since it is unlike the dominant group, it is considered to be simple, uncivilized, savage, and barely human.²² The European mind's ability to comprehend such culturally different peoples was so deficient that the original inhabitants of the Americas were even enslaved.²³ This subjugation permitted the imposition of a whole history of Euro-North American romanticising of Native peoples. The lithographs described above by Louis Maurer and Felix O.C. Darley were created not from actual accounts but from images by other artists such as Karl Bodmer and George Catlin. Darley's prints have been published in literary works (by such notable authors as James Fennimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edgar Allen Poe), on bank notes and in

²¹ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995): 17

²² Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 130

²³ In 1709 New France had 3000 Native slaves and 1700 African slaves. See Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada* (London, New Haven, Montreal: Yale University Press, 1972): pp 271.

various widely-read magazines (such as *Harper's Weekly* and his work lauded in *The Pennsylvanian* and *The Literary Age*).²⁴ His fictionalised representations of Native men, with such a large viewership, became the standard image of the Indian for Euro-North Americans.²⁵ In the May 1, 1858 issue of *Harper's Weekly* where three of his works were published, the accompanying article stated that "(o)f all the artists who have made Indian life their study, Mr. Darley has been, without a doubt, the most successful."²⁶ Apart from the fact that he did not directly document the Native peoples of his time but depended on Catlin's work, Darley himself never travelled west of the Alleghenies.²⁷

Darley's work exemplifies the perpetuated image – the symbol of raw masculine power – embodied by the mythologized Native man as the Noble Savage. For instance, in Darley's *Hunting the Buffalo*, engraved by W.W. Rice after the Wellstood Collection (see figure 8),²⁸ male nudity and eroticism reveal a powerful virility in his Indian figures. This show of manly prowess and skill would be one that could be appreciated by a European audience. And yet nudity also identified the Native man as being animalistic and inferior to the European who was in these images; for the latter was for the large part properly dressed, i.e.: his body fully covered by clothing from neck to toes. Although European tradition has depicted classical heroes, gods and allegorical figures in the nude, civilized contemporary people were generally clothed in nineteenth century paintings, largely due

²⁴ John C. Ewers, "Not Quite Redmen: The Plains Indians Illustrations of Felix O.C. Darley," *American Art Journal*, (Autumn, 1971, vol. 3, No. 2, New York: Kennedy Galleries): 88.

²⁵ Martha A. Sandweiss, "The Public Life of Western Art," *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts* (New Haven: Yale University Press: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992): 132

²⁶ Rena N. Coen, "The Last of the Buffalo," *American Art Journal*, (Nov. 1973, Vol. 5, No. 2, New York: Kennedy Galleries): pp 91

²⁷ John C. Ewers, "Not Quite Redmen" *American Art Journal* : 92

²⁸ John C. Ewers, "Not Quite Redmen" *American Art Journal* : 95, 96

to an aversion to nudity in art, especially male nudity, in popular Victorian culture of colonial America.²⁹

The state of nudity places the Indian figure in a category inferior to that of the Euro-North American. Look, for example, at the hierarchy depicted in Darley's untitled work identified simply as *Trapper and Indian* (see figure 15). The composition implies levels of social importance and value. Three figures appear to be taking a moment of rest, bits of flora in the background suggesting some sylvan setting. The fully clothed Euro-North American man is standing at his ease, his arm and chin leaning on his rifle. It is the trapper's figure which occupies most of the left hand side of the picture, a physical presence which lends structure to the rest of the image. The Indian is seated in the right-hand portion of the image, only one half of his muscular body visible, his torso naked. Although the tones used to depict his skin are darker than those used to describe the trapper's face and hands, the overall effect is lighter, since the trapper's clothing, the markers of civilization, are much darker, while the Indian's skin has the same tonal quality as the landscape. Although he fills the bottom right quarter of the image, his body, for all its exoticism, is less solid than the trapper's darker, more opaque clothing. The tones used suggest the frame, extending up into the tortured bush above his head on the little hill. He is vigilant, his burning eyes stern with distrust, staring out of the picture plane at the viewer. A dog, with only its head visible in the bottom left at the trapper's knee, is positioned lower than the Indian, and of course is rendered completely naked (as far as we can tell). As vigilant as the Indian, the dog is looking away from its companions, its attention attracted by something to the left and beyond the picture's

²⁹ Robert O. Mellow, *Nineteenth Century Attitudes Towards the Nude Figure in Art*, Ph.D. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 1975: 1 ; Margaret Walters, *The Nude Male* (New York: Paddington Press, 1978): 228-230

frame. The dark parts of the dog's fur extend the framing darkness of the trapper's clothing down to the bottom of the image, while its white snout permits for the curved shaping of the bottom, its paleness fading out with the landscape on the bottom right of the image.

Mr Darley is telling a story here. The artist made choices in representing his subjects in a hierarchy of dominance. The trapper is most prominent in the image, while the dog and the Indian, through position, garb and tonality, remain subordinate to him. The trapper, as the superior being, is fully clothed and confident. The Indian, subordinate in position to the trapper, is half-naked and wary, like a wild beast. The domesticated dog trusts his master and remains close to him, yet is on watch to protect him. In contrasting the two human subjects by representing his Euro-North American subject as fully clothed and his Aboriginal subject with a naked torso, wearing (Darley's interpretation of) traditional and, to the nineteenth century European mind, exotic and uncivilized accoutrements, the artist is responding to perceptions, contemporary to his time, of the social, cultural and biological hierarchy of Euro-North Americans and Natives, based on Darwinian imperatives.³⁰ The Indian's 'wildness' of dress (including nakedness) and expression relate him to the dog, placing him somewhere between human and animal, making of him a symbol of the natural world by the tonal similarities between him and

³⁰ Margaret Walters, *The Nude Male* : 230; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* (Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 91; William H. Gerdts, *The Great American Nude* (New York: Praeger, 1974): 14; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1973): 145

the landscape.³¹ The Indian is one with the land as one of its wild denizens, not as its custodian.³²

The Surprise, published by Currier and Ives in 1858 (see figure 13), shows a similar consideration of the Indian, showing a figure just as exotic, partially nude and classically muscular as the Indian in the previously discussed lithograph. He is being roped as if he were a calf in a rodeo ring. The Indian dwarfs his horse, showing the viewer that he is not closer to us in the picture plane but noticeably larger than the two Euro-North American trappers. Dominance here is described within another hierarchy based on Darwinism, where the Indian's size puts on emphasis on his physical brutishness, his nakedness equating him to the primitive beast, his massiveness aligning him with the wild buffalo. In *The Surprise* the Indian is helpless against the lasso, sign of Euro-North American ingenuity triumphant against the bestial Redman. To underscore the aggression towards the Native man, a second trapper in the background is watching this sport, gun at the ready.

While the expressions of the players in this last image are indicative of Euro-North Americans animosity towards Aborigines, the gruesome hunt depicted in Currier & Ives' 1862 lithograph *The Hunters' Stratagem* (see figure 14) makes this explicitly evident. The Euro-North American men in the foreground, again fully dressed, are hiding behind a fallen tree, guns aimed and cocked. The log in the foreground and the vines climbing the tree in the middle-ground, to the left, frame the scene from the hunters'

³¹ In describing Frederick Remington's *The Courier du Bois and the Savage*, 1892, Melissa Dabakis concurs that the "opposition of fully clad frontiersman to naked savage posited the racist divide between nature and domination." See Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* : 100

³² What I intend here is not a contemporary interpretation of the First Nations individual as the keepers of the land. I am referring to Biblical imperatives that Man is the Custodian of the Earth, so that the European, as the righteous Christian, has a right to possess the land as its master, while the Indian, as the savage beast, does not because he is part of the land.

perspective implicating the viewer; we are looking out in the same direction as the hunters, we are behind the protection of the log with them, we are on *this* side of the line of conflict. What we and the hunters are looking at is framed on two sides by the log and vines. The decoys are recognizably made to look like the hunters dressed as they are in Euro-North American-styled clothing, displaying again their ingenuity at fooling the 'savages' for, creeping up on the decoys, is a gang of wild 'injuns', tomahawks raised for the kill. The latter are skulking behind a second fallen tree which runs horizontally across the framed area we are observing, which occupies the top third of the image. This is the second social line drawn between the civilizing hunters and the animalistic Indians. The third division is in the title which describes the attitudes brought to this situation; it does not describe a war, it identifies a hunt. Decoys are used to hunt ducks, not humans. The enemy is no longer a man but is equated with hunted animals, and animals were not much more than objects, possessions or sport, to be exploited or slaughtered as was perceived as being most useful or pleasurable to the dominant humans.

The philosophies of philanthropic movements also underscored the insistence on difference between Euro-North Americans and First Peoples. Preservationist movements to protect the American West emerged in the nineteenth century. The artist George Catlin³³ suggested in 1832 that a national park be established not only for the bison that were being decimated but also for Natives so that they "might in future be seen preserved in their pristine beauty and wildness, in a magnificent park."³⁴ Although Catlin was undoubtedly expressing a noble sentiment for the preservation of a species and of cultures, this quote demonstrates the equation Euro-North Americans made between

³³ For examples of Catlin's work see figure 9, 17, 19, 25.

³⁴ Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* : 164; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 101

'wilderness' and 'animal'. Both the bison and the Indians of Catlin's proposal should be *preserved in their pristine beauty and wildness*. If the Indian was considered a 'wild' creature, it would stand to reason that partial nudity would be acceptable since it was the natural state of wild animals to be without clothing. For all the physical differences depicted in nineteenth century Euro-North American art between White and Native bodies, the similarities are just as noticeable.³⁵

Making-Up Maleness

The bestialising of the Aboriginal other in nineteenth century popular opinion and art allowed for the Native male to be used as a foil against which Euro-North American males could bolster their own sense of masculinity. The twisting, muscular torsos in Darley's *Hunting the Buffalo* (see figure 8) are almost Grecian in male athletic perfection, the manly feats depicted are daring and brave and dangerous. Images such as this are nevertheless interpretations of a Euro-North American fancy that cast the Native man in a role concocted to appeal to popular tastes, an image constructed along Eurocentric notions to serve its own purposes, not to empathize with the First Nations man but to use his image to further Euro-North American masculine ideals. Darley's sleek, muscular, exotic males are beautiful and, in their extreme masculinity, sexually powerful, yet their image was employed by Euro-North Americans to ease anxiety about their own masculine potency.

³⁵ In "Sexuality, Class and Role in Nineteenth Century America", Charles E. Rosenberg describes the astonishment of a nineteenth century doctor who discovered, during a gynaecological survey of the Oneida people, that the Oneida women had the same genital configurations as European women. This observation was not only based on perceived physical difference but on cultural and social differences, for the Victorians believed that sexual intercourse during youth brought about sexual debility; while it was known to the researchers that sexual experiences were widespread among the Oneida youth. In *The American Man*, ed. Elizabeth H. and Joseph H. Pleck, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980): 227

The link between buffalo and Indian in the Euro-North American mind went beyond the establishment of preserves. Catlin's suggestion for preserves for bison and Natives was first mentioned in 1832, but North American governments did not immediately act on his ideas, for they welcomed the decline of the bison as a means to force hungry First Peoples to comply to the reservation system.³⁶ The preservationists, who gained real momentum in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, opened the first nature preserves in Canada and the United States to save some of the remaining wild buffalo. They were, for the vast majority, middle-class male Easterners who had an ulterior motive in their desire to save the last bison: it was part of an agenda to save the male Euro-North American identity from what was perceived as a waning masculinity.³⁷ According to Andrew Isenberg, "[if the] virility [of Euro-North American men] were to be salvaged, the men of the cosmopolitan East needed to imitate the experiences of their frontiersmen forebears."³⁸ It was felt by such men as the twenty-sixth president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt³⁹ as well as by George Bird Grinnel, founder of the Audubon Society, that because of "their station in life [Eastern Euro-North American men were] refined, cosmopolitan, and comfortable but also [...] overfed, effete, and pampered".⁴⁰ The dangers of a waning masculinity through luxury and corruption, in other words the effeminizing of 'civilized' man, are couched in a theory of cyclical history. These are the same conditions, Victorians believed, which brought about the downfall of Rome to the savage hordes. To avoid the destruction of their own

³⁶ Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* : 164

³⁷ For a detailed analysis of nineteenth century American masculinity see E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993).

³⁸ Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* : 170

³⁹ *The New Lexicon Webster's Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the English Language, Canadian Edition* 1998, (New York: Lexicon Publications, Inc.): 864; Roosevelt was in office from 1901 - 1909

⁴⁰ Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* : 169

civilization, Victorians wanted to avoid the same patterns at all costs.⁴¹ Popular opinion held that the debilitating corruption and overabundance at the end of the nineteenth century was proof that, like the affluent period of the late Roman Empire, America had seen its glory days and was in a state of decline; "[b]usiness values and urban living were felt to be undermining the character, taste and morality" of the American man.⁴² President Roosevelt was one of many American men who looked to the West for a model of maleness; he even went so far as to make the preservationist movement an issue of manliness.⁴³ These men sought an opportunity to pit male strength and wit against the savage unpredictability of nature in an attempt to reclaim a romanticized masculinity, a middle-class fiction of what it meant to 'be a real man' in America.⁴⁴

Living at the moment of Victorianism's twilight, before the dawn of the Edwardian period,⁴⁵ the prevalent fear was of the effects of its own affluence. It was believed that the ease of living developed by a wealthy business class corrupted the European male, making him 'soft'. In North America, this fear was enjoined by a republican aversion to luxury associated with two signifiers of effeminacy – civilization and the aristocracy. This effeminacy was perceived as the opposite to the soldierly readiness for battle, the martial ideal of the hardened male choosing to lay down his life for the good of the community.⁴⁶ Although the definition for *manliness* transmogrified through the nineteenth century, its fulfilment consistently required toughness, strength

⁴¹ Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1994): 5

⁴² Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 144

⁴³ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 150

⁴⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 127; Henry Nash Smith, "The Mountain Man as Western Hero," *The American Man* : 233; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* : 83, 94

⁴⁵ The Victorian period is considered to have existed, generally speaking, between 1837 to 1901, succeeded by the Edwardian period which was from 1901 to 1910.

⁴⁶ Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*: 6-8

and assertiveness.⁴⁷ We denizens of the twenty-first century would assume that an effeminate man was a homosexual, but not so the Victorians. For most of the nineteenth century the term *homosexual* did not exist, for the act of same-sex sexual contact was not considered to define an identity.⁴⁸ No, for the Victorians, an effeminate was a man who possessed traits considered to be womanly. This negative attitude towards femininity predates the 1800s, when men were perceived as the virtuous sex, being attributed by society with greater powers of reasoning which supposedly enabled men to control their passions, such as "ambition, defiance and envy more effectively than women could,"⁴⁹ making males superior, and females weak from unruly passions and unfit for tasks that required a strong reasoning mind. In the nineteenth century, as popular opinion towards masculinity shifted, women were perceived as being the keepers of civilization,⁵⁰ instructing the menfolk of the household in morality.

By the late nineteenth century the division between the roles of women and men was so definite that a moral confusion warred within men, a battle between conflicting gendered feelings.⁵¹ Pre-1800s attitudes towards femininity had been internalized and normalized, so that to show signs of effeminacy was to display one's character as being weak, while the nineteenth century association between the feminine sphere and civilization meant that the latter became associated with effeminacy.⁵² Yet the borderlands between the feminine and the masculine were rarely totally respected.

Nineteenth century gender divisions in America required for men to go out into the harsh

⁴⁷ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: pp 3-6; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* : 94

⁴⁸ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: pp 83

⁴⁹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 3

⁵⁰ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 4

⁵¹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 8-9

⁵² Charles E. Roseberg, "Sexuality, Class and Role in Nineteenth Century America," *The American Man* : 231.

world to participate in politics, the marketplace and war, as the case may be. These areas were all perceived as cruel and barbaric, and also the sole domain of men. But men were once boys. Women, perceived as weak and dependent on the strength of men, maintained the home which included childrearing of both female and male children.⁵³ Since the duties of a man in the nineteenth century generally kept him away from the home, boys spent the formative years of their lives in the realm of the feminine, learning proper behaviour and morals from their mothers; the woman didn't just maintain the home, she was a civilizing force for the savage and violent male temperaments of her household. A man had to contend with warring sides within himself as to which social construction to follow; "[a] man's aggression [was] male; his conscience, female (...)." ⁵⁴ The man who exhibited too much of a womanly sensibility was considered to have effeminate qualities, which did not fit into the manly worlds of the marketplace, politics and war, but to 'be a man' he had to betray his mother's teachings.

Male assertiveness versus female gentleness was an accepted dichotomy in Euro-North American society, but the descriptives changed as the nineteenth century progressed. The same qualities which had marked a good man early on in the century became associated with effeminacy for, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, new virtues and fixations were adopted in response to men's gender anxiety. While earlier signifiers of manhood among the middle-class included reflectiveness and self-control over 'natural' male aggressiveness, towards the end of the Victorian era the qualities of manly virtue had changed to emphasize aggressiveness and dominance, relegating reflectiveness and self-control much more decisively to the sphere of womanhood. These

⁵³ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 94.

