

**Walking the Noble (Savage) Path: The Didactics of Indigenous
Knowledge (Re)Presentation in the Toronto Zoo's Canadian
Domain**

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Abstract

As one of the largest zoos in the world, the Toronto Zoo boasts some 5000 animals of 500 species, and over 1.2 million visitors annually from 2006-2010. With their focus on human-animal relationships, the rationale for Indigenous content at the zoo is not straightforward, but suggests the importance of Indigenous peoples to Canadian national narratives. The Toronto Zoo's Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail aim to teach zoo guests about Indigenous Knowledge through the reading of informative placards. Interpreting these placards using a multisite methodology informed by Saussurean semiotics determines if the didactics of transmitting Indigenous Knowledge is effective. This paper argues that the (re)presentation—the synchronic culmination of the presentation and construction—of Indigenous Knowledge at the Toronto Zoo misrepresents and stereotypes the First Nations cultures and knowledges that are located in the Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

Keywords: semiotics, Indigenous, zoo, education, stereotypes, Indigenous Knowledge

Acknowledgements

This thesis was written on the unceded land of the Algonquin Nation, while the site of my research is on the land of the Mississaugas of New Credit. I feel that, like Scott Morgensen (2011), it is important for me to mention them as “Naming these storied places and their nations reminds of my responsibility to act in response to not only them but all ongoing struggles by Native peoples on lands that much they might have changed, remain Indigenous” (p.231). Indeed, the Indigenous inhabitants of these lands—and all of Canada for that matter—need to be recognized because without them, Canada as it is today would not exist.

Without Anne Trepanier’s guidance this thesis would not have come to fruition. Her patience, tenacity and guidance helped me write the paper I was striving for. Merci, Anne, for everything.

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INTRODUCTION: PASTWATCH

Academic writing can be analogous to walking in the forest. Although what can cause one to stumble is not physical—but rather theoretical and can also lead to faltering—it is still a challenging task. Likewise, the base of an epistemology grows upwards, branching out into particular theories, which in turn nurture certain ideas until they sprout into a specific discussion on a topic. With much of what symbolizes Canada being tied to the land and environment—the Rocky Mountains, the Arctic tundra, the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts and each province and territory having a designated flower, tree, animal, rock—thinking critically about Canada should correlate with its physical environment as well as its people. Rooted in an anecdotal and idealized narrative surrounding their ‘primitivism’ Indigenous peoples have been stereotyped as maintaining a harmonized life with nature for centuries. This construction relegates them to a romanticized past that never existed, and is why their histories are primarily foreign to the Canadian population. Kaniienkehaka academic Taiaiake Alfred states that “Most people in Canada understand very little of the realities of Indigenous peoples’ lives, the challenges they face, or the history of interaction between Indigenous peoples’ ancestors and their own ancestors that have created these realities” (2011). The Canadians Alfred is referring to are what are otherwise known as settlers: people or ancestors of these people who left their countries of origin to immigrate to Canada. The term settler embodies the idea that settlers are “founders of political orders who carry with them a distinct sovereign capacity” (Canavagh and Veracini, 2010). In other words, settlers have created a society and nation that disregards the rights to prior occupancy held by Indigenous peoples. In the context of this thesis, the term settler refers to peoples whose ancestral heritage comes from a place other than what would eventually become Canada.

Knowingly or unknowingly, these individuals continue to perpetrate colonialism through their residency in Canada. When writing about issues that affect Indigenous peoples, often settler journalists use incorrect terminologies in their work. As Kanienkehaka journalist Dan David sarcastically comments, when journalists are describing Indigenous peoples in the media, they should remember that “you can’t go wrong staying as unspecific as possible. Forget the facts. Dump the details. Use one word: “aboriginals.” Simple. No muss, no fuss. No complications” (2012). Because many media professionals regularly apply inexact wording, the language used in the media is reflective of settler ignorance. This lack of awareness is also apparent when reading online commentaries on news articles on Indigenous topics. For example, EricTheBlue, commenting on Jeffrey Simpson’s problematic “It still comes down to fixing the reserves” article in the *Globe and Mail*, states:

Simple solution, eliminate the reserves, remove all tax benefits aboriginals have, and integrate them into mainstream society. That is the best possible "reparations" that we can pay them for our history. It is still possible to maintain your culture while functioning as part of society as a whole, many other cultures do it (Simpson, 2012).

EricTheBlue’s assertions appear to be commonplace in terms of what is said on the internet. In another case commenting on the same article, user JOE_M, states that reserves are “Sinkholes. The reserves and the aboriginal government agencies. Cut off all funding. Taxpayers have been ripped off long enough” (Simpson, 2012). Perhaps because EricTheBlue, JOE_M and other likeminded individuals can hide behind the anonymity of the internet, they type things they may otherwise get chastised for in the public domain. Even if this prejudice is covert rather than overt, it exists in Canada, and still affects Indigenous peoples in their day-to-day lives. One method that can be used to teach tolerance and acceptance of others is to include information about other cultures in the

school curriculum. However, this curricula has been part of the problem, as Métis scholar Craig Proulx and settler scholar Heather Howard illustrate in “Transformations and Continuities: An Introduction”. They believe that “Many non-Native people in Canada know very little about Aboriginal peoples, their history, and current life beyond the simplistic and often stereotypical portrayals provided by mainstream media and culturally ignorant education systems” (Harding 2006; Silver et al. 2002 qtd in Howard and Proulx, 2011, p.2). This has resulted in the lives of Indigenous peoples being affected by misconceptions attributed to them by the non-Indigenous population.

Educational institutions are set up in such a way that students are captive, meaning that they must learn in a proscribed way as dictated by the instructor and the ministry, regardless of their background. Because they are rooted in Western epistemological traditions, classrooms and school environments may not be the best learning environments for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students. To address this issue, the Ontario Ministry of Education published its *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* in 2007 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). The document’s intent is to make Western educational environments more inclusive of the Indigenous students who are being educated alongside the settler population (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). The framework comes following changes to social studies curricula developed in 2005 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). In turn, the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* helped create *Aboriginal perspectives: A guide to the teacher’s toolkit*, in 2009. It was thought that creating *Aboriginal perspectives* would help teachers to be cognisant of the challenges Indigenous children face within Western classrooms. The ministry’s publication will thus assist

teachers with the implementation of the 2005 curricular updates in their pedagogies, curricula, and practices. The paradigmatic shift associated with these curricular updates, if orchestrated properly, can provide students with a means to learn about the history of colonization and the relevance Indigenous Knowledge (IK) can have to Canadians. In turn it may remove what appear to be ignorance of and prejudice against Indigenous people.

Despite the inclusive accommodations of the ministry, there are notable issues with this initiative. Teachers who have little-to-no background in Indigenous knowledges, cultures and histories are now responsible for educating their students on these topics. There are a number of worrying implications to this task, including the possibilities for teachers to unintentionally romanticize or marginalize Indigenous persons in the classroom. This misinforming and common fallacy has resulted in Indigenous peoples being separate, subordinate and slighted by the settler population (Lawrence, 2004, p. 17-8). Because educational institutions keep their students metaphorically caged, they must learn and behave as the ministry dictates. Zoos on the other hand, have willing spectators, where attendees are free to move around the park to see animals and exhibits at their leisure. However, with a number of distractions in zoos—fun, food, frolic and the fauna people come to see—the information that is presented is often stereotypical and generalized to catch people’s attention. Recognizing that Indigenous narratives and ways of knowing have mostly been absent from educational institutions, the Toronto Zoo developed and arranged placards relating to Indigenous Knowledge in its Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

The purpose of this essay is to provide a close reading of the placards in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail as they pertain to the (re)presentation—the synchronic culmination of the presentation and construction—of Indigenous Knowledge. This will be achieved through the use of semiotic theory to extrapolate what the placards are communicating. Before the investigation of the placards occurs, there are five chapters that give the analysis background and context.

Chapter One provides the terms, terminologies and key concepts that are used throughout this thesis. This informs the reader of the language that is used, providing a background of the language that is included in the rest of the paper. This approach focuses on how the meaning of words can influence the interpretation of these words, relating to the analysis of the placards in the Canadian Domain that is conducted in Chapter Six.