⁵⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 9.

new qualities weren't new at all. Earlier models of manhood recognized violence as a negative male trait that needed to be controlled. By the late nineteenth century, the American model of manhood no longer equated a strong character to moral strength but to physical strength.⁵⁵ This physicality meant that manliness was active, while reflectiveness was effeminate. Male rationality was no longer "a capacity for deep, logical reflection but rather an absence of complex emotions – an absence which freed men to act boldly and decisively."⁵⁶ In literature, the figure of the Mountain Man – men who previously had been condemned as wild ruffians escaping the civilizing fold of Europeanism – began to be used as examples of the romantic ideal of American masculinity, pitting his brawn against the savage land and its denizens.⁵⁷ The Mountain Man was a combination of Indian manly brutishness and European racial superiority.

The late nineteenth century brought more change as women were forcing their way out of the confines of the home and into the public sphere, introducing female influences into what had previously been the exclusive domain of men. While maintaining their dominion over the morally structuring household, women entered the professional realm in droves, alarming the male establishment. For example, as their numbers increased in the teaching profession, men became alarmed because they saw women's civilizing influence over children, both girls and boys, become more powerful as it extended beyond the confines of the home-space.⁵⁸ As significant, if not more so, was the delicate ecosystem of men's public habits, threatened by women-driven

⁵⁵ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 223

⁵⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 225

⁵⁷ Henry Nash Smith, "The Mountain Man as Western Hero", in *The American Man*: 159-172; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 228-229

⁵⁸ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 252

campaigns for Temperance, against violent sports such as boxing⁵⁹ and, as newly admitted members of the workforce, they even changed the marketplace by bringing the aesthetics and decorum of the civilized, genteel home into the lion's den of the office.⁶⁰

A feminine presence in the office was threatening to the Euro-North American male because, previously, a man could identify himself and his role in society through his work. In *American Manhood* Rotundo states that "a man's primary duty was to support his family through his efforts in the workplace; a man determined his own social position and that of his family through work; work provided men with an acceptable outlet for aggressive action in a society where such action was a crucial component of manhood; it also gave men an arena in which they could exercise their manliness through dominance."⁶¹ With female inroads forging a space for women in the male spheres, men rebelled against an imposed re-definition of their social roles. This meant that they refuted the dictum of self-control to embrace and make desirable the negative qualities that were attached to the male identity, such as "primitive", "savage", "barbarian", "passion" and "impulse". These are all inversions of 'feminized' Victorian civilization.⁶² Thus, they claimed that it was man's combativeness and brutish instincts that suited them for the public domain and protected the nation from outside, savage forces, which the gentleness and dependence of woman could not do.⁶³ In the last quarter of the century the changing nature of the marketplace due to an expanding corporate bureaucracy came as another blow to male identity in the workplace. Men who once strove for a place of

⁵⁹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 252

⁶⁰ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 250

⁶¹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 176

⁶² E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 253; Charles E. Roseberg, "Sexuality, Class and Role in Nineteenth Century America," *The American Man*: 229

⁶³ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 254

distinction in society as self-made men became service workers submissive to a corporate 'boss', again putting pressure on the male identity of strength and independence.⁶⁴

President Theodore Roosevelt became an icon, a hero of the time. A proponent of "the strenuous life" he presented himself as the cowboy,⁶⁵ full of "passion and primitive vigour."⁶⁶ Of his experience in the Dakota Territory in the Wild West it was said that "[by] wearing the buckskin clothes, by mixing with ranchers, hunters, and savages ... [Roosevelt] consciously imbibed the energy, frankness, and fellowship of the wilderness."⁶⁷ The cowboy had become venerated as a hero and it was not uncommon for young middle-class men to go to the frontier to work as cowboys to learn "the self-discipline needed for the active life of the marketplace,"⁶⁸ by testing their manliness against the unmerciful wilderness.⁶⁹ The Wild West was also the mythic home of another symbol of manhood, the "Red Indian".⁷⁰

Wild Injuns

After the American Civil War, a fascination among grown men with Aboriginal people was considered normal. Within this 'cult of the primitive', Euro-North American men did not identify with real Native men but with their own construction of the animalistic Indian man.⁷¹ The middle-class male was thus provided with a potent and safe⁷² icon he could use in his desire to assert his dominance in a world that increasingly

⁶⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : pp 248-9

⁶⁵ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 259

⁶⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 247

⁶⁷ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 228

⁶⁸ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 21; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* : 100

⁶⁹ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 154

⁷⁰ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* : 100

⁷¹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 228-9

⁷² By this time Aboriginal self-determination had gone underground, quashed by numerous legislative acts of dispossession. Melissa Dabakis states that the Native man became an object of identification for the

challenged Victorian constructions of manhood. While some men went off to live in the Eastern woods or the Western plains, intent on recapturing a mythic frontier past where manhood remained unchallenged,⁷³ others remained within the folds of civilization as they knew it, reclaiming their inner primitivity vicariously through literature and the visual arts.⁷⁴

The Victorian era and after inherited the language of the Romantics of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who embraced the notion of nature and, more specifically, wilderness as an expression of divine presence, engendering the notion of the *sublime*. The so-called "New World's" wilderness was seen as being 'pure' and 'untouched', as God had created it. The notion that primitivism is the key to true happiness and health is a Romantic concept⁷⁵ which gradually infiltrated European and Euro-North American society. In the Victorian period and thereafter, many proponents of the primitive in manhood were artists, writers,⁷⁶ scientists and vacationers; in short, gentlemen such as George Catlin,⁷⁷ Thomas Cole,⁷⁸ Walt Whitman,⁷⁹ Herman Melville,⁸⁰ and Henry David Thoreau,⁸¹ who used the language developed by Romanticism to express their appreciation of the North American landscape.⁸² These men are not frontiersmen, but urban dwellers of the middle or upper classes, making them the

middle-class Euro-North American man when "his power had completely diminished." See Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 100

⁷³ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 93

⁷⁴ For example, Gail Bederman recounts how books for boys influenced a young Theodore Roosevelt, in *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 173

⁷⁵ Shaping the sense of the sublime in wilderness were such pre-Victorian figures as Lord Byron, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant and Daniel Defoe. See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 44-49

⁷⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 251

⁷⁷ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 51

⁷⁸ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 101

⁷⁹ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 151, 152

⁸⁰ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 152

⁸¹ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 102

⁸² Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 50

least likely to be forced to survive in the wilderness.⁸³ As we've seen, images of Aboriginal men in Euro-North American art abound. Kent Monkman's direct inspiration for *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, as previously noted, is Mr John Mix Stanley's *Buffalo Hunt*. It is of particular interest to our study of *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* because it is not only the basis for the work's form, it is also the art historical backdrop Monkman used to develop his updated representation of the Native man and the cowboy. In terms of this exploration of Monkman's work in relation to nineteenth century masculinity, John Mix Stanley's social position is itself of interest, for while his art supported the construction of masculinities, his profession as an artist associated him closely with creativity and expression, both of which were considered feminine qualities. Hence, even professions were gendered, and those men involved in 'effeminate' professions were suspect.⁸⁴ However, John Mix Stanley was able to redeem himself because of his intrepid adventures in the Far West: as part of the topographical unit in Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny's "Army of the West"⁸⁵ in 1846 and then again in 1853⁸⁶ with Governor Isaac I. Steven's Pacific Railroad Surveys.⁸⁷ In his painting *Buffalo Hunt*, the artist inserted himself in the scene as the mighty huntsman who has just felled a bison. Associations with the manly profession of the soldier and the "strenuous life" in the wilds, not to mention his apparent interaction with Native American peoples depicted in his painting – hunting buffalo with the men – boosted his masculine image. After his stint with the Pacific Railroad Survey, in 1854 he was back on the East Coast and working on a number

⁸³ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*: 51

⁸⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* : 170 (171-2)

⁸⁵ Patricia Trenton and Peter H. Hassrick, *The Rocky Mountains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983): 79

⁸⁶ Patricia Trenton and Peter H. Hassrick, *The Rocky Mountains*: 81

⁸⁷ Donald W. Meinig, "Isaac Stevens: Practical Geographer of the Early Northwest." *Geographical Review* (October, 1995, Vol. 45, No. 4): 542-558

of paintings based on his experiences in the American West,⁸⁸ one of which, according to the dates, we can assume is the *Buffalo Hunt*.

To demonstrate the power of the visual arts in creating documents that reinforce a social position, consider how this painting depicts the wild and fierce opponents that the forebears of nineteenth century Euro-North Americans had tamed and/or defeated: both the powerful bison and the manly Indian. Not only did the painting create a false narrative that acted as a 'record' of the so-called uncivilized Indian, it was also an image that was controlled by the artist and could be owned by the patron – an appropriation of Native identity as well as a virtual⁸⁹ enslavement through the authority of the gaze. The paintings and stories of the Wild West were meant to show Euro-North American men asserting their maleness through the domination of all aspects of Nature, which included the bison and the wild Indian and the land itself.

Primitivism (adopted by North American male societies such as the Boy Scouts of America) encouraged the myth of the Native man as an example of masculine virtues of virility, toughness, and fearlessness.⁹⁰ To represent Euro-North American males alongside the wild Indian in works of art and literature created fictionalised links and records which evidenced that the Victorian male was as virile, tough and fearless as his Native model, and more so, as the inheritor of victory and domination of the land. Euro-North American men could be like the Indian, yet different. They considered themselves

⁸⁸ Patricia Trenton and Peter H. Hassrick, *The Rocky Mountains*: 81

⁸⁹ Used in the philosophical sense in that it defines something that is not real but has all the qualities of being real. In this sense, the painted image of the Native man is not the real Native man but it is the Indian man of Euro-North American construction.

⁹⁰ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 100

superior because they retained what they perceived of as 'civilization', which, in their construction, the Indian lacked.⁹¹

Paradoxically, the exploitation of the nude Native male body in art to strengthen the nineteenth century ideal of manly virtue created a consensual homosocial forum for men to look at the bodies of other men. Works that display the male form in idealized and near-naked form invite the gaze, both female and male. If the intention was for men to identify with these representations of perfect men, as Laura Mulvey asserts in her article on the gaze in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema",⁹² then it also invites the male viewer to make observations about his own physical deficiencies and, by extension, his character flaws. The male spectator can't help but compare his own form with that of these virile (and unrealistic) examples of the ideal male, and by extension his gaze excites an awareness of other males in his environment, which he then turns back onto himself; the male gaze appraising the male form creates an "intermale surveillance".⁹³ This "masculine masquerade"⁹⁴ is one of the sources of the gender anxiety experienced by nineteenth century Victorian Euro-North American gentlemen. If masculinity is a masquerade, the male attempts to act the part proscribed by the unattainable model to display his ability and/or deficiency in assuming the signifiers of masculinity identified in the object of the gaze. To assert his own masculinity using the narratives of manliness created through art and literature which describe the hardy natures of their forebears and the Indian, the Eastern North-American man must double any previous accomplishments.

⁹¹ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 173 – 182; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 83

⁹² Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989): 14-26

⁹³ Norman Bryson, "Géricault and 'Masculinity'," *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation*, eds. Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxley (Hanover; London: University Press of New England, 1994): 231; Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 91; also mentioned in E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 174

⁹⁴ Norman Bryson, "Géricault and 'Masculinity'," *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation*: 231

In the Victorian era the perception of early North American settlers as tamers of the New World put their descendants under the gun to prove their mettle against this mirage.

The paintings of nineteenth century western artists, such as John Mix Stanley, of Native men and buffalo hunts, while contributing to the effort to boost the sense of an intact male social identity in middle-class males through an identification of male primitive aggressiveness with the hyper-manly Indian, also created a threatening figure with uncontrolled (wild) sexual power: the Savage rapist. We see this repeated in the colonial fear of the "Negro Rapist,"⁹⁵ which logically extended to the Indian male⁹⁶ since it was a phenomenon believed to exist because of 'primitive', uncontrolled passions.⁹⁷ John Vanderlyn's *The Death of Jane McCrea* (see figure 16) from 1804 describes a scene based on an actual killing, but the choices he has made, with Jane McCrea's breast partially exposed and the straining muscular bodies of the men, suggest a sexual assault, which, for the nineteenth century viewer, was "proof of the debased nature of the naked savage."⁹⁸ It was held that, since Afro-Americans and Aboriginal men did not benefit from the controlling forces of European civilization, their passions were uncontrolled.⁹⁹ The fear of the savage sexual predator not only exacerbated the general desire to control the image and the actual real Native person, but also spurred on the greedy control and exploitation of the so-called New World's resources, otherwise known as European expansionism. The drive to prove Euro-North American masculine potency and evolutionary superiority indicates why there was no attempt at concealing the desire for power and domination in the invasion of the West. This is exemplified by comments

⁹⁵ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 46

⁹⁶ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 181

⁹⁷ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 141-2

⁹⁸ William H. Gerds, *The Great American Nude* (New York: Praeger, 1974): 14

⁹⁹ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 142

made by William Temple Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park at the turn of the twentieth century. Hornaday claimed that to reconnect with the wilderness, Euro-North American men had to "maintain their advantage in the universal struggle for domination."¹⁰⁰ The result of this increasing encroachment by Euro-North American culture meant the disempowerment of Aboriginal communities and an increasing erasure of divergent traditions, including those pertaining to divergent sexual and gender expressions that had been, prior to contact, socially acceptable and integrated into Native cultures.¹⁰¹ By suppressing Native expressions of sexual and gender variability, the new Dominant also fundamentally altered the cultural and social development of many nations.

Beautiful Inversions

The crude expression for being cheated, swindled, hoodwinked or taken advantage of is to "get screwed" or to "get fucked"; words that also describe the most base forms of sexual interaction. It would be no exaggeration to say that many Native peoples feel they 'got fucked' by the invading Europeans and in their later dealings with Euro-North Americans. History is replete with examples of opposite sex and same-sex sexual domination and violence, verbal and physical, being used to degrade and disempower the enemy through shame. In world history there are many instances where men were symbolically emasculated by being the receptive party in anal rapes, either as the losing warrior in a battle or as the cuckold, forced to be the pathic to the cuckolded male.¹⁰² But *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a twenty-first century construction, coming out of a pluralistic society that is in full transformation of its position towards

¹⁰⁰ Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison* : 172

¹⁰¹ Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986): 2

¹⁰² Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995): 17-23

what is now the homosexual identity. In conversation with Monkman, the artist stated that he was not interested in depicting, actually or symbolically, the violence between Natives and Euro-North Americans, but desired to recognise the reality of historical and actual acts of dominance and aggression by using the image of sexual relations between two men as a representation of political power and the colonization of Native sexualities.¹⁰³ Sexual intercourse offers here the opportunity to transcend differences while remaining suitably ambiguous to serve Monkman's purpose of balancing on the knife-edge of interpretations.

In *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, the problems with stereotypes are persistently reinforced and refuted; stereotypes exist and yet they are not the truth. Monkman's painting contains two main figures: the stereotyped white cowboy with readily noticeable signifiers of submission; and the powerful, assertive Native man of nineteenth century constructions who is, however, clad in garb which, with a combination of feminine accents and Native trappings, identify him as both Aboriginal and sexually variable, embodying two stereotypes that are in opposition. That the Cowboy is submissive and Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle is dominant does not mean that the cowboy is powerless and the Indian a tyrant. Or then again, maybe it does. The juxtapositions in Monkman's work tip off the viewer that s/he should take nothing for granted.

Since *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a revisionist work, it considers past understandings of Native/Euro-North American relations, which we have studied as it pertains to Euro-North American masculinity and John Mix Stanley's painting. In the following chapters we will consider the historical significance of homosexual acts used to display dominance in acts of aggression as well as the historical perspective of the

¹⁰³ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

penetrative/receptive-straight/gay dichotomy Monkman uses to shatter expectations; for Miss Chief is not only displaying her queerness, s/he is also displaying her position as triumphant aggressor. Uncertainty remains as to whether or not the cowboy is the willing partner. Monkman has a growing body of paintings featuring Miss Chief in various sexually compromising scenarios with a White man. Our initial impression is that *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a humorous political fiction, along the same lines as Thomas King's re-imagined Western film scene in his novel *Green Grass Running Water*, where what is usual in classic Westerns is subverted: in typical Eurocentric Westerns the cowboy, woefully outnumbered, triumphs against all odds over the massed hoards of Indians. King writes the ending of a classic Western film that is mysteriously altered so that the Indians vanquish John Wayne and his cronies, reversing the expected.¹⁰⁴ In Monkman's painting this same kind of reversal occurs as the Native and cowboy figures appear to be lovers or, at least, they display signifiers that strongly suggest that the pursuit will end with them having sex together, consensual or not.