Chapter Two uses my social location as the basis to explain the academic theories relating to my point of view as a settler embarking on this subject. The term settler for myself refers to my status as a child and great grandchild of immigrants who have established residency in Canada. Although my family's habitation in Canada is relatively recent, it is still shaped by and has benefitted from centuries of Euro-Canadian settler colonialism. Thus, I assert that my interpretation of the placards in the Canadian Domain may have certain Western-centric and ethnocentric biases.

Chapter Three discusses seven stereotypes that the settler population has created for Indigenous peoples. Five of these—the Noble Savage, the Vanishing Race, the Living Fossil, the Savage, and the Generic Indian—come from Oneida/Mohican scholar Carol Corneliuss' (1999) *Iroquois corn*. The Warrior Stereotype is presented in "The Mohawk

Warrior” by settler academic Heather Smyth (2000), and Cree filmmaker Neil Diamond’s (2009) *Reel Injun* gives context to the Ecological Indian. Providing descriptions of these archetypes informs how these stereotypes are reinforced in Canadian national institutions like museums and art galleries.

Chapter Four presents the history of zoos, illustrating their change over time. There is a particular focus on human zoos in this section, since Indigenous peoples were often forcibly subjected to being in these exhibitions. How zoos function as educational institutions is emphasized through a case study on children’s knowledge of animals before and after an educational program the London Zoo in London, England. Results from this study are extrapolated to hypothesize how zoo guests may learn about Indigenous peoples at the Toronto Zoo.

Chapter Five investigates Indigenous Knowledge as a concept, the controversies that surround it, and the definition offered by the Toronto Zoo. This informs how zoo guests might interpret the information being presented to them in the Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

In summation, this thesis focuses on how the coinciding construction and presentation of Indigenous Knowledge is presented in the Toronto Zoo’s Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail. Due to the focus on animals in zoological parks, human zoos have primarily been the only kind of zoos with Indigenous content. Studies about the presence and representation of Indigenous peoples in contemporary zoos, however, are practically non-existent. Thus, academic literature on the configuration and inclusion of Indigeneity in museums and galleries has been extrapolated and used to inform this case study on the Toronto Zoo. This thesis, at the

crossroads of Anthropology, Sociology and Cultural Studies, contributes to the scarce amount of academic resources on how zoos function as educational institutions. The Toronto Zoo's purpose for including Indigenous Knowledge is not to sensationalize or dehumanize Indigenous peoples, but rather to teach about Indigenous epistemologies. As this essay moves through this winding and sometimes rough terrain, it maps out how Canadian society presents and represents itself through a national institution, and in turn reflects how Indigenous peoples are seen by the Canadian settler population.

TERMS, TERMINOLOGY AND KEY CONCEPTS

Words are a memory
 a window in the present
 a coming to terms with meaning
 history made into now
 a surge in reclaiming
 a piece in the collective experience of time
 a sleep in which I try to awaken
 the whispered echoes of voices
 resting in each word
 moving back into the dark blue
 voices of continuance
 countless sound shapings which roll thunderous
 over millions of tongues
 to reach me...
 ...reaching ever forward into distances unknown
 always linking to others...
 – Jeanette Armstrong, “From the Landscape of Grandmother.”

TERMS AND TERMINOLOGY

In Western cultures, written language “is central to meaning and culture and has always been regarded as the key repository of cultural values and meanings” (Hall, 1997a, p.1). What has been deemed important in North America is based primarily on European norms and values. For many Indigenous groups, the colonizer was the one who determined what a nation would be named rather than the people themselves. For example, more Canadians are familiar with Ojibwe than they are Anishinaabe, or recognize Iroquois rather than Haudenosaunee. There are multiple terms for Indigenous peoples, groups and nations, both worldwide and within Canada; therefore deciding which terms to use necessitates a careful navigation of terms to avoid undermining connotations. As Taiaiake Alfred (2009) states, “Today we recognize the significance and symbolic value of terminology, and the use of our own recovered languages is important not only for the purposes of communication but as a symbol of our survival” (p. 23).

Through providing the definitions of Aboriginal, Indigenous, Indian, First Nations, Anishinaabe and culture, this chapter aims to facilitate the reader's understanding of how words can impact the language of the essay as a whole. In doing so, this chapter aspires to use terms that are culturally appropriate for the peoples represented, while simultaneously avoiding generalizing language that diminishes the comprehension of Indigenous issues and topics. These six common terms are examined and explained in a Canadian context.

Aboriginal

The National Aboriginal Health Organization, a knowledge-based Canadian organization that focuses on the health and wellbeing of First Nations, Métis and Inuit at the individual, family and community levels (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012a), defines an Aboriginal as an individual who is two or more of the three groups, Indian (First Nations), Inuit and Métis, as defined by Section 35 of the 1982 *Constitution Act* (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b). Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the federal branch of government that is concerned with Indigenous peoples, provides a similar definition; however it adds a differentiation, where First Nations, Métis and Inuit are “three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). Although Aboriginals can be seen as having a similar history in terms of colonization—in that settlers from Europe radically altered the land that would be known as Canada—“Aboriginal” can be thought of as a generalized term. In fact, it is lumping together First Nations, Métis and Inuit into a homogeneous group, when these societal associations are very diverse within each sociocultural body. For

example, even though the Coast Salish and Innu are both First Nations, they have distinct cultures, histories, languages, and traditional territories, and thus equating the experiences of the two nations is problematic.

Despite the definitions illustrating the significant differences between Métis, Inuit and First Nations, the term Aboriginal reveals an oversimplification of these variations that has resulted in its critique by Indigenous scholars. The word Aboriginal is therefore rooted in the Canadian government's conception of Indigenous groups based on Canada's laws. Because Canada is a nation-state that owes its establishment to "settler-invaders" (Knowles, 2009, p.v), some Indigenous peoples see the word as contestable. As Taiaiake Alfred (2005) notes, because the term Aboriginal "is a legal and social construction of the state" by embracing the Aboriginal label, Indigenous peoples are accepting the "violence and economic oppression to serve an agenda of silent surrender" (p. 23) that comes with it. In this argument, those who accept the epithet are being willingly assimilated, and are abandoning "any meaningful notion of being indigenous" (Alfred, 2005, p. 24). Although Alfred's position may be radical for some of the settler population, it is significant given the history of Canada as a colony, then a dominion, and later a self-made, non-ethnic civic nation with branded national values. Furthermore, in 2008 the Anishinaabe Nation outlawed the use of the word Aboriginal, calling it "another means of assimilation through the displacement of our First Nation-specific inherent and treaty rights" (Beaton, 2008). As a result of the position held by the Anishinaabe Nation and scholars like Alfred, this paper will not use Aboriginal, preferring instead to use Indigenous because of its universality.

Indigenous

The term Indigenous also possesses generalizing qualities, but is different than the term Aboriginal when considered in the Canadian context. Indeed, the current academic understanding of the term is an adjective that locates a living object geographically. For instance, the Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) is indigenous to Ontario (Toronto Zoo, 2012a), while the Red-Eared Slider (*Pseudemys elegans*), a species sold in pet shops is not indigenous to Canada, having been released into the wild by people who no longer wanted their pet turtle (Toronto Zoo, 2012b). Since one definition of the term relates to biology, differentiating between indigenous flora and fauna and Indigenous peoples can be “confusing because most people in the world are “indigenous” to their countries in the sense of having been born in them or being descended from people who were born in them” (Maybury-Lewis, 2006, p. 19). Thus, “Indigenous peoples are clearly native to their countries in this sense too, but they also make another claim, namely that they were there first and are still there, and so have the rights of prior occupancy to their lands” (Maybury-Lewis, 2006, p. 19-20).

In the context of Canada based on the *Constitution Act* (1982), Inuit, First Nations and Métis are considered to be Indigenous, but the term has not been widely adopted. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for example, does not use “Indigenous” unless referring to the work of international organizations; instead that governmental branch prefers to use the term Aboriginal (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). The term is favoured by international organizations such as the United Nations because of its versatility, which reflects Indigenous peoples globally.