That Monkman uses a gay coupling is interesting in itself. In twenty-first century gay relationships the stereotyped roles of the penetrator and the receptive do not apply in the same way as they might elsewhere. The contemporary construction of the homosexual male is that if a man is sexually attracted to, predominantly, other men, they are queer, whether they prefer to be the penetrator or the receptive. In these same-sex couplings, because their union is consensual, the roles of the penetrator and the receptive are not influenced by gender but rather by individual desires and attitudes, determining which of the three main categories for gay male sexual roles each will play: 'Top', meaning a man who prefers to be the penetrator, 'Bottom', denoting a man who prefers to

¹⁰⁴ Thomas King, *Green Grass, Running Water* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1993): 316-322

be receptive, and 'Versatile', which signifies a man who likes to be both the penetrator and/or the receptive. All of this is to say that the roles of penetrator and receptive are not stable in a gay couple but can shift from one to the other. It would be disingenuous to claim that a New Age kind of ideal communication exists in all contemporary gay couplings where there is always agreement on who is active and who is receptive. The difference is that the imbalances tend not to come from the invective of patriarchal power structures between male and female counterparts. Further, the issue of domination and submission is conceptually related to the physical act, but is not determined by the roles of 'penetrator' or 'receptive'. The contemporary understanding of 'penetrator' and 'receptive' roles being interchangeable in terms of the position of dominance shatters any easy assumptions.

Gender and sexuality are two distinct categories defined differently according to the cultural constructions composing the definitions. Monkman's own *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* challenges the machismo depicted in John Mix Stanley's *Buffalo Hunt* and exposes its links to the colonization of Native sexualities and construction of nineteenth century masculinity. Miss Chief tricks us into noticing how the Artist is represented differently in these two paintings – the manly hunter, John Mix Stanley, and the feminized-yet-manly cross-dressing Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle. Monkman combines previously distinct constructions of sexuality (Native, Euro-North American, pre-Contact, post-Contact and post-Colonial) in order to speak to a contemporary audience about new directions made possible in a globalized society.

CHAPTER 2

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A Wilderness of Sex, pp 37 – *What It is, is what It isn't*, pp 39 – *Tribal Warfare*, pp 40 –
Where the Pale-Face Comes From, pp 42 – *Not One of Us*, pp 44 –
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In Times Out of Mind

In this chapter we discuss some of the narratives written on Aboriginal and European non-heterosexualities prior to the nineteenth century to establish a ground for our subsequent exploration of the new narratives for gender, sexuality and identity exemplified by Miss Chief and the cowboy. The present chapter discusses recorded forms of Native gender and sexual classifications and the problems of using European sources to map non-European cultural practices, European practices and attitudes towards non-heterosexual practices and how these attitudes impacted Aboriginal peoples, and the impact these Euro-centric attitudes have had in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the gender and sexual expressions of Aboriginal peoples and communities.

This chapter's primary point of inquiry is what Kent Monkman has called the European colonization of Native sexualities in the Americas. His reinterpretation of a nineteenth century Western American painting to include images of queers for a twenty-first century audience is not simply a case of historical revisionism; Monkman re-imagines a narrative where he describes Native classifications of gender and sexual expressions that have been obliterated or have gone underground because of the violence of colonization. In doing so his work implies that, first of all, Aboriginal modes of classification differ from European categories, and secondly, that history itself is a construct, a narrative that shifts with the perception of the teller of the tale and of the

audience, a topic which is discussed in Chapter 3. It is the re-imagining of Native gender and sexual categories that can establish a continuous thread of sex- and gender-variance from the past into the present of Aboriginal societies.

Stepping Over the Past

In the study of gender- and sexual-variable Native persons, researchers have depended on the writings of European chroniclers, explorers who used their own cultural perspectives to record what they saw and experienced during the period of Contact. This requires from the contemporary researcher an accurate translation of these records into the present-day idiom; the problem is that these translations are always merely partial, as we shall see in this and subsequent chapters.¹ We must content ourselves with mapping myths and ideologies to understand the relationships between ideologies and behaviours of cultures distant from our own in time and experience.²

Evidence exists to show that there were divergent sexualities already present at the moment of Contact in many Aboriginal cultures, and that these became the focus of European attempts at their eradication. Although there are few visual records of these sexualities in Euro-North American art in the nineteenth century,³ there are previous European depictions of gender-variant peoples in the Americas.⁴ The problems in discussing pre-Contact and early Contact Native sexualities and gender practices are fourfold. Firstly, direct access to the experiences and traditions of pre-Contact North American Aboriginal peoples, specifically in relation to sexuality, is non-existent.

¹ See Chapter 4, "Reading the Terrain"

² This view is based on a discussion on the challenges of writing about the history of sexuality in Charles E. Rosenberg's "Sexuality, Class and Role in Nineteenth Century America," in *The American Man*, edited by Elizabeth H. and Joseph H. Pleck (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980): 221.

³ See George Catlin's *Dance to the Berdache* from the 1830's, Figure 17.

⁴ Johann Théodore De Bry, *Timucua berdaches working with women in carrying food*, 1591, see Figure 18a; Johann Théodore De Bry, *Balboa setting his dogs upon Indian practitioners of male love (Balboa lässt Indianer durch Bluthunde zerreißen)*, 1594, Figure 18b

Secondly, existing evidence of Native sexualities are translations that come from European cultures with a different understanding of sex, sexuality and gender. Thirdly, agendas from both parties excluded a desire to share cultural knowledge.⁵ The fourth point is the experiences of Aboriginal cultures which, over the past five hundred years, are distinct from their pre-Contact forebears.

As the nineteenth century approached, the presence of sex and gender variables mostly disappeared from written and visual records.⁶ George Catlin's sole image of a transvested male in *Dance to the Berdache* (see figure 17) is accompanied by written text where the artist expresses his disgust at the practice.⁷ We've established that nineteenth century images representing the virile Native man are a poor record of the real Aboriginal man, even more so since they excluded the presence of gender-variable men. European anxieties around gender in the last third of the century were exacerbated by a new sense of the term 'sexuality,' caused by the growing awareness of a new set of categories: 'heterosexuality' vs. 'homosexuality'. *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a kind of displacement, seeking to step over the past five hundred years to reclaim for Native peoples the right to assert a continuum to their own historical narratives on gender and sexuality. In this quest for the thread of the Native, queer and Native queer identity in history, Monkman has referenced "two-spirit" people in his talks and interviews.⁸ As a neologism, the term "two-spirit" refers to Native practices – a part of which was

⁵ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995): 124, 137, 161

⁶ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 85; Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 102

⁷ Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History* (Toronto; New York; London; Victoria; Auckland: Penguin Group, Penguin Books, 1992): 301-302

⁸ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.; Kent Monkman, "The Impact of Christianity on Aboriginal Sexuality", *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*. Accessed June 17, 2006. <http://cybermuse.beaux-arts.ca/cybermuse/docs/MonkmanClip6_e.pdf>.

previously called "berdachism" – that European explorers and Euro-North American colonizers used to bestialize and subjugate Native peoples.

A Wilderness of Sex

The term *two-spirit* which Monkman has used to identify Miss Chief, is a neologism that was coined in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1990 during the third annual intertribal Native American/First Nations gay and lesbian conference,⁹ to rectify the effects of colonization on Native definitions of gender and sexual variability. Early European explorers in the Americas recognized well established differences in gender classifications and sexual expression among the First Peoples. Recent scholarship on this topic presents opposing interpretations of the texts and images of Aboriginal gender classes that have come down to us from Euro-North American explorers and anthropologists. From these sources on the traditional "berdache", Harriet Whitehead has written a seminal text, "The Bow and the Burden Strap: A New Look at Institutionalized Homosexuality in Native North America",¹⁰ a discussion that uses a definition of this gender class to describe a society primarily segregated by social role as per choice of occupation. This position is challenged in Richard C. Trexler's book *Sex and Conquest*,¹¹ which argues that sex and sexuality in North America was a political tool that echoed similar structures in European societies. The contrast in findings between these two researchers demonstrates at the very least the challenges in dispelling European assumptions on sex, gender, and non-European peoples.

⁹ Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang, "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, eds. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang. (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1997): pp 2

¹⁰ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981)

¹¹ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995)

Early texts are misinterpretations of Native societies that have confused past scholarship and are the precursors to what is now a more exact and impartial perception of what is today widely termed as the "two-spirit". Although there may well have been different kinds of sexual and gender expressions in Native North American societies already present prior to and during the period of Contact, the transvested male is of particular interest to *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, since Miss Chief Eagle Testickle is herself transvested yet ignores most of the other established signifiers of the category. Until the 1990 conference in Winnipeg, the European label for these individuals was "berdache", which is derived from the French and means 'male prostitute'.¹² The word "berdache" appears to have been recorded for the first time in the eighteenth century *Jesuit Relations* to condemn the transvested gender variable male in Native traditions.¹³ The term has been used since in anthropology to "refer to what the writers perceived to be transvestism, homosexuality, hermaphroditism, and transgenderism as institutions viewed positively in Native American cultures."¹⁴ The term 'two-spirit' is intended to be used to distance Native peoples from the derogatory connotations of the European terms "berdache", and *gay*, which denote a different and Eurocentric means of classifying sexual and gender non-conformists. It is a contemporary neologism derived from *niizh manidoowag* of the Northern Algonquin dialect, translated literally into the English as 'two-spirit' which describes a person containing both a masculine and feminine spirit.¹⁵ It

¹² Sue-Ellen Jacobs , Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang, "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*: pp 4

¹³ Sue-Ellen Jacobs , Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang, "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*: pp 4

¹⁴ Sue-Ellen Jacobs , Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang, "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*: pp 4

¹⁵ Anguksuar [Richard LaFortune] (Yup'ik), "A Postcolonial Colonial Perspective on Western [Mis]Conceptions of the Cosmos and the Restoration of Indigenous Taxonomies," *Two-Spirit People* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997): 221.

is unlike the category "berdache" for it does not solely define the transvested male but comprises male and female Aboriginal sexual and gender non-conformists,¹⁶ while each Aboriginal nation has its own word-concept for these individuals.¹⁷ Because the term 'two-spirit' is meant to be used as a pan-lingual umbrella term, I will continue to use, where appropriate, the category-specific term of "berdache", placed in quotation marks to denote its origin and questionable meaning.¹⁸

What It is, is what It isn't

European and mestizo writers have described the category of "berdache" in Aboriginal societies as a social role where a biological male assumes the gendered dress and tasks of the female for life. There are two defining categories that are used to determine whether a male is destined for the role of "berdache": biological and social.¹⁹ The first is established by genital identification at birth, which lumps all infants with penises in the category of 'male'. The second is a social category identified primarily through the adoption by males of stations that are gendered female. According to Harriett Whitehead's study, the "berdache" is primarily established as such when a boy shows a predisposition towards identifiers of femaleness. The primary indicators of gender-crossing males include a proclivity for the tools and occupations that fall within women's division of productive labor and a lack of interest for male gendered tools such as the bow and arrow,²⁰ female mannerisms such as stylized bodily movements and a piping

¹⁶ Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang, "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*: pp 6.

¹⁷ Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*: 680.

¹⁸ I will use the term "berdache" in discussions on the limited understanding of gender variant practices expressed in European historical records. I also have chosen to use the bracketed "berdache" in this paper in recognition of cultural evolution, because it is not clear to me if the category of two-spirit would translate well into past interpretations of this figure.

¹⁹ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 86.

²⁰ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 87

voice, and attempts at wearing female-identified clothing. Whitehead writes that "[o]f the two attributes, occupational preference and dress, it is the first that is most often mentioned and commented upon, and inclining us to believe that it was the most central of the social attributes definitive of gender."²¹ If a boy was identified as gender-crossed, he was given women's clothes, involved in women's division of labour and may have engaged in homosexual contact as the passive, with the potential of marrying a man.²²

The exception to the rule of the 'born' gender-crosser is the adult gender-crosser. Whitehead indicates that in some nations "male war captives were incorporated into the capturing group as berdaches." To be born gender-crossed was honourable, but to be made a "berdache" because of failing as a warrior by being captured was dishonourable.²³

Whether one became "berdache" from boyhood or through the disgrace of being defeated on the field of battle, the gender-crosser, being anatomically male and gendered female, occupied a separate category where s/he was considered less than male but more than woman.²⁴ Yet, as we shall see in "Where the Pale-face Comes From" below, the gap in power between genders may not have been as dramatic as in European societies.

Tribal Warfare

Opinion on the social standing and role of the "berdache" is not unanimous among scholars. Trexler, in his book *Sex and Conquest*, concurs with the theory of an institutionalised homosexuality in Native North American societies, but he diverges from the model where occupation is the driving force behind the category of "berdache".

²¹ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 88 ; The fact that our overview of nineteenth century Euro-North American gender constructions includes occupation as gendered and gendering indicates that, while gender was not ascribed by occupation, that effemination was achieved through occupation.

²² Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 85; Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 135-6

²³ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 117

²⁴ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 89

Instead, he proposes a model of the "berdache" as a political category, where males who don women's garb and stations, by choice or by force, were instruments in the masculinisation of other men and in imparting status and power to a dominant male or males.²⁵ He elaborates a theory based on intra-gender hierarchies where the penetrator acts out his dominance by making the other male his receptive passive,²⁶ degrading him – so to speak – to the station of woman where, paraphrasing Michel Foucault, sexuality is a transfer point of power between individuals.²⁷ For Trexler, gender-crossers are emblems of tribal power where the domination of other males displays the potency of the dominating male, usually a man in a position of power.²⁸ While Trexler recognises the part social role plays in the institution of the cross-gendered Native person, his position is in opposition to Whitehead's. Where Whitehead sketches out a scenario of the differently-identified gender categories among North American First Peoples as based on social role and not on sexuality, Trexler uses historical records to show the importance placed on the sexual act in determining the social role of the cross-gendered person.

Same-sex sexual activity in Native North American tradition was not necessarily an act performed by and with a cross-dresser. I wish to reiterate at this point that the early records we have of observations from European chroniclers, witnesses to Native North American societies, were heavily invested in their own cultural biases, assuming that cross-dressing was the marker of a receptive sodomite. There are some indications of same-sex romantic relationships among non-transvested Aboriginals which have largely

²⁵ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: berdaches used as currency for political exchanges, pp 94-95; sexual subordination of men to show the power of the dominant, pp 117

²⁶ The term 'passive' is used by Trexler to denote the role of the dominated male in anal intercourse (see Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 184, note 21). In this paper the term 'receptive' is preferred, intended to be more neutral in describing the mechanics of intercourse and avoid blanket judgements on a complex exchange of power.

²⁷ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 2

²⁸ Trexler relates instances where sex, gender-crossers and politics intersect in *Sex and Conquest*: 6

been ignored by chroniclers.²⁹ Whitehead says that, even though Native North American and European gender systems share the same three basic elements (dress/demeanour, occupational pursuits, sexual object choice), the gradation of importance between these differs, where in Aboriginal societies occupational pursuits come first by a long shot, closely followed by dress/demeanour, with the importance of sexual object choice coming in "so low that by itself it does not provoke the reclassification of the individual to a special status."³⁰ Conversely, Trexler seems to analyse the original writings of these early European chroniclers more literally, taking into consideration the temporal differences in language use, extracting tales describing an expression of sexuality that was exhibitionist, a display of social, political and martial power. He also points out that these chroniclers were more interested in uncovering evidence of tales of sodomy and the spectacle of cross-dressing, both considered immoral sexual conducts by European standards, which helped justify the invasion and proselytizing of the land and of its peoples.³¹

Where the Pale-Face Comes From

European observers used the same criteria to identify the Native North American gender-crosser as they used to describe sexual variability in their own cultures. Because of this they often mistook "berdaches" for hermaphrodites³² or commented on those who

²⁹ A few exceptions come in the form of romantic friendships between two people of the same sex. See Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*: "1846: Francis Parkman; 'Romantic... Friendships'", pp 303-304; "1876: H. Clay Trumbull; 'Brothers by Adoption'", pp 311-312. Of particular interest is the 1931 excerpt from C.Daryll Forde's article "Ethnology of the Yuma Indians". A short paragraph at the bottom of the quote on page 324 of *Gay American History* reads:

"Casual secret homosexuality among both women and men is well known. The latter is probably more common. This is not considered objectionable but such persons would resent being called elxa' or kwe'rham (Yuma terminology for the cross-gendered individual)."

³⁰ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 97

³¹ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 1

³² Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*: 285, 286

adopted women's clothes and station by using words such as: "impotent, effeminate,"³³ "demeaning themselves to do everything that the women do,"³⁴ "cowardly,"³⁵ etc. They confused gender identity variability with sexuality assuming that all Native men garbed as women practiced same-sex sexual contact. In describing the real or imagined same-sex sexuality of the Aboriginal gender-crossed male, they used words like "infamous passions,"³⁶ "unnatural sins,"³⁷ "nefarious practices,"³⁸ "abominable vice,"³⁹ "nefandous sin"⁴⁰ and the list goes on. The term that continuously returns, among others but of particular interest to this discussion, is *sodomy*.