Like the term Aboriginal, using the term Indigenous simplifies and homogenizes non-settler peoples internationally and in Canada. However, because of its prevalence in international organizations, and its use by non-settler scholars in colonized countries, it could be seen as the best term to use when talking about two or more First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in the context of a thesis. The fact that it is a term that the Canadian government has not actively adopted suggests that they are either against the term for political reasons or that they have decided to implement it slowly. An important distinction between the uses of indigenous and Indigenous and their meanings must be made: using the capital “I” refers to peoples being indigenous, whereas using the lowercase “i” refers to someone or a living thing being born here in a nation. Within the context of this paper, the word Indigenous has the following definition—which combines an emphasis on the “natural, tribal and traditional characteristics...” (Alfred, 2009, p. 23) of a specific group of people that “have the rights of prior occupancy to their lands” (Maybury-Lewis, 2006, p. 20) before the arrival of Europeans. When mentioning two or more of First Nations, Métis or Inuit within the confines of this paper, Indigenous will be used because it does not have the same colonial and governmental connotation as the term Aboriginal. However, if a specific historical time period is being discussed, the word Indian will be used instead.

Indian

In Canada, the term Indian “collectively describes all the Indigenous People in Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Indian Peoples are one of three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the Constitution Act” (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). Indians can be subdivided

into three separate subcategories based on their affiliation according to the Canadian government. Status Indians meet the criteria of Indian asserted through the *Indian Act* and have certain legal ‘rights and benefits’ according to the law (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). Non-status Indians may consider themselves Indians but do not have the same ‘rights and benefits’ as Status Indians (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). Treaty Indians have ancestors that signed a treaty with the Crown or Canada and maintain a connection with a particular treaty band (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). A Treaty Indian can be a Status or non-Status Indian depending on the Indian status of their relations.

Indian is no longer considered a politically correct term and thus has fallen out of popular usage in Canada; however, the term is used exclusively by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, who consider it a synonym for First Nation. Because of this, there are accusations that the Canadian government’s resistance to changing its terminology is rooted in their paternalistic policies towards First Nations. Using the term Indian in this paper therefore refers to either a conception of First Nations that existed previous to the twentieth century, or in specific reference to governmental policy. Instead of Indian, the term First Nations will be utilized due to the frequency of its usage outside of the Canadian government.

First Nations

First Nation and Indian are metonyms for each other, with the latter falling out of favour since some people considered “Indian” an offensive term (National Aboriginal

Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007). Despite the prevalence of the term in Canada, it does not have a legal definition (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2012b; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2007), suggesting why Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada continues to use Indian. Within the limits of this essay, when indicating First Nations people generally, or two or more First Nation communities, First Nations is the preferred term. When referencing one specific First Nation, the nation will be identified in its language whenever possible as a sign of respect for them as sovereign peoples. This follows the example of settler journalist and author Charles Mann (2006), who explains that it is important to “try to call groups by the name preferred by their members”, since many of the common names for Indigenous people are insulting or come from offensive terms (p. 389). The previous definitions of Aboriginal, Indigenous, Indian and First Nations provide a specific context that refers for the term culture, which is used frequently within this essay.

Culture

Although the culture is more likely to be experienced in the day-to-day lives of Canadians than the terms Aboriginal, Indigenous, First Nation or Indian, as American anthropologist Carol Delaney (2011) states, culture can be considered a “slippery concept that is difficult to grasp” (p. 12). The fluidity of the term and the reason why there is no singular definition is connected to who is defining the term and the time period to which it relates. In his essay “Education of Children” (1780), Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) uses a metaphor to explain how culture in humans is like horticulture. He notes that

Just as in agriculture the operations that come before the planting, as well as the planting itself, are certain and easy; but as soon as the plant comes to life, there are various methods and great difficulties in raising it; so it is with men: little industry is needed to plant them, but it is quite a burden we assume from the moment of their birth, a burden full of care and fear—that of training and bringing them up (p. 109).