European and American laws classified sodomy as a legal infraction.⁴¹ The term "sodomy" referred to all sorts of carnal acts such as bestiality, oral or anal intercourse with members of the opposite sex as well as same-sex genital contact.⁴² The pie-slice of time on our plate is roughly from the fifteenth century onward, with a dollop of the thirteenth century. Trexler is of particular interest here in the way he has traced a brief history of pre-Contact Europe to help further his thesis in explaining the attitudes of Iberian explorers in their dealings with Aboriginal gender variability, going back to

³³ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1528-36: Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca; I saw a devilish thing," *Gay American History*: 285

³⁴ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1673-77: Jacques Marquette; They pass for Manitous... or persons of Consequence," *Gay American History*: 287

³⁵ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1711-17: Joseph Francois Lafitau; Men Who Dress as Women," *Gay American History*: 288

³⁶ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1721: Pierre Francois Xavier de Charlevoix; Effeminacy and lewdness," *Gay American History*: 290

³⁷ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1750: Georg Heinrich Loskiel; Unnatural sins," *Gay American History*: 290-1

³⁸ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1775-76: Pedro Font; Sodomites, dedicated to nefarious practices," *Gay American History*: 291

³⁹ Jonathan Ned Katz, "1777: Francisco Palou; The abominable vice will be eliminated," *Gay American History*: 292

⁴⁰ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 104

⁴¹ Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*: 2; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993): 84; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, volume 1 (New York, Toronto: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books Edition, 1990): 43

⁴² E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 83-4

Spanish laws of the thirteenth century. The punishment for sodomy then was castration as a public spectacle; three days later, the convicted sodomite was hung upside-down until dead, his body never taken down for proper burial. On July 22, 1497, the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain (the same rulers who funded Christopher Columbus' search for a passage to India which brought him to the Americas) introduced the Pragmatic Against Sodomy (*Pragmatica sobre el pecado nefando*), proclaimed at Medina del Campo, a decree that dropped castration, stoning and hanging for those found guilty of sodomy, and replaced these with burning the offender alive in the very place where the act had been perpetrated.⁴³

In every European country of the same time frame sodomy was dealt with harshly, often exacting punishment through death by choking, burning, and drowning or, if they were not killed, sodomites were "jailed, pilloried, fined, court-martialled, prostituted, fired, framed, blackmailed, disinherited, declared insane, driven to insanity, to suicide, murder, and self-hate, witch-hunted, entrapped, stereotyped, mocked, insulted, isolated, pitied, castigated, and despised (...) They were also castrated" and in more recent times, "lobotomized, shock-treated, and psychoanalysed."⁴⁴ In North America, the same actions took place.

Not One of Us

Europeans held the belief that sodomy was a communicable disease which had to be eradicated before it had the chance to spread to the populace. Usually the carrier was a

⁴³ Richard C. Trexler gives the dates as August 22, 1497, *Sex and Conquest*: 45-6. In conversation with Professor José Sanchez, the original document of the *Pragmatica* indicates the dates used in this paper.

⁴⁴ This list of atrocities comes from Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*: 11. Analysis and documentation of these events can be found in the same book as well as in Kent Gerard and Gert Hekma's *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989).

'foreigner' of some sort; in other words not 'one of us' but an 'other'.⁴⁵ Trexler uses examples from European chronicles to show that the same attitude was applied to First Peoples, primarily focusing on the cross-gendered individual, where the discussion of same-sex sexual activities 'spread' from one tribe to the next, like a contagion.⁴⁶ This attitude served the invaders and missionaries; if they showed that sodomy was widespread and tolerated by Native authorities, then the native system of governance and, by extension, its people were proven to be corrupt and needed Christian European interventions to be cleansed, in this way rationalising their right to conquer.⁴⁷

The desire to dominate is a desire to exercise power over the actions of another. Integral to the exercise of power is the proliferation of discourses on sex.⁴⁸ The more reports of the extent to which sodomy had 'spread' in the Americas, the more 'proof' the interested parties possessed to justify an invasion and, to its fullest extent, attempt an eradication of its peoples' cultures⁴⁹ over the following five hundred years, which is the process which Monkman has called the colonization of Aboriginal sexualities.⁵⁰

Teaching the Savages

Trexler's discussion of institutionalised homosexuality in the Americas builds an argument based on observations from Christian chronicles that the cross-gendered role was a construction used as a political tool. The question remains: to what degree were these early chronicles coloured by the writers' cultural baggage, as products of a Christian hegemony? Foucault writes that the Christian pastoral sought to control sex by that "great

⁴⁵ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 46, 57

⁴⁶ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 65, 82, 145-147

⁴⁷ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 84

⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 32

⁴⁹ Largely through missionary efforts to convert in the early years of Contact. Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 3

⁵⁰ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

subjugation: ways of rendering [sex] morally acceptable and technically useful."⁵¹

Christianised Europeans were in conflict with Aboriginal cultures because they were inflexible in their morality, making them incapable of accepting disparate sexual practices and perceiving these as direct threats to their conceptions of correctness.⁵² The ensuing rationalisations justified what is today identified as a history of brutal and repressive actions on the part of the newcomers. Monkman's position in composing *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is in agreement, for he has said that "since the first arrival of the Spanish in the Americas, the church has played a vital role in the sexual conquest of the Aboriginal nations. The Spanish conquistadors sought papal permission to punish the natives for practicing sodomy, and having accused their enemies of committing this 'abominable sin', the Spanish felt justified in their brutalities and thereby claimed their right to conquest of the Native American."⁵³

In making sex useful, the European placed sex in a "binary system: licit and illicit, permitted and forbidden."⁵⁴ Laws were enunciated to organise and police sex; whatever fell outside the permissible would have been considered rebellious and subversive. The power of the law is the power of the Word, the agreement (enunciation) to abide by the rules, to obey the law.⁵⁵ If sex is associated with an untamed energy that has to be subjugated, it is an expression of an equivalent European binary; that there is 'tamed' and 'untamed'. For European Christians, to tame the untamed was their moral imperative; to bring the wilderness under the righteous power of the Law, of the Word. In order to tame

⁵¹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 17-21

⁵² For example, see the discussion on the terms "berdache" and "two-spirit" earlier in this Chapter, in "A Wilderness of Sex".

⁵³ Kent Monkman, "The Prayer Language," *Kent Monkman: Writings*, accessed June 15, 2006, <<http://urbannation.com/kentwritings.htm>>.

⁵⁴ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 83

⁵⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 85: "All modes of domination, submission, and subjugation are ultimately reduced to an effect of obedience."

this wilderness and impose on Aboriginal peoples the 'correct' channels of sexual expression dictated by European culture, the invaders chose assimilation, proselytizing, kidnapping, brainwashing, outright murder and genocide, or imprisonment on government reserves and residential schools, or a combination of these.⁵⁶

In a sense, the taming of the 'wild Indian' served to effeminize him. If, as per Trexler's Foucaultian perspective, sexuality is a transfer point of power between individuals,⁵⁷ the conquered Indian was placed in a position of dependency and, as such, became receptive in relation to the conquering Eurocentrics. First Nations men underwent a process of disempowerment where they were dispossessed of lands and, through this, became incapable of providing for themselves and their people. The defeats at the hands of European military and religious incursions put them in a perceived position of weakness, of dependence – of effeminacy – where Europeans became the masculine dominant, those who possessed power and could decide the fate of their dependents. And if those dependents dared rebel, then it was the European who, like a vengeful god, could decide and execute their punishments.

Where Never is Heard a Discouraging Word

The disempowerment of the First Nations was well under way at the end of the nineteenth century. Defeated and on state-sanctioned Indian reserves, Native American males were safely out of sight, the reality of their existence tucked away, their presence incapable of marring the image being constructed of the Frontier Myth, the Savage Noble

⁵⁶ Studies of these can be found in David A. Nock's *A Victorian Missionary and Canadian Indian Policy: Cultural Synthesis vs. Cultural Replacement* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988) and Klaus Frantz's *Indian Reservations in the United States* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and in Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young's *The Circle Game: Shadow and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books Ltd, 1997).

⁵⁷ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 2; first cited on page 42 of the present chapter.

and the development of late nineteenth century masculinity. The appropriated images of the Native male were used as examples of masculine ideals and as markers for Euro-North American superiority.

What we have in the image of the Aboriginal man in mid-to-late nineteenth century art are contradictions. On the one hand the Indian is a mythic representation of Euro-North American masculine ideals, full of primitive strength, savage courage and uncivilized passions, while on the other hand the Aboriginal man of the same period is disempowered by the loss of lands and autonomy through tensions with Euro-North American groups. If we return to the idea of the defeated warrior being forced to take on the role of the "berdache" and Trexler's narrative of anal rape as a debasement, a feminization and an enslavement of defeated warriors, the fact that Euro-North American art could represent the nude Indian man signalled Euro-North American dominance over the Native man, making him effeminate, submissive and dependant. The figure's nudity renders him vulnerable to the pleasures of the penetrative male gaze by putting him on display, fully exposed except for a loincloth, always available for perusal and contemplation. He is effeminized, yet his muscular aggressiveness nevertheless allows him to maintain an appearance of autonomous manliness.

Artistic representations of naked male bodies on public displays in mid-to-late nineteenth century America created some moral confusion as to the "propriety of the homosocial gaze."⁵⁸ The male body as the erotic object of the male gaze in heterosexual Victorian society was socially incorrect, yet these public, highly visible male bodies were

⁵⁸ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* (Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 93

accessible to any and everyone, available to be the source of a sense of desire.⁵⁹ The idealized and highly eroticised bodies of Native Americans depicted as the 'Savage', noble or not, marked the brawny, near-naked Indian as aesthetically alluring, in a context where "within the discourse of race, desire and domination functioned interdependently."⁶⁰ Already associated with the feminine, the Aboriginal's sexual power is contained; he becomes an object of visual pleasure through the authority of the Euro-North American male gaze.⁶¹ Through aesthetic disinterest, the homoeroticism of these images was sublimated, displacing desire from action to a position where desire itself was contained. Desire was not acted upon but became a libidinal motivation for desire.⁶² The homosocial gaze obtained pleasure from the male form and redirected that pleasure into efforts to become the object of visual pleasure.

The confusion elicited by the homosocial gaze coincided with the period where the *sodomite* became the *homosexual*. For most of the nineteenth century there was no word for the homosexual, because it was not specifically a social identity.⁶³ The urban explosion of the nineteenth century permitted the creation of gay ghettos, areas where men who identified with same-sex desire gravitated, banded together and began to develop a sub-culture around their common and shared experiences. By the 1880's in North America, there was an increase in prosecutions for sodomy as well as an increased interest from the scientific community. The previous belief that homosexuality was a degenerative disease started to be replaced by a conviction that it was a congenital condition, transferring the power to judge and define the sodomite from the legal quarter

⁵⁹ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 93

⁶⁰ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 100

⁶¹ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 102

⁶² Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*: 93

⁶³ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 83

to the medical and social sciences.⁶⁴ It is during this time, in 1895, across the Atlantic, that Oscar Wilde's 'spontaneous' oration at his own trial marked what many feel is the point to which we can trace the very beginnings of the twentieth century construction of 'homosexuality' and of sexuality in general as a social identity.⁶⁵ Wilde's position concurred with a growing interest in the activities of the homosexual and a shift in opinion that homosexuality was not a "crime against nature" but that it was in-born, part of one's identity make-up.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, European attitudes towards the "berdache" tradition did not improve. Native leaders grew to be afraid of homosexuality on their reserves for fear of government retribution. Paula Gunn Allen, a Laguna-Sioux/Lebanese poet and essayist, points out that in the 1920s, the U.S. government's "Bureau of Indian Affairs did indeed gather pornographic gossip about the Pueblo Indians to win support for legislation unfavourable to Pueblo claims."⁶⁷ These types of retributive legislations resulted in the removal of Native peoples' lands, homes and children.⁶⁸ In terms of the institutionalized position of the divergent sexual expression in First Nations societies, by the late nineteenth century, when anthropologists began to study Aboriginal cultures, the "berdache" tradition had practically completely eroded from sub arctic and northwest coastal areas, bringing into doubt its importance and frequency in those societies.⁶⁹ Since

⁶⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 274 ; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 41, 43

⁶⁵ Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*: 2; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 84

⁶⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 274 ; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 43

⁶⁷ Paula Gunn Allen, quoted in Will Roscoe, "Living the Tradition: Gay American Indians," *Gay Spirit: Myth and Meaning* (St.Martin's Press, New York, 1987): 72

⁶⁸ Will Roscoe, "Living the Tradition: Gay American Indians," *Gay Spirit: Myth and Meaning* (St.Martin's Press, New York, 1987): 72

⁶⁹ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 84

Contact, Christian conquerors, missionaries and governments alike sought to stamp out what, according to their knowledge, was sinful, deviant behaviour. Their efforts were so effective that Native communities have become conservative in the extreme, and individuals who once may have held positions of prestige for excellence in their skills⁷⁰ or for their position in the political hierarchy⁷¹ are met today with homophobic aggression.⁷²

This conservatism is the result of five hundred years of Christian and European influences. The further we get from pre-conquest conditions, the more formal Christian Native leadership became. For example, as early as the seventeenth century, Franciscan and mestizo writers and leaders in Mesoamerica re-created pre-Contact Aztec history to spin a narrative containing rather biblical punishments visited on practitioners of same-sex contact and transvestism, at best an exaggerated history to prove the authors' prejudices.⁷³ The bottom line is that these accounts come down to us through the records of the male elite, showing their perspective. This again indicates how the European male elite found it difficult to understand the "cultural forms projected by native males."⁷⁴

Part of the reason why the term *two-spirit* was adopted to describe non-heterosexual Native individuals was to help reduce homophobic activities on Indian reserves. It was hoped that the new term would act as a reminder of the spiritual aspect of an individual's life and redirect the focus from the homosexual label.⁷⁵ The changing

⁷⁰ Harriet Whitehead, "The Bow and the Burden Strap," *Sexual Meaning*: 99-108

⁷¹ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 116

⁷² Will Roscoe, "Living the Tradition: Gay American Indians," *Gay Spirit: Myth and Meaning*: 71-3; Kent Monkman, "The Impact of Christianity on Aboriginal Sexuality," *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*.

⁷³ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest* : 160

⁷⁴ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest*: 161

⁷⁵ The creation of the term Two-Spirit has two main problematics. One is that it has not been adopted by all Aboriginal people it was intended for, therefore is a preferential term, not an absolute definition. Secondly, it is meant as a neutral term to replace the now offensive term "berdache" and distance the subject from

social and political landscape for the Native American meant radical shifts in perception of their realities. By the late nineteenth century/early twentieth century, their very sense of self, collectively and individually, was being sundered through an erosion of their cultures using a variety of means: the residential school system⁷⁶ the regular school systems,⁷⁷ prohibitive legislations, restrictive on-reserve economies and non-Native-dominated media. Those engaged in this assimilationist effort on the part of the Euro-North American dominant will point out the more humanitarian perspectives in that Aboriginals were encouraged to develop and capitalise on those skills they traditionally possessed that could translate into the European economy, such as the fabrication of baskets and other objects for the tourist trade.⁷⁸ The more draconian approaches included federal legislation prohibiting the practice of traditions such as the potlatch ceremonies on the West Coast,⁷⁹ or the eradication of unwanted traditions such as that of "berdachism" through social and religious pressures.

In Arthur Penn's 1970 film *Little Big Man*,⁸⁰ a young Jack Crab/Little Big Man (played by Dustin Hoffman) who, as a European captive, had been raised from childhood by the Cheyenne, is re-captured by the U.S. Army and put in the care of Reverend Pendrake (Thayer David) and his sexually frustrated wife, Mrs Louise Pendrake (Faye

European constructions of homosexuality and 'gayness'. The term Two-Spirit, when translated in languages other than Northern Algonquin has different cultural meanings: in Shoshone "two-spirit" means "ghost"; in Athapaskan languages it signifies someone who possesses a dead and a living spirit (which is not desirable). See "Introduction," *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*: 3

⁷⁶ This isolated them from the teachings of their own heritages and from their elders.

⁷⁷ This taught the Euro-North American perspective on history and on First Nations peoples.

⁷⁸ Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast, 1700-1900* (McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1998): 201

⁷⁹ Gloria Cranmer Webster, "The Contemporary Potlatch," *Chiefly Feasts: The Enduring Kwakiutl Potlatch*, ed. Aldona Jonaitis (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991): 227

⁸⁰ *Little Big Man*, dir. Arthur Penn, U.S.A. Cinema Center Films/Stockbridge-Hiller Productions, 1970. The film has a sympathetic representation of a "berdache", a character named Little Horse (played by Robert Little Star).

Dunaway). The multiple roles Jack/Little Big Man plays in the film, from Cheyenne to Euro-American, from traumatised boy to young Cheyenne warrior to snake-oil salesman to gunslinger to legitimate businessman, back to Cheyenne warrior then scout for General Custer to alcoholic and back again, permits for the contemporary observer to see the colonial Victorian period from different perspectives. The characters of Louise Pendrake and her husband are a darkly comic example of Simon Gikandi's observation that the further removed the colonial subject was from the centre of Victorianism, the more heavily invested s/he was in it, perhaps even more so than the Victorian. Their exaggerated piousness and belief that Little Big Man/Jack Crab must have suffered traumas at the hands of the "savages", in particular sexual trauma, displays not only late nineteenth century preoccupations with sexuality but an extreme adherence to Victorian preoccupations on confessing to expose the workings of sex. The colonized were also involved in this hyper-Victorianism. Gikandi says that, "in rehearsing Victorianism and its core values, the colonized were also transforming Victorian categories; they were using the dominant forms of colonisation to express their own experiences."⁸¹ The colonized adopted the narrative enforced by the colonizer, through a process of repetition. Part of the schemata Homi K. Bhabha gives of colonial power is that it is through repetition that the dominant and the colonized change each other. Further, it is through repetitive imitation that the colonized begins by integrating the rules of the colonizer, an imitation that is never exactly the thing it mimics. While this shows the instability of authority, it also shows that there are transformations that occur in the society of the

⁸¹ Simon Gikandi, "The Embarrassment of Victorianism: Colonial Subjects and the Lure of Englishness," *Victorian Afterlife: Postmodern Culture Rewrites the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000): 159

colonized.⁸² For Native communities to 'forget' the tradition of the "berdache" and begin to persecute those who are not heterosexual or gender-normative would show a marked change in the Aboriginal social environment. Thus, a Victorian conservatism crept in, and Euro-North American rules became internalized by Aboriginal communities.

If the colonial Victorian altered the originary form of Victorianism through a 'rehearsal', as Gikandi puts it, or as 'repetition' and 'mimesis' as Bhabha says, then it means that Native identity, collective and individual, as it existed before Contact, has also been altered. Individual identity is confirmed and reconfirmed in a cycle based on exchanges between an interior reality, both physical and mental, and an exterior reality (or with everything outside the individual), the understanding of which is shaped by ideology and largely communicated and established through discourse (I am shamelessly drawing from Lacan's theories of the Mirror Stage of an infant's development and applying it to the general formation of identity⁸³). This expression exists within the space of performativity, for identity repeats what it believes to be itself to its-self and to the exterior world, forming the *I*. Judith Butler discusses the performativity of identity and states that it is the repeated 'playing' (or 'rehearsal') of identity that causes a constant reconstitution of identity.⁸⁴ Butler says that "identity [is] tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts [... and] if the *I* is a site of repetition, that is, if the *I* only achieves the semblance of identity through a certain

⁸² Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders." *The Location of Culture*. London; New York: Routledge, 1994. In this article there are a number of instances where Bhabha points out the role repetition and imitation play in the colonial experience. For examples, see pages 102, 105, 108, 110. Although Bhabha focuses on the English novel in this article, the ideas he expresses can believably be extended to the general category of forms of communication: textual, visual and verbal. Also, in conversation with Professor Carol Payne, Carleton University, September 13, 2007.

⁸³ Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: a Selection*. Translated from the French by Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1977: 1 - 7

⁸⁴ Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelow et al. New York: Routledge, 1993: 311

repetition of itself, then the *I* is always displaced by the very repetition that sustains it."⁸⁵

The 'I' only exists in the 'now', since it is perpetually recreating itself, and language is always flowing, is constantly redefining itself and what it describes. If the Native pre-Contact self, for example, perceives that male-to-male sexual relations are a natural part of his/her society, s/he will react to instances of male-to-male sexual relations in an accepting manner, viewing it as 'normal', 'correct'. If identity reshapes itself from rehearsals of the *I* in reaction to repetitions from the external, then the post-Contact Native individuality, confronted with a completely different set of cultural and ideological standards, will receive repeated negative feedback from the new Euro-North American dominant, causing new information to be integrated by the Native post-Contact individual's interior, altering his/her behaviour towards instances of sexual behaviour that are not prescribed by the new Euro-North American rules. Henceforward the performance of the Native individuality will change to incorporate the learned behaviour surrounding sexuality as a whole, including the development of a new standard of language to express this change in the collective perspective.

Real Fictions

While Native populations suffered from attempts at cultural and in some instances ethnic eradications, sexual and gender variable people in North America were also being actively persecuted. Homosexuals were subjected to the vagaries of various institutions up until the last quarter of the twentieth century, punished as sexual inverts, subjected to methods of enforcing sexual conformity, from psychoanalysis to lobotomies, from losing jobs to murder by gay bashing. There is a paradox (at least one) in these attempts to subsume identity; they are acts that serve to confirm that something exists in order to

⁸⁵ Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*: 311

disavow it, therefore resulting in an avowal of the unwanted identity. What might change is the self-esteem of the beleaguered identity. Dominant society tried to convert First Nations peoples (and colonize their sexuality) to Europeanism and it also tried to 'convert' homosexuals to the accepted sexual expression of normalised, genitally-gender-specific heterosexuality.

The growing discourse from medical, psychiatric and justice institutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries increasingly identified sex as dangerous.⁸⁶ Through this discourse, sex was integral to the exercise of power,⁸⁷ divided and classified in increasing categories. Judith Butler identifies these categories as tools of oppressive regulatory regimes.⁸⁸ Whether the term is "berdache", "two-spirit", "gay", "homosexual", "queer", "ethnically diverse", disavowing one definition and avowing another serves an equal purpose as the means of confirming the category. Creating and confirming these categories through a discourse of avowal or disavowal can, as Foucault notes, function as "an instrument of and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy."⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 30-1

⁸⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 32

⁸⁸ Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*: 308

⁸⁹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 101

CHAPTER 3

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch, pp 57 – *Camping with the Indians*, pp 59 –
The Mischief of Miss Chief, pp 65 – *Going Native*, pp 67 – *Clothes Make the Man*, pp 71
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Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

The fierce personage of Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle looks like a warrior on the rampage, a man with a mission, a woman on the hunt. For Kent Monkman, "Miss Chief is not really male, not really female, she's kind of in between, and sometimes she's more female, sometimes she's more male."¹ S/he is a trickster, like the Cree coyote spirit Wasagachuk,² undefinable, fluid, charming, upsetting, silly, playful, revealing.

Portrait of the Artist as Hunter re-presents and subverts nineteenth century American paintings of Aboriginal men in Eurocentric historical documents to challenge the accepted construction of Native, queer and queer Native existences. The play of meanings in the painting destabilizes normative expectations through the re-appropriations of representations as well as through visual discontinuities. This is accomplished largely through the use of camp irony, which I define as a tactic associated mainly with the gay community and useful in ontological critiques of the normative. Such critiques attempt to explore a system of thinking to overcome its limitations.

While drawing heavily on nineteenth century representations of Aboriginal men in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, Miss Chief is clearly not a displaced figure from the past. Speaking to a contemporary audience, s/he shows the historical baggage of the Native and the contemporary queer, acquired through their relationships with the non-Native and the non-queer. This third chapter will discuss the origins of Miss Chief as a product of a

¹ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

² Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

close observation on the part of the artist of a contemporary popular culture that descends from nineteenth century Euro-centric conceptions of ethnicity, gender and sexuality. The critique evinced from Monkman's analysis of a colonized sexuality through camp imagery establishes links between the expression of a camp sensibility and hybridity. Such links combine colonial experience and the experience of the sexual and gender variable, creating an alloy which is present in the artist's work and in his biography while imaginatively recreating the past to relate it to contemporary Native, queer and queer Native issues.

Monkman embodies a multiplicity of elements. He was born into the Swampy Cree of the Fisher River band in Manitoba³; his father is a Cree Anglican minister, his mother is English/Irish⁴; he has publicly been referred to as *queer*⁵ or referring to his alter-ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, as *two-spirit*.⁶ These are all neat boxes Monkman can be placed in, or are they? Monkman is First Nations and European, raised in the Anglican Church⁷, interested in Aboriginal traditions and he is also queer. A similar kind of blending of identities occurs in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, the object of our study. The imagery in the painting references homosexuality and gay camp culture, quite blatantly displaying queer sensibilities and queer sexuality, thus adding overlapping

³ National Gallery of Canada, "I Placed my Alter Ego in the Painting," *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*.

⁴ Kent Monkman, Musée des beaux arts de Montreal, February 14, 2007 ; National Gallery of Canada, "Kent Monkman," *Cybermuse: Meet the Artist*, http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/cybermuse/showcases/meet/artist_e.jsp?artistid=26919.

⁵ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007; Jon Davies, "Manned Claims: ImagineNative FEST / Sex Upends our National Mythology," *Capital Xtra!* Thursday, October 13, 2005 (Ottawa: Pink Triangle Press) Accessed March 18, 2007.

<http://www.xtra.ca/public/viewstory.aspx?AFF_TYPE=3&STORY_ID=1016&PUB_TEMPLATE_ID=5>.

⁶ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007; Kent Monkman, "I Placed My Altar-Ego In the Painting," *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*.

⁷ Kent Monkman, Artist Statement, *The Prayer Language*, <http://urbannation.com/kentwritings.htm> Monkman's great-grandmother was converted to Christianity, and his father ministered to the Cree in their native tongue.

layers to which the unit labelled *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* participates: the queer community, the artistic community, the Native community.

The painting visually lists and displays different aspects of Kent Monkman's identity through his self-avowed alter-ego, Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle. In an interview for the National Gallery of Canada Monkman said:

I placed myself in the work *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, as my drag persona, Share Eagle Testickle and I created that drag persona because I wanted to have a character, a representation of two-spirited sexuality. I felt that really the strongest way of doing that was to paint myself in drag in the painting.⁸

By incorporating a multiplicity of identity elements in Miss Chief, the reality Monkman presents is inclusive; it isn't a question of "either/or", which implies a stable identity, one that is constant and singular which attempts to convert the divergent back into its 'true' image. The reality he presents is "also/and": Aboriginal *and* male *and* queer... a shifting and multifaceted identity, restructuring itself as it encounters and absorbs new information.

Portrait of the Artist as Hunter explores, appropriates and reworks stereotyped images of Monkman's male, gay, First Nations and European heritages which can be recognized by a contemporary audience. This multiplicity is all represented in one painting which, through this combination, creates a character that becomes far from generalized: Miss Chief.

Camping with the Indians

It is shocking, funny and unexpected to see the Indian chasing the cowboy, and equally ironic that the Indian is so effeminate yet domineering. These ironic juxtapositions in the painting serve to display the limitations of previous representations

⁸ Kent Monkman, "I Placed My Altar-Ego In the Painting," *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*.

of the Native and the sexual and gender variable (and, ultimately, the Euro-North American) using not just any old irony, but one that comes from a camp aesthetic. First, a few words on camp: Susan Sontag's seminal text "Notes on 'Camp'" is *de rigueur* in contemporary queer theory and has, since its publication, been the subject of debate, helping to further the discourse on gay issues. Part of her discussion says that camp is something that has the "proper mixture of the exaggerated, the fantastic, the passionate, and the naive."⁹ Later in her essay, she shows some ambivalence on the latter point by stating that Camp is either "completely naive or wholly conscious."¹⁰ Some twenty years later Sue-Ellen Case wrote that "Camp both articulates the lives of homosexuals through the obtuse tone of irony and inscribes their oppression with the same device. Likewise, it eradicates the ruling powers of heterosexist realist modes."¹¹ With its strong political tone, Case's definition runs counter to Susan Sontag's position of the camp sensibility as "disengaged, depoliticized – or at least apolitical", that Camp is not only *demesure* but is also frivolous.¹² Granted, Sontag's text was the first known article on the Camp phenomenon, published in 1966, written in 1964. A lot has happened since then that has given the opportunity for individuals like Case to note the vital role irony plays in the power of camp.

On the night of June 28, 1969, just three years after the publication of Sontag's collection *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*,¹³ which includes the article "Notes on 'Camp'", the drag queens that frequented New York City's Stonewall Inn bar had had

⁹ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, (New York: Picador, 1966): 283

¹⁰ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*: 283

¹¹ Sue-Ellen Case, "Towards a Butch-Femme Aesthetic," *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove et al. (New York: Routledge, 1993): 298

¹² Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*: 277

¹³ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, (New York: Picador, 1966).

enough of being harassed and brutalized by police for being homosexuals. During a police raid on that night, they rebelled and The Stonewall Riots erupted in the city streets, marking what is for many the dawning of the gay protest movement, a decidedly political effort and considered as the concrete beginning of the gay subject as a politically engaged entity and the beginning of a movement to "decriminalize, demedicalize, and devillainize" homosexuals.¹⁴ While drag queens, those members of the gay community most readily associated with a camp sensibility, are perceived by many as being droll and vain, the very act of adopting exaggerations of feminine clothing and appearance is a political action that challenges the heterosexual realist modes of gendered dress codes in Euro-North American society through irony: the disjunction of what is presented and what is expected.

Moe Meyers, in the introduction to *The Politics and Poetics of Camp*, claims that true Camp is solely queer, the "total body of queer identity performance practices."¹⁵ He states that Sontag misrepresents Camp as being "the performative gestures executed independently of queer self-reflexivity."¹⁶ Meyers qualifies this as an act of appropriation by the 'unqueer' and defines these moments as 'traces' of camp, qualifying his position by saying that it is the adoption by the unqueer of this queer sensibility that provides "the queer access to the apparatus of representation."¹⁷ Whether one agrees or not with this position, it indicates the degree to which camp is identified with queerness. It also shows how the queer subject is still positioned as the other, working under the assumption that it

¹⁴ See Mark Thompson's *Long Road to Freedom: The Advocate History of the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); also Robert Amsel, "Back to Our Future? A Walk on the Wild Side of Stonewall." *The Advocate*, Sept 15, 1987, issue 481. Los Angeles, Calif.: LPI Media: 36-46, archived in the Queer Resources Directory at <http://www.qrd.org/qrd/misc/text/stonewall.history-ADVOCATE>.

¹⁵ Moe Meyers, *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (New York: Routledge, 1992): 5

¹⁶ Moe Meyers, *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (New York: Routledge, 1992): 5

¹⁷ Moe Meyers, *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (New York: Routledge, 1992): 5

is through the dominant unqueer that the queer can obtain emancipation of their representation.

In this paper we discuss 'camp', linked with irony, as an ontological critique of normative society. My interpretation of an ironic camp aesthetic, while based on Sontag's work in that I agree that it possesses the elements of the extravagant and theatrical, qualifies the paradox of 'innocent/self-conscious'¹⁸ with the term *playful*. Monkman's painting is not frivolous fluff, which it would have to be according to Sontag's definition. It is a work with a political purpose, which is to challenge normative twenty-first century perceptions of Native men, First Peoples, and queers, unabashedly displaying the signifiers of these collectivities according to their own terms of understanding, and not by pandering to a non-Native, un-queer audience. As such, it has not been borrowed but purchased by a national institution for public display to queer and un-queer, Native and non-Native alike. It is political, respecting a grave and tragic history of violence and it is humorous because of the ironic juxtapositions it contains. It belongs to the new post-Stonewall camp, one that is politically savvy while maintaining the ironic playfulness and ontological power of camp aesthetics to speak of Native and queer issues.

The narrative in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a camp parody, picking on the subjective position of the artists who produced Western American wild frontier paintings; teasing the period's fearful Eastern businessmen trying to stave off the so-called feminisation of over civilization; and bullying the emergent insecurity of the homoerotic in art. In so doing, he isn't speaking to a history of the past, but to a construction of the present. Irony is a strategy that can be used by those who have been disenfranchised in order to observe normative society, critique it and then emancipate themselves from it,

¹⁸ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*: 283

recreating themselves through imaginative repetitions of their subject position. In *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* Monkman critiques normative heterosexist, racist and macho social constructions by closely reproducing a work of art from the past. The narrative in John Mix Stanley's work is one shared by other buffalo hunt artists and has been taken by Eurocentric society as fact. By creating a new narrative based on the old, Monkman's ironic juxtapositions of nineteenth century constructions and twenty-first century experiences is subversive to a contemporary construction of masculinity and ethnicity that is based on accepted, mainstream historical narratives.

Homi Bhabha says that resistance to colonial powers comes from a recognition of the constructed nature of the displaced voice of authority "within the deferential of colonial power – hierarchy, normalization, marginalization and so forth."¹⁹ In the colonial situation the European dominant denies that its presence causes any disruption to Native culture because it holds that Aboriginal culture is already deficient – in terms of European standards, Indians are guilty, for example, of immoral sexual practices and improper dress codes. In order to preserve a sense of "the authority of its identity" as superior, the European believed, through the construction of historical and political narratives, that it was his/her destiny and evolutionary prerogative to dominate by bringing 'culture' to the Native. Monkman's form of resistance to colonial power is in demonstrating how these constructed narratives have produced "differentiations, individuations, identity effects through which discriminatory practices map out subject populations" silenced by the colonial project,²⁰ co-opting the very identifiers that have obscured the Native and the queer and transformed these discriminations into their

¹⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 110

²⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 111

opposite. Sue-Ellen Case says that "[t]he controlling agents of the status quo may know the power of lies; dissident subcultures, however, are closer to knowing their value."²¹ I equate the word 'lies' in this quote with the concept of 'correct' and 'incorrect'. When challenging the status quo, the collectivities and individuals that have been 'othered' are attempting to redirect "relations of power-knowledge"²² to alter the definitions for what has been defined as 'correct' and 'incorrect'.

The figure of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle regroups multiple subject positions and, as a representation that exists outside the norm, is an updated and imaginative repetition of the construction of the queer Native *I*. If identity needs repetition to maintain its existence, as Butler suggests,²³ then subversive influences have the potential of altering that repetition. If this binary system is what we know as reality, camp, as a queer aesthetics with its inherent ironic incongruity between what is expected and what actually occurs, throws this reality into chaos. Sontag writes that "[w]hat (camp) does is to offer ... a different – a supplementary – set of standards."²⁴ Monkman presents his audience with a contemporary alternative to accepted historical interpretations of Western mythologies in a close reproduction of a classic Victorian-era Western American painting by inserting what appears at first glance to be a rather crude joke: the butt-naked cowboy chased by Miss Chief. Ha ha. What it really describes is an alternative to Native and non-Native relations, and alternatives to sexual and gender expressions.

²¹ Sue-Ellen Case, "Towards a Butch-Femme Aesthetic," *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*: 298

²² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1 (New York, Toronto: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books Edition, 1990): 99

²³ See Chapter 2, "Where Never Is Heard A Discouraging Word"

²⁴ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*: 286

The Mischief of Miss Chief

Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle is based on the singer/actor Cher's 1960s half-breed persona,²⁵ where she dressed as an outlandish Indian (see figures 19). Monkman has even adopted a name for his alter-ego that plays on the sound of Cher's name: Share. Miss Chief also brings to mind The American Indian persona embodied by Felipe Rose (see figure 20)²⁶ of the 1970s gay disco group *The Village People* (see figure 21), another iconic send-up of the popular commodification of the Native image. Monkman has said that incorporating these icons in his painting was a:

way of sort of reclaiming that Hollywood stereotype and disempowering it in the same way that homosexuals have reclaimed the word fag. It's a very similar sort of reclaiming of stereotypes that have been harmful, you sort of take them back, you own them, you reclaim them and then you present them from a position of power and that's really what I wanted to do.²⁷

This is the axis of an ironic recontextualisation that dismantles the signifiers Monkman reappropriates from these popular icons. Cher and The American Indian (a.k.a. Felipe Rose) have appropriated the signifiers they used for their personas as entertainers from those employed by Hollywood western films that in their turn appropriated their images from previous sources such as the nineteenth century histories, photographs, literatures and paintings we have studied. By ironically recontextualizing the representation of the gay male and the Native man, as well as the relationship between Aboriginals and Euro-North Americans, Monkman reconstructs them according to his will. He reclaims the

²⁵ David Liss, "Kent Monkman: Miss Chief Returns," *Canadian Art*, Fall 2005, 22, 3: 80

²⁶ "Felipe Rose is a native New Yorker, having been born and raised in Brooklyn. His Puerto Rican and Native American heritage (Lakota Sioux) is reflected in the clothing that he dons to perform. This is not just a costume but also a signifier of where he comes from and his long association with Native American groups across the country. Felipe has been called a "Shadow Walker" - a native term for walking in two worlds" From "Bio: Felipe Rose", *Felipe Rose*, accessed May 29, 2007, <<http://www.tiptopwebsite.com/websites/index2.php?username=feliperose&page=3>>.

²⁷ Kent Monkman, "I Placed My Altar-Ego In the Painting," *CyberMuse: Meet the Artist*.

representation of his own membership to multiple groups and chooses the identity what he wishes the viewer to witness. It is, after all, a portrait of the artist.

Even as Kent's alter-ego in the painting displays the multifaceted nature of visual identifiers, Miss Chief's name is a play on the multi-faceted nature of verbal identifiers. Monkman said that Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle also stands for Mischief Cher Egotistical.²⁸ The word 'mischief' is a reference to the Trickster traditions in First Peoples cultures, and also the tricks Monkman has played on the viewer in the painting. 'Egotistical' alludes to the artist's ego, a reference to what Monkman sees as the egotism of the nineteenth century artists who adopted the representation of the Native man in their art, in particular those artists who represented themselves alongside the heroic figures of the Aboriginal men represented in their own paintings. On the image John Mix Stanley painted of himself in *The Buffalo Hunt* (see figure 5), Monkman said : "This is (a) painting by the artist John Mix Stanley and here he is, he's even looking towards the audience, he's just shot the buffalo, very macho, manly, rugged adventurer, the male artist ego."²⁹

Monkman's title underlines the significance of the artist's presence, both in the John Mix Stanley as well as in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*. This is a portrait of the artist as a hunter – the artist is Miss Chief, and Miss Chief is Kent Monkman. His intention was to exaggerate the self-aggrandising Western artist by creating a persona which was "this ego-maniac who (is) always appearing in her own work and subjugating these European men into various roles and so forth."³⁰ The play on words in the title coupled with complimentary imagery shows a strong predisposition to explore the

²⁸ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

²⁹ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

³⁰ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

function of visual and verbal signifiers in order to revisit the erroneous narratives on First Peoples.

Going Native

Notice the immaculate feather headdress Miss Chief wears, and the warrior's protective chest plate. Note her painted eyes and lips, her glamorous floor-length pink loin-cloth and platform pink pumps. S/he is riding her horse bareback with confidence and skill, her strong, muscular body taught with intent, her arm steady as s/he pulls back the string of her bow, ready to shoot her arrow at her target: the cowboy's bare bottom. Miss Chief is a transvested male, displaying the fashion sense of a diva and the strength and skill of a warrior. John Mix Stanley and Felix O.C. Darley never imagined this kind of representation for their male Indians, since strength and effeminacy to the nineteenth century mind was clearly an oxymoron. The preoccupation at the close of the nineteenth century with the active, muscular male as the epitome of masculinity coincided with the image of a new sexual category of the homosexual; those who appeared feminine – in movement, intonation, word choice, dress or a combination of these – were marked as “homosexual.”³¹ As with European chroniclers and anthropologists who did not question the sexuality or gender of the Aboriginal men who had sex with or who married the “berdache”,³² the scientists of this period studying the homosexual in North-American urban centres often identified the active male in homosexual couplings as 'straight' and conversely, men whose sexual object was woman but who were considered effeminate or were cross-dressers were mistaken as homosexual. The scientific study of the

³¹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993): 276

³² Sabine Lang, "Various Kinds of Two-Spirit People" *Two-Spirit People*, eds. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, Sabine Lang (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1997): 102

homosexual developed a theory based on an internal form of hermaphroditism which, in some circles meant a new species of men-women.³³ Contributing to the confusion, many men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who identified as homosexual were in agreement with the scientific community, declaring that they were morphologically men but otherwise like women in every respect, given to women's desires, activities and mannerisms.³⁴

The figure of the 'butch' homosexual emerged in the twentieth century. Such a figure assumed the signifiers of masculinity such as moustaches and leather biker outfits, and moved into the urban gay ghettos of the late 1950s and early 1960s, actively participating in the homosexual community. These manly gays, who were considered 'straights' in previous centuries even though they had sex with effeminate homosexuals, did not identify as men-women.

In the second quarter of the twentieth century, the paintings of Mexican artist George Quaintance depicted youthful, almost feminine men with perfect, muscular bodies engaged in manly activities, the cowboy being a particular favourite of his.³⁵ These figures relate to each other with barely concealed homoeroticism. In 1945 the work of George Quaintance obtained a new forum in print media with the advent of magazines featuring 'artistic studies' of the male form, consisting of photographs by gay men of muscular youths.³⁶ The most significant of these was published by Bob Mizer under the title of *Physique Pictorial*. Works by Quaintance, such as the one seen in figure 23, and

³³ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 43

³⁴ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 276-7

³⁵ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Stonewall Inn Editions, 2000): 130 ; Volker Janssen, ed., *The Art of George Quaintance*, translated from the German by Hubertus Falkenstein (Frankfurt/Germany; Trumbull, CT/USA: Janssen Publishers CC, 2003): 3

³⁶ Volker Janssen, ed., *The Art of George Quaintance*: 3 ; *The Quaintance Collection: Male Physique Paintings of the 1950s*, accessed April 30, 2007, <http://www.georgequaintance.com/05_about.html>.

other like-minded artists were featured on the cover of the magazine, all of which depicted hyper-realistic albeit idealized images of nude or semi-nude men.³⁷

In 1957, the first images by an unknown artist from Finland by the name of Touko Laaksonen were featured on the cover of *Physique Pictorial*, which marked the beginning of a revolution in the representation of the gay identity in the West. In the spirit of the American market, Mizer changed the artist's name to Tom of Finland, a name that became famous in the gay community.³⁸ At the height of his career, the men in Tom's drawings were mature, averaging thirty five years of age, who possessed impossible physical characteristics: an idealized fantasy of the muscular, masculine, phallic male body (see Figure 24). These images of powerful, butch gay men inspired the international gay male community to espouse the Tom of Finland 'look',³⁹ which became known as the gay 'clone' look of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, clothing a body-builder's exaggerated muscular frame in leather jackets, tight jeans, sometimes a plaid shirt and often with facial hair, as seen in the Hollywood film *Cruising* starring Al Pacino.⁴⁰ What were signifiers of masculine maleness became appropriated and fetishized by the homosexual community as an expression of gay sexuality as hyper-masculine, as opposed to Quaintance's manly effeminates. Tom of Finland is considered the 'daddy' of the masculine homosexual image.

The Village People was the product of an image-conscious American music industry ready to capitalize on the male gay fetish for the Tom of Finland man. This gay disco group's outrageousness helped popularize the new masculine homosexual image in

³⁷ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 77

³⁸ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 78

³⁹ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 8

⁴⁰ *Cruising*, dir. William Friedkin, U.S.A. Lorimar Productions/United Artists, 1980.

North American culture. To this day people of all ages sing their hit songs *Go West* and mimic the popular dance moves to *Y.M.C.A.* Each member of this musical group played a character that represented a sexual fetish of the hyper-masculine man in the gay community: the cowboy, the construction worker, the policeman, the leather-man, the Black man and the Native man, their identities established because of their appearance. A representation by gay men of gay men as hyper-masculine macho homosexual is particular to the twentieth century.

The contribution made by Tom of Finland's pornographic art to the social transformation and masculinization of the homosexual image and identity was to transform the representations of the homosexual male from dependent, tragic and effeminate to men who were empowered, strong and happy in their sexuality. Although Tom stated that this was part of his intention in drawing and publishing these images,⁴¹ he didn't espouse any strong political intentions for and in his work. They were intended for pleasure and pornographic gratification. The modification in identity construction these images effected in the gay community of the 1970s intersected with a gay liberation movement sparked by the effeminate drag queens of the Stonewall riots and encouraged by the sexual revolution and second-wave feminism,⁴² a period of concerted efforts by disparate groups at obtaining increasing amounts of social tolerance. Tom's drawings mark the liberation of gay men "from the shackles of femininity and unnaturalness,"⁴³ from perceptions of the homosexual male not chosen but imposed on the gay psyche. In the early eighties the gay subculture was led by assertive young professionals who did not

⁴¹ Dian Hanson, *Tom of Finland: The Comic Collection*. Volume 1, Köln; London: Taschen, 2005: 8-9 ; F. Valentine Hooven III, *Tom of Finland: His Life and Times*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993: 88.

⁴² Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 10

⁴³ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 58.

accept that gay men had to be less masculine than straight men. They espoused the look of Tom's men;⁴⁴ the homosexual male no longer needed to identify with femininity to explain and understand his sexual variance. The sexual identity he constructed and played was made of gender signifiers which had become free-floating elements liberated from binarism.⁴⁵

Tom of Finland's work helped open the potential for representations of effeminate muscularity. There is a quality of the caricature in Tom's work, of exaggerations of the macho male muscular body. The same goes for Monkman's figures, with the cowboy's rosy-pink bottom and Miss Chief's flamboyancy and athletic muscularity. As such, like the manly homosexual, Miss Chief is the stereotype and is not the stereotype. S/he is the powerful male, the extravagant cross-dresser, the skilled huntsman, the desirous slut, the fierce warrior. Don't mess with her, girlfriend! The bottom line is that s/he is empowered, dominant, active, aggressive – male traits wrapped in scintillating, shimmering pink, with feathers on and a Louis Vuitton quiver.⁴⁶ As a representation of the queer identity, s/he is a powerful example of the shifting subject-position of the 'I'.

Clothes Make The Man

Like other nineteenth century Western artists, George Catlin believed that Aboriginal cultures were in decline and would soon disappear altogether.⁴⁷ He saw the

⁴⁴ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 11

⁴⁵ Tom of Finland's influence was also felt in the world of High Art. Notable figures of the American art illuminati have expressed their admiration and interest in his work, such as Andy Warhol, David Hockney and Robert Mapplethorpe. The latter actively helped promote Tom's art, even arranging for a showing in New York art galleries. Mapplethorpe continued to be influential in Tom's career posthumously. Original drawings by Tom were part of the Mapplethorpe's estate auction at Christies, estimated between \$300-600 and fetching up to \$4000. (Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality* : 18-20)

⁴⁶ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁴⁷ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1973): 100-101.

early effects of cultural hybridity among Natives as signs of cultural decline as opposed to cultural vitality. In his portrait of Pigeon's Egg (see figure 25), discussed below by Monkman, Catlin mocks this Native man for adopting some of the signifiers of Euro-North American dress:

So this is a painting called *Pigeon's Egg: Returning from Washington*. This is by George Catlin and this painting is interesting to me because Catlin, as much as he was in love with this dying, or what he saw as a dying culture, he also had this contempt for Aboriginal people who were innovative, who took on any influence from European cultures. He wrote something he called the Moral Schema which was this document that really simplistically reduced the qualities of the Aboriginal person pre-contact, and after contact.⁴⁸

Monkman here points out a double-standard shared by Catlin and his fellow Euro-North Americans: "true" Aboriginal cultures were expected to maintain the semblance of a nostalgic form of culture or a golden past. These were considered signs of cultural purity. In contrast, Euro-North Americans co-opting vestimentary elements from Native cultures, such as the buckskin outfits worn by John Mix Stanley in *Buffalo Hunt* and by Roosevelt in the latter part of the nineteenth century, legitimately participated in the cult of the primitive and the masculinisation of the Euro-North American male.⁴⁹ If parts of Indian culture were taken up by Euro-North American society, it was not to become like the Aboriginal, but to forge links with their own lionized pioneer ancestors, a past as mythologized as the Dying Indian was romanticised.

The charm in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is in the humorous inversion of roles between Native and Cowboy, and also in the playful means with which Monkman has employed identifiers. The viewer feels like s/he's in on the joke because the visual cues in the painting are easily recognizable to a contemporary audience, and yet they have been

⁴⁸ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁴⁹ See our discussion on the Mountain Man and of Roosevelt and the cult of the primitive in Chapter 1, "Making Up Maleness."

repositioned to give a meaning different from what is expected. As we've discussed, part of this ironic humour in the painting is that the effeminate Native man is chasing the butch cowboy. The subtle game here is on how we come to make these associations; not through the body itself but by how the body is made to appear using adornments and clothing.

Like the "berdache" discussed in chapter two who is made to wear women's clothes as a sign of his adoption of the role of 'woman' in Native cultures, the masculine homosexual male distinguishes himself from female-identified homosexuals by wearing hyper-masculinized clothing, sometimes associated with male-gendered occupations. For our purposes, the cowboy, as one of these types, has been popular in American mythology because he is an American invention, a specific example of a Euro-North American construction of masculinity.⁵⁰ The markers of difference between a cowboy and a businessman have nothing to do with physical cues – clothes are the sole indicators of their respective roles and occupations. The primary function of clothing is to shield the body from damage, either from environmental damage – heat, cold, wind, sun etc – or from external damage – objects or other beings. Its secondary function is social, where different styling is used to denote social position, e.g. business suit, cowboy hat, apron, evening gown, loin cloth, etc. For the North American male myth of the cowboy, "the signs of masculinity are multiplied to cover the entire body and to code the body itself so that from the male body will be projected the imago of strength that is not simply personal but national."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 73, 130.

⁵¹ Norman Bryson, "Gericault and 'Masculinity'," *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation*, eds Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxley. (Hanover; London: University Press of New England, 1994): 243.

Early twentieth century homosexuals identified with a female desire which translated into effeminate comportments. The significance of the Tom of Finland clone in light of this stereotype was that the signifiers of masculinity that were employed by 'straight' men were appropriated by homosexuals, blurring the visual cues that distinguished one from the other. Up until the mid-twentieth century in Euro-North American society, the men who had sex with avowed homosexuals (effeminates) were classified as 'straight' because of their appearance and behaviour (behaviour which included being the penetrative partner in same-sex unions). The Tom of Finland clone permitted men who felt same-sex attraction but did not identify with the man-woman model to identify themselves as homosexual while retaining (and even exaggerating) their masculinity. This new way of dressing allowed for a distancing of the homosexual from the male/female axis, as is described in Tom of Finland's erotic drawings; men who played the role of the receptive sexual partner could also be masculine. In addition to this, the division of penetrative and receptive were shown to be interchangeable in sexual encounters, no longer necessitating an imitation of heterosexuality. The homosexual was no longer devoid of phallic aggressiveness because of his sexuality.⁵² Where once homosexuality was denoted by the appearance of femininity as opposed to actual same-sex erotic contact,⁵³ in the latter half of the twentieth century the identifiers of homosexuality diversified, included signifiers of masculinity, and became centered primarily on sexuality.

The cowboy in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* wears all the signifiers of masculinity, including a blue shirt (the colour given to boys), minus his pants. His buttocks and

⁵² Micha Ramakers, *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*: 229

⁵³ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood*: 277

scrotum are in full view. The masculine man, as the impenetrable penetrator,⁵⁴ displays his station through his attire. In the case of Monkman's cowboy, it is the Euro-North American body which is on display. Not only is it on display, but the most vulnerable and shielded part of the male body is framed, exposed and pointed out (consider the trajectory of Miss Chief's arrow), subject to the penetrative male gaze.⁵⁵ In this context his clothes, while referencing the masculine image of the cowboy, also reference a gay fetish: the cowboy, an appropriation by the macho-gay important enough to be included as an icon alongside Felipe Rose as the American Indian in the previously-mentioned *The Village People* and also to play a prominent element in the 1969 Hollywood film *Midnight Cowboy*. In the film, Ratso, played by Dustin Hoffman, berates the innocent Joe Buck, played by Jon Voight, who comes to New York from the American Mid-West to be a straight hustler, using what he feels is his natural, manly, cowboy charm, clothes, hat, boots, body and accent to charm rich women. Of his outfit, Ratso scathingly says: "If you wanna know the truth, that stuff is strictly for faggots! That's faggot stuff."⁵⁶ That the cowboy in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* wears chaps without trousers is a contemporary reference to the gay masculine subculture; chaps are a highly fetishized item of clothing that has enjoyed great popularity on the gay scene. This cowboy, then, is a gay cowboy.

The cowboy is a foil for Miss Chief, who is clothed in feminine trappings yet possesses an idealized masculine body, displays manly skills and behaves in an aggressively manly fashion. S/he is not the anthropologist's "berdache", but a flamboyant

⁵⁴ The anxiety around anal penetration of the male is discussed by Richard Trexler. See Chapter 2, "Stepping Over the Past".

⁵⁵ See our discussion on the male gaze in "Making Up Maleness" in Chapter 1.

⁵⁶ Vito Russo, *The Celluloid Closet*, (New York: Harper & Row), 1981: 81.

Native two-spirit man. This is significant in distancing the character of Miss Chief from the "berdache" as s/he is described in anthropology and in both Whitehead and Trexler's opposing analysis. The basic format of Miss Chief's clothing is masculine, with the stereotyped chief's headdress, the bone chest protector and the loin cloth. It is their style, their colour and exaggerated panache that marks them as unusually feminine – an extravagant ceremonial feather headdress would certainly prove to be unwieldy in a buffalo hunt, and the chances are pretty slim that a Native hunter would wear a fabulous pink⁵⁷ floor-length loin-cloth with matching pumps. Miss Chief's mascara, rouge and lipstick mark her as a 'painted lady' and also as a painted Indian. The makeup recalls the use of pigment in making meaningful designs on the face and body in many Native cultures, again popularized and misrepresented in Hollywood films. Miss Chief's accoutrements do not mark her exclusively male nor female, but as both.

Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle, the artist Kent Monkman's alter-ego, is acting out the subject position of a gender-bending Native man. The signifiers s/he displays are not those of a man trying to be a woman by assuming signifiers that have been gendered female. S/He is 'playing' a third space that is gendered neither 'man' nor 'woman' and yet is both. At the same time, the signifiers of maleness that define her as a gender-bending Native man underline the fact that genitally defined s/he is male and socially defined in contemporary Euro-North American society s/he is a man.⁵⁸ These signifiers are what the individual takes on in what Susan Sontag has termed "Being-as-Playing-a-Role". As an element of camp, she defines it as "the farthest extension, in sensibility, of the metaphor

⁵⁷ The colour most strongly associated with little girls in Western society.

⁵⁸ In the late nineteenth century model of sexuality Miss Chief would be identified with the homosexual, therefore the effeminate man with the heart of a woman.

of life as theatre."⁵⁹ While Sontag locates camp in the world of the fantastic, the unreal and theatrical, Butler has located the gay camp identity in the real world, an instance of identity not as simply a mask or theatre, but as a shifting and evolving performance that constitutes identity. The performance of a gay *and* Native identity works to defeat the reign of heterosexist, racist realism, as well as to situate queer and Native discourse within the category of what can be said and/or seen.⁶⁰

Miss Chief's Tool

No longer invisible, Miss Chief roars her presence on the canvas, declaring with full-throated streaks of pink the existence of an empowered gender variability. But what exactly is Monkman making visible? As previously noted, it isn't the "berdache", since these individuals, once they donned the clothing of women, assumed them and their attendant roles for life. Were there others whose gender variability or sexual expression did not register on the radars of the European chroniclers? Monkman relates a story of George Catlin's "missing dandies" of the Mandan nation:

He came across these 'dandies' numerous times. And in the Mandan tribe, these men... just the way he described them you could tell they were the most flamboyant men in the village. Their feathers were turkey feathers, they weren't eagle feathers. So they didn't have the same standing as the warriors and chiefs. At one point he tried to make a painting of this guy because he looked so spectacular. But the warriors and the chiefs were so put off by him giving that kind of status to this flamboyant character that they stormed out of the tipi, that he had to not make the painting. The painting never got made; it was this chalk drawing that never got painted.⁶¹ I always think of Catlin's

⁵⁹ Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'", *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, Picador, New York, NY, 1966.

⁶⁰ Cornell West wrote of the "problematics of namelessness and invisibility" in African American communities in relation to a dominant Euro American hegemony. See Cornel West, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference", in Simon During, ed., *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London, New York : Routledge, 1993).

⁶¹ George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians: Written During Eight Years' Travel Amongst the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North American: in 1832, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, and 39*, Two Volumes, with Four Hundred Illustrations, Carefully Engraved from his Original Paintings, (London: Chatto&Windus, 1866): 112-117

missing dandies – he called them dandies – and so that's where I am now, thinking about those missing characters, those characters who never got painted, the missing dandies, the missing berdaches, the flamboyant men or the men-women in the villages.⁶²

By painting his own version of these missing representations, Monkman is reclaiming Native sexuality from an obscured cultural past "and drawing that true line from the past up to the present and into the future,"⁶³ in other words positing a reasonable doubt that the historical records and cultural memories don't hold the full story and that there was a multiplicity of sexualities in Aboriginal cultures as well as gender variabilities that were not detected or understood by European chroniclers. If we consider the disturbing play on words in the title for the etching *The Hunter's Stratagem*,⁶⁴ is the title *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, is Miss Chief hunting buffalo or is s/he at war? In some nations the "berdache" was permitted to participate in warfare, but because of her status as a woman, s/he was barred from using the male gendered bow and arrow, and allowed only to use clubs.⁶⁵ If Miss Chief is indeed at war then, again, s/he is flouting the "berdache's" parameters. By exhibiting effeminate tendencies s/he should be barred from the use of male-gendered tools and activities.⁶⁶ Yet s/he is on a hunt, handling a bow and arrow, in an activity not described in any historical record. The cocked bow and arrow Miss Chief wields play an important role in the narrative of the work in establishing the sexual roles of the participants. The penetrative nature of the arrow in Miss Chief's hands,

⁶² Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁶³ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁶⁴ See Chapter 1, "Everything Comes from Somewhere"

⁶⁵ Trexler notes this of the Illinois and Nadouessi "berdache". Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995): 116

⁶⁶ The berdache only had access to tools gendered for female occupations. See Chapter 2, "What It is and what It isn't"

aimed as it is at the cowboy's unprotected posterior, is a clear sign that Miss Chief has the phallic power to dominate the receptive cowboy.

The Cache

The portrait of Miss Chief chasing the cowboy is not meant to represent a contemporary scene – it is a fiction meant to recall the nineteenth century in order to comment on contemporaneous issues. Monkman desired to address the colonization of Aboriginal sexualities by appropriating nineteenth century painting "without pandering to all those little clichés, those representations that are outdated and so forth."⁶⁷ History, Monkman shows us, is "a largely subjective and arbitrary fabrication, no more valid or trustworthy than fiction,"⁶⁸ a position that gives the artist full rein to reveal his fantasies using historical backdrops in a re-imagination of the past. Monkman chose to model Miss Chief after Cher's Half-Breed persona because of the way in which the performer was engaged in "cross-gender dressing but also cross-cultural dressing."⁶⁹

The act of bestialising the Native person was based on appearance and representation⁷⁰ in an "opposition of fully clad frontiersman to naked savage [that] posited the racist divide between nature and domination."⁷¹ For the European, clothing was a marker of civilization, proof of European superiority, engendering "empiricism, idealism, mimeticism, monoculturalism", which the dominant used to maintain cultural authority.⁷² In the passage referenced above, Bhabha is discussing the role of the book in a colonial environment. I've adapted his argument to discuss clothing as a sign of

⁶⁷ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁶⁸ David Liss, "Kent Monkman: Miss Chief Returns," *Canadian Art*, Fall 2005, 22, 3: 80

⁶⁹ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁷⁰ See Chapter 1, "Everything Comes From Somewhere"

⁷¹ Melissa Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* (Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 100

⁷² Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 105.

dominance, transposing the notion of 'enunciation' to the visual language described by garments.

Clothing becomes a metonymic signifier of the dominant only once the European meets the Native. In other words, it only becomes the sign of dominance after the transformative trauma of contact and conquest. It is this meeting of different cultures that gives clothing meaning as a sign of authority or subservience.⁷³ The European's perspective and experience are set up as being 'correct', while the Aboriginal's are reduced to the status of 'incorrect'. Homi Bhabha says that "'truth' emerges as a visible sign of authority only after the regulatory and displacing division of the true and the false."⁷⁴ If there was no question of either of these possibilities until the meeting of the two groups, then these are constructions. As such, European dress codes are not inherently 'correct', or a naturally evident truth. It becomes part of a larger discourse of correctness or, in Bhabha's words, of 'truth', the repetition and mimesis of a dominant discourse that displaces previous discourses.⁷⁵

The main source of Monkman's appropriation, the *Buffalo Hunt*, has the artist, John Mix Stanley, painting himself in as the triumphant hunter, his gun smoking. The buffalo lying dead in front of him was felled by his skilful shot, as the stampede continues around him. Mix Stanley is dressed in buckskin clothes, looking every inch the manly nineteenth century frontiersman. These are not Native clothes, nor are they, strictly speaking, European clothes. They are American clothes, a blend of European dress code and Native fabric and adornment adopted by the nineteenth century gentleman, surely, to

⁷³ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 106

⁷⁴ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 110

⁷⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 107

display his manliness through objects linked to the cult of the primitive⁷⁶ while retaining Euro-North American propriety by covering up as much of the male body as possible.

Monkman chose this painting because he wanted to comment on artists such as Mix Stanley and also Catlin⁷⁷:

I really wanted to look at the individual careers of these artists and to challenge the subjectivity of their work, to look at the individual motivations, to look at their egos, their career ambitions, and so forth. They were creating these images that were defining, in a way, the Aboriginal peoples, but they also had their own career interests, they had their own ambitions and their own egos.⁷⁸

Monkman is suggesting that these artists set themselves up as superior to the Aboriginal people they interacted with in their paintings. These works demonstrated the European artistic dilemma between art and fact,⁷⁹ but also the weight of cultural constructions.

Monkman went on to say that he developed a perspective on colonization through the study of art history:

The more I looked at art of the nineteenth century going backwards in time, the more I realized that those paintings of that time were a manifesto, this visual manifesto of colonization and this was the visual record, this was the European's imagination of what he saw North America being and how he saw himself taking ownership of it and how he saw the Aboriginal people relating to himself but also to landscape.⁸⁰

Miss Chief, then, as an instrument in re-imagining history, supplants Mix Stanley's egotistical machismo and the European claim to the lands of North America. Instead,

⁷⁶ The 'cult of the primitive' is discussed in Chapter 1, "Making Up Maleness"

⁷⁷ Who also placed himself in his own paintings as a privileged and superior man. See figure 19. Monkman said of Catlin : "Catlin wrote a lot about how he really got off being revered as a medicine man because he could create these likenesses of people. He had all of this status and it actually gave him entry into these situations where he wouldn't normally have access. He got access to chiefs and so forth but to me this also spoke very much about the ego of the artist, painting himself and self-aggrandising." Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁷⁸ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

⁷⁹ As discussed in Chapter 1, "Everything Comes from Somewhere".

⁸⁰ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

another history is narrated where the Aboriginal two-spirit person dominates, and the Euro-North American, as previously noted, gets "fucked".⁸¹

Not Just A Pretty Face

Irony is a strategy used by those who have been disenfranchised in order to emancipate themselves from ill-fitting normative categories, recreating themselves through imaginative repetitions of their subject position of difference. In an artist statement Monkman wrote that "(j)ust as most Aboriginal cultures employ humour to endure dark situations, I employ 'camp' which evolved in the gay community as a reaction to negative attitudes toward homosexuality."⁸² *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, by closely reproducing a work of art from the past meant to reinforce Euro-North American constructions of masculinity, critiques heterosexist, racist and macho normative social constructions.

The evolution of an identity comes from an imaginative repetition of the construction of our *I*. By challenging the status quo, the collectivities and individuals that have been othered are attempting to alter the definitions established by the dominant for what has been defined as 'correct' and 'incorrect'. Indeed, if irony is an "incongruity between what might be expected and what actually occurs"⁸³ it is a valuable tool for any ontological critique that seeks to destabilize the fixed definitions created by normative society in order to shift the relations of power, equally useful for the queer subject as for the Native person and the Aboriginal queer individual. The incongruity of all the different identifiers in the painting speaks of a shifting identity, both individual and social. You

⁸¹ See Chapter 1, "Beautiful Inversions" on the use of sexuality to assert dominance.

⁸² Kent Monkman, "The Trilogy of St. Thomas: three large scale paintings by Kent Monkman," Artist statement provided by the artist

⁸³ Peter Davies, ed., *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (the)*, (Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1976) : 377.

just can't pin Miss Chief down. S/he is an unstable compound, a disjunctive force, forging new associations between recognised categories: Native, half-breed, man, woman, macho, effeminate.

Assumptions of discriminatory identities are questioned through the theory of hybridity by a displacing repetition of them, a strategy used by Monkman when he employs the image of Miss Chief as a reclamation of Native identity from Cher, anthropology and from Euro-North American historical documents. Homi Bhabha says that hybridity "unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but re-implicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power."⁸⁴ While the viewer recognizes Miss Chief and the exposed cowboy as contemporary renditions, the viewer also recognizes the painting as an image of a buffalo hunt modeled after the work of a Western master. The dominant is re-implicated in an image that communicates divergent perspectives, that uses stereotypes produced through interactions with the dominant to subvert the typical images of the Native man and the queer man and the Native queer man, encouraging a space of negotiation between the other and the dominant. We shouldn't think of Miss Chief as the dominant. Instead we should understand her and her relationship with the cowboy as representations of power relations.

If power in a society has its own "permanent, inert, and self-reproducing" tendencies,⁸⁵ then when two societies meet, new information enters their respective feedback loops,⁸⁶ transforming them both. The history of the "berdache", with its non-

⁸⁴ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 112.

⁸⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 93

⁸⁶ Fritjof Capra, pop Quantum guru of the late 20th century, likened the feedback loop to "a circular arrangement of causally connected elements, in which an initial cause propagates around the links of the

Native taxonomy, is not the history of the two-spirit, yet they are interconnected. The decision by Native queers to adopt the term *two-spirit* is a point of resistance through reclamation not of a lost tradition, but of the right to self-determination. According to Foucault, the multiple types of power relations in a society are constantly shifting, growing, changing, gaining strength or weakening as the population cleaves to certain things that are considered to be true,⁸⁷ believing – or disbelieving – in the strategies in which they take effect, strategies that crystallize through state apparatus, the written law and social hegemonies.⁸⁸ Foucault states that "more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remoulding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds."⁸⁹

Miss Chief embodies the unstable locus of power in the lines of relationships between a multiplicity of elements that characterize Native and non-Native societies, between homosexual, two-spirit and non-homosexual, non-two-spirit groups. The camp irony in *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* first recognises the conceits of contemporary normative Euro-North American society and then re-combines and repositions signifiers to create new meanings. Foucault tells us that discourse knows no allegiances; the same knowledge can be used to different effects,⁹⁰ which is how, in the twentieth century, homosexual men could learn to adopt known masculine traits in order to create a new form of macho homosexuality. These men know that they are not heterosexual,

loop, so that each element has an effect into the first element of the cycle." Fritjof Capra, "The Web of Life," *Resurgence*, September/October 1996, no. 178, (Bodmin, England): 24-29

⁸⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 94

⁸⁸ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 93

⁸⁹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 96

⁹⁰ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Volume 1: 100-101

displaying the signs of masculinity to emphasize their desire for same-sex contact. Contemporary Native gays and lesbians take traces of traditions on the historical two-spirit, combine these with knowledge from anthropological sources on the "berdache", and create new-traditional forms of reclaimed sexualities and gender expressions that reflect a twenty-first century existence under the umbrella term "two spirit." *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* is a hybrid's hybrid, combining the macho homosexual hybrid with the Native two-spirit hybrid to create Miss Chief, a macho drag queen Aboriginal two-spirit portrait, an aspect of the artist, Kent Monkman.

CHAPTER 4

Reading the Terrain, pp 86 – *The Parley*, pp 87 – *Into the Sunset*, pp 89

Reading the Terrain

John Mix Stanley created works such as *Buffalo Hunt* which he intended as faithful depictions of Native cultures, a record for posterity of what he and his compatriots – such as Catlin – felt was a dying race.¹ This was a philosophical failure on the part of the Euro-North Americans to recognize the double standards they were imposing on other societies. On the one hand the romantic notion of the Indian was a European construction that denied Native peoples their humanity and required they become specimens; their social and cultural practices should be frozen in time to maintain the sense of nostalgia craved by the European. On the other hand, to conceive of Native cultures and societies as anachronistic and immoral was used to further the Euro-North American cause.² With these perceptual handicaps, the Euro-North American inability to translate the reality of nineteenth century Natives and the effects of hybridity indicates the impossibility of a total transparency of meaning; in effect, these are partial and deficient translations which engender re-codifications of meaning.³

Nineteenth century Western painting is a fusion of appropriated Native representations and social concerns of the late nineteenth century Euro-North American, a visual translation of other cultures depicted through the lens of Euro-North American hegemonic power. *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* translates the deficiencies in *Buffalo*

¹ Brian W. Dippie, "The Moving Fingers Writes," *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts* (New Haven: Yale University Press: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992): 101-102.

² See Chapter 1, Making Up Maleness.

³ Sarat Maharaj, "Perfidious Fidelity: the Untranslatability of the Other," *Global Visions: Towards a New Internationalism in the Visual Arts*, ed. Jean Fisher (London: Kala Press, 1994): 28, 29.

Hunt using a twenty-first century understanding of pluralism, offering a fusion of nineteenth century landscape painting, Euro-North American ideals, camp irony and contemporary Aboriginal politics. Monkman's parody of nineteenth century landscape painting is a self-conscious partial translation composed to contest the latter's status as a transparent document of Aboriginal nations and the closing of the American frontier.⁴ Stylistically, Monkman's painstaking attention and beautifully successful execution of Romantic landscape painting repeats the form used by those who created the false documents of Natives: Romantic painting. By combining these with queer and Native understandings, "disavowed knowledges return to make the presence of authority uncertain."⁵

The Parley

These shifts in power relations permit the Native, the queer and the Aboriginal queer to negotiate with the dominant Euro-North American heterosexual hegemony for space to re-imagine themselves. Lesbian performance artist Lorri Millan has said that "the more marginalised you are the more used you are to rewriting stories [and] popular culture, otherwise you'll never see yourself anywhere. We have no choice."⁶ Monkman's work dissects John Mix Stanley's creation, and in so doing dismantles earlier notions of a singular abiding self – the masculine, superior Euro-North American male – while also consciously constructing the identity of Miss Chief. But Monkman is not merely taking apart dominant narratives. The work is clearly writing an alternate narrative, engaging "with representation in order to deconstruct the given categories of gender and to

⁴ Adapted from Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1994): 115.

⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*,: 120.

⁶ Robert Enright, "Moments of Rage and Beauty: the Art of Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan," *Bordercrossings*, May 1998, Vol. 17, no. 2 (Winnipeg: Arts Manitoba Publications): 17.

reposition the spectator in relation to the hitherto unquestioned images and ideologies of contemporary cultures."⁷ For Mohawk artist Shelley Niro, "[Native] people are going to have to start using their imaginations... and start creating their own images of themselves..."⁸ This is a sentiment shared by Navajo author N. Scott Momaday who said: "[w]e are what we imagine. Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves."⁹ This comes into the sphere of the actor, and back to Sontag's notion of the performance of being or "Being-As-Playing-A-Role,"¹⁰ and Butler's theory of the "I" being reconstituted through a perpetual rehearsal of identity.¹¹

Monkman's ontological critique of normative society happens, as we have seen, through ironic camp stylizations of the figures in his painting. Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle is a character who plays a multiple subject position. Monkman displays his alter-ego to make visible existing spaces in the dominant narrative where Aboriginals, queers, and queer Natives can re-imagine themselves and write their own stories. He has used camp because, for the queer individual, it is "the total body of performative practices and strategies used to enact queer identity, with enactment defined as the production of social visibility."¹² By embracing and understanding the shifting identity, the identity that can be re-created, Aboriginals, queers and queer Natives have the potential to create their own systems of representation, as is exemplified in Monkman's *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* with his fabulous Aboriginal hunter drag-queen alter-ego

⁷ Janet Wolff on Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* in "Postmodern Theory and Feminist Practice", *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture* (Polity Press, Oxford, 1990), pp 93.

⁸ Allan J. Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art*, Vancouver: UBC Press; Seattle, Wa: University of Washington Press, 1999: 13.

⁹ Allan J. Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art*: 13.

¹⁰ See Chapter 3, "Clothes Make the Man."

¹¹ See Chapter 2, pp 56.

¹² Moe Meyers, *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (Routledge, New York, 1994): 5.

and the suggestively half-dressed cowboy galloping madly across the Western landscape together.

Into the Sunset

It is difficult to predict how *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* will be interpreted in fifty years from now, just as it was impossible for John Mix Stanley to predict that *Buffalo Hunt* would be used a century and a half later as a model in an effort to debunk Euro-North American hegemony and to empower Aboriginals and queers. Between the two markers of 'now' and 'then' are innumerable historical 'nows' that shape the awareness of the viewer and perpetually alter the reading of the work. To believe that a work has been deciphered, that its meaning has been exposed completely, is to crystallize an ultimate meaning of the work. At best, the meaning of a work is *disentangled*, not *deciphered*,¹³ for the signifiers that give it meaning change at every present moment. The fibres of the synthesis/work form a continuum of shifting meaning that refutes the essentialism of an original, singular truth, or even of the artist as the ultimate authority on the work. The true location of creation is where the work coalesces, where multiplicity is made coherent and unified. This space of cohesion is not in the figure of the Artist, a mythical genius creator of a timeless work of immutable meaning. It is the viewer/reader, a 'someone' upon which the multiple definitions in the work, cultural and temporal, coalesce and are made manifest, every time the work is viewed.¹⁴

We can see Miss Chief in the painting chasing the butt-naked cowboy but it is like a single frame from a larger film – what will happen to our heroes? Although we can infer sexual activity from all the signifiers we've discovered, the painting's drama lies in

¹³ Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author," *Image, music, text / Roland Barthes: Essays Selected and Translated by Stephen Heath*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977): pp 147.

¹⁴ See Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author," *Image, music, text / Roland Barthes*: pp 148.

its unresolved narrative; the story continues. In John Mix Stanley's *Buffalo Hunt* the main action is finished, the artist-as-hunter has climaxed, he shot his bullet, his gun is beginning to droop, he is slowing his mount to survey his felled prey as the adrenaline rush fades. Not our diva warrior! S/he is in full action, weapon cocked, eyes bright, horse foaming and panting between her thighs, perpetually on the edge of releasing her arrow to claim her man, perpetually cresting in the thrill of the hunt.

While the discriminated absorbs and transforms the colonial, there comes a point where s/he questions and translates the colonial into a familiar idiom. As this hybridity weathers away at the symbols of colonial dominance, as new 'truths' are "repeated, translated, misread, displaced," something new is created;¹⁵ definitions change so that it becomes disingenuous to believe that there are untouched last bastions of social or cultural 'purity' in North America – certainly not in urban centres¹⁶ – which does not mean that there needs be a loss of cultural identity. The culturally diverse subject is a blend of different elements, existing not in an interstice of categories or between the stitches of a cultural mosaic. Instead of being segregated into ghetto-tesserae – the colonial *here*, the colonist *there*, etc. – the individual in a multicultural environment is an overlapping plurality of cultures, where s/he is involved in a multiplicity of interrelated groups.¹⁷ An overlap of cultural influences recognises that society and culture are not fixed signs but evolving organisms in which each individual and sub-culture and social group are simultaneously participants in a multiplicity of other groups.

¹⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *The Location of Culture*: 102.

¹⁶ Geeta Kapur, "A New Inter Nationalism: The Missing Hyphen," *Global Vision: Towards a New Internationalism in the Visual Arts*, ed. Jean Fisher (London: Kala Publishers, 1994): 41.

¹⁷ Monika Kin Gagnon, ed., *Other Conundrums: Race, Culture and Canadian Art* (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000) pg 128

The figures of Miss Chief and the cowboy bring to Monkman's magnificent landscape a camp humour that challenges the dominant discourse of Euro-North American masculinist heterosexuality by making the intersections of power relations and the interstices of society visible. Of the relationship between Miss Chief and the cowboy Monkman has said:

I decided at one point that ... the Indian was going to be the top because this was about power and this was kind of a reversal of power so I was going to use this sexual metaphor to talk about colonial relationships and power relationships.¹⁸

The cowboy and Miss Chief have exchanged roles; therefore they have exchanged perceived positions of power. The historical disjunctions cue the viewer to the contemporary nature of the painting, thereby referencing a twenty-first century queer awareness that challenges normative gender roles and the presumption of a merely dualistic notion of sexuality by presenting a fierce but enigmatic self in Miss Chief; s/he is a multifaceted identity and frees the signifiers of effeminacy from the binary of gender and active/passive roles.

Shouldering aside aspects of dominant discourse to make space for itself, the questions raised by *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* bring to the foreground the need to explore the existence of and work of other queer Native artists and if and/or how their work relates to the interactions of hybridity and of colonized sexualities. Further afield, there are undoubtedly queer culturally diverse artists, nationally and internationally, whose work explores the liminal space between sexuality and post-colonial hybridity. Finally, what are the similarities and differences between these various sexually and culturally diverse artists and their work?

¹⁸ Kent Monkman, artist talk, Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, February 14, 2007.

While Miss Chief can be an empowering figure for two-spirit and queer
Aboriginals, s/he is also an example of other ways of categorizing and understanding
gender and sexuality, moving away from the construction of sexuality based on sexual
activity and, ultimately, on the male/female binary of sexuality. This is a "remembering",
not in the usual use of the word, but as a "re-member-ing", picking up the pieces of the
forgotten and discarded two-spirit body and putting all the bits back together. It is
impossible to go back, the past is done. Decolonizing Native sexualities is not about
trying to recall something from before contact. From the fragments of what we know and
of what queer Native people live today, we can clothe the spirit of something real, a
rebirth of a powerful and new imagining of the self.

APPENDIX

Figure 1: *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter*, Kent Monkman, 2002. Acrylic on canvas, 59.9 × 91.3 cm. Image provided by the artist.

Figure 2: Detail, the Artist as Hunter.

Figure 3: Detail, the Cowboy.

Figure 4: Edward S. Curtis, *Chief Joseph-Nez Perce*, 1903. Reproduced from *Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Reading Room, Edward S. Curtis Collection*. Accessed February 20, 2007
<<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/cph/3a00000/3a03000/3a03700/3a03795r.jpg>>

Figure 5: Kent Monkman as his alter-ego Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle, reproduced from Jon Davies, "Manned Claims: ImagineNative FEST / Sex Upends our National Mythology." *Xtra!* Thursday, October 13, 2005. Accessed March 18, 2007. <http://www.xtra.ca/public/viewstory.aspx?AFF_TYPE=3&STORY_ID=1016&PUB_TEMPLATE_ID=5>.

Figure 6: John Mix Stanley, "Buffalo Hunt", n.d., originally printed in *Western Wilds*, 1854, oil on canvas, 40x62 3/8. Reproduced from the book *Treasures of the Old West: Paintings and Sculptures from the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art*, plate 21.

Figure 7: Albert Bierstadt, *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, 1863. Oil on canvas, 73½ x 120¾ inches. Metropolitan Museum of Art. From *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts*, pp 9, figure 6.

Figure 8: *Hunting the buffalo*. Engraving by William W. Rice, 1873, after Felix O. C. Darley. Reproduced from the *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Prints & Photographs Online Catalogue*, Accessed September 14, 2006
[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/PPALL:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cph+3a04643\)\)>](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3a04643))>)

Figure 9: George Catlin. *North American Indian Portfolio*, 1832-33. Plate 7. Buffalo chase, bulls making battle with men and horses. Reproduced from *The Natural Man Observed: A study of Catlin's Indian gallery*, William H. Truettner, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C., 1979, pp 260; also reproduced by Currier & Ives as "Indian Buffalo Hunt: 'Close Quarters'", undated. See *Currier & Ives: a Catalogue Raisonne*, Vol 1, Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, figure 3292, pp 339, 344

Figure 10: John Mix Stanley (1814-1872) *Buffalo Hunt on the Southwestern Prairies*, 1845, oil on canvas, 40 1/4 x 60 3/4 . Smithsonian American Art Museum. *The Bison in Art: A Graphic Chronicle of the American Bison*. Reproduced from *Smithsonian Institution Archives*, Accessed April 30, 2007. < <http://siarchives.si.edu/history/jhp/indian.jpg>>

Figure 12: Frederic Remington, "The Buffalo Hunt," 1890, oil on canvas, 34x49.
Reproduced from the book *The Bison in Art: A Graphic Chronicle of the American Bison*, 73.

Figure 13: *The surprise*. Lithograph by Louis Maurer. Publisher: Currier & Ives, 1858,
Currier & Ives: a catalogue raisonne, Vol 2, Gale Research Company, Detroit,
Michigan, figure 6367, pp 608, 647

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Figure 14: *American frontier life: The hunter's stratagem*. Lithograph, Arthur F. Tait, 20.6x27.2. Published by Currier & Ives, 1862. *Currier & Ives: a catalogue raisonne*, Vol 1, Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, figure 0172, pp 339 ; Reproduced from *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Prints & Photographs Online Catalogue*, Accessed May 7, 2007 <[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/PPALL:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cph+3a04681\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3a04681)))>

Figure 15: Felix Octavius Carr Darley, "Untitled [trapper and indian]", n.d. (1840-1888), drawing; wash. Reproduced from the *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Prints & Photographs Online Catalogue*, Accessed May 7, 2007 <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?cai:32:./temp/~pp_wq9j::>

Figure 16: John Vanderlynn, "The Death of Jane McCrea", 1804. Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 ½ . Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, Connecticut. Reproduced from *Picturing a Nation*, pp 2.

Figure 17: George Catlin, *Dance to the Berdache, Sauk and Fox, 1835-37*, *The Natural Man Observed: A Study of Catlin's Indian Gallery*, William H. Truettner, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C., 1979, pp 269, figure 442. Colour image reproduced from *Smithsonian American Art Museum*, Accessed May 22, 2007.
http://americanart.si.edu/images/1985/1985.66.442_1b.jpg

Figure 18a: Johann Théodore De Bry, *Timucua berdaches working with women in carrying food, 1591*

Balboa lässt Indianer durch Bluthunde zerreißen.
 Nach einem Kupferstich des 16. Jahrhunderts.

Figure 18b: Johann Théodore De Bry, (1528-1598) *Balboa setting his dogs upon Indian practitioners of male love (Balboa lässt Indianer durch Bluthunde zerreißen)*, 1594. The Spanish invader Vasco Núñez de Balboa (1475-1519) shown in Central America with his troops, presiding over the execution of Indians, whom he ordered eaten alive by the war dogs for having practiced male love.

Figure 19: George Catlin, *The Author Painting a Chief in an Indian Village*, image from *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts*, pp 57

Figure 20: Cher dressed as the Indian Princess. Reproduced from record sleeve for *Half Breed*, MCA Records, 1973.

Figure 21: The American Indian, stage persona of Felipe Rose, member of the Village People. Reproduced from "The Village People," *Rotten Dot Com: Library: Culture*. Accessed May 22, 2007. <http://www.rottentom.com/library/culture/village-people/>

Figure 22: The Village People, album cover to *Macho Man*, Casablanca Records, 1978.

Figure 23: George Quaintance, *Physique Pictorial*, cover art, February 1952.

Figure 24: Tom of Finland, Plate from *Camping*, 1976, used as frontispiece to *Dirty Pictures: Tom of Finland, Masculinity, and Homosexuality*, Micha Ramakers, 2000.

Figure 25: George Catlin, *Wi-jun-jon - Pigeon's Egg Head: Going to Washington / Returning to His Home*. 18.7x12.7 (plate and text). Black and white with tint. *Currier & Ives: a Catalogue Raisonne*, Vol 1, Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, figure 7204, pp 748, 734. Reproduced from *Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering & Technology*. Accessed May 07, 2007
<http://www.lindahall.org/services/digital/ebooks/catlin/catlin25.shtml>

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