For Montaigne, the process of creating culture for humans began in some ways with fertilization, but did not truly start until birth, where the child—which is very much like a plant—is new to the world and very fragile, and must be nurtured and developed as the individual grows in order to adopt the culture of its parents. Though the plant is only responsive to its genetics, as the child grows and interacts with its parents it becomes uniquely cultured. This progression allows parents and society to cultivate and grow children in such a way that allows them to take root in their culture and plant these same seeds in later generations. Thus, cultured individuals represent the propagation of Western ideals and values insofar as they are related to European peoples during the Enlightenment period.

In contrast, the anthropological definition of culture is used to refer to “whatever is distinctive about the ‘way of life’ of a people, community, nation or social group,” and can refer to the shared values of a specific group (Hall, 1997a, p. 2). Since the group’s size may vary, what the distinctive way of life means will also be diverse: group culture could consist of a family party, while national culture can consist of Canada Day celebrations. These activities are comprised of specific languages, religious practices and social norms. Therefore, when alluding to a culture or cultures within this essay, an entire selection of practices, attitudes and customs people acquire as members of a group is being indicated (Maybury-Lewis, 2006, p.21). Cultures are not static and unchanging, but fluid and dynamic, “always negotiable and in process of endorsement, contestation and

transformation” (Wright, 1998, p. 10). This variation in cultural groups has led to the diversity of peoples we know today. Although there are many different Indigenous groups nationally and abroad, the Anishinaabe group or culture is especially important to this thesis.

Anishinaabe

More commonly known as Ojibway, Ojibwe or Chippewa, the Anishinaabe are a First Nation whose traditional territory covers much of Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, several American states and parts of Saskatchewan (Peacock and Wisuri, 2008, p.22). Coming from their creation story, the word Anishinaabe refers to the Original Man being placed on the earth by Gitchi-Manitou, and from him all the Anishinaabe people are descended (Benton-Banai, 2010, p. 3). Translated directly, it is

ANI = from whence
 NISHINA = was lowered
 ABE = the male of the species (Benton-Banai, 2010, p. 3; Kelly, 2008, p.36).

There is no mention of women because they embody the spiritual powers—that is childbirth—responsible for the creation of the first man, Nanaboshoo (Kelly, 2008, p.35). The Anishinaabe community of the Mississaugas of New Credit claim the City of Toronto as being their traditional land, and as a result so is the land the Toronto Zoo is founded on. This essay will use Anishinaabe as a term to refer to that culture or group by means of showing respect to the nation as one of the original inhabitants of the area that became Toronto.

The previous discussion of Aboriginal, Indigenous, Indian, First Nation culture and Anishinaabe reveals the Canadian context of these words and their use in this thesis.

The application of these terms in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail is related to how the (re)presentation of language is understood as a communication tool. Determining meaning for words and concepts is what makes that culture unique. For Indigenous peoples and settlers who are interested in decolonization, “Words can, in fact, be powerful shocks to the system and are capable of causing people to rethink their identity and their place within colonialism” (Alfred, 2005, p. 57). Indeed, the power of the words and their meaning is not always recognized at first glance.

*

This chapter provided the definitions of Aboriginal, Indigenous, Indian, First Nation, culture and Anishinaabe for the reader in order to assert consciousness of vocabulary regarding the names of some of the Indigenous groups in Canadian society. However, the comprehension one may have of different cultures and terminologies is directly dependent on an individual’s social location and their willingness to explore.

SOCIAL LOCATION

We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit. – *Port Huron Statement*

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Locating oneself in terms of their own life experiences can be seen as “one of the most fundamental principles of Aboriginal research methodology” (Absolon and Willett 2005, p. 97). This is both a respectful and logical position to take, since lived experience impacts the cultural lens through which individuals see the world. For some academics, providing a personal account of one’s biography can seem like a narcissistic and esoteric way of doing research. The notion of *habitus*, developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) could reconcile the opposing views in academia. *Habitus* “describes the way in which particular social environments are internalized by individuals in the form of dispositions toward particular bodily orientations and behaviours” (O’Brien and Szeman 2004, 190). The experiences one has in life will impact not only their worldview, but also their future. Bourdieu’s approach was relevant in the fields of Sociology, Cultural Studies and Media Studies in the 1980s and 1990s, but it is not part of Indigenous Studies. However, this thesis suggests that it is common for Indigenous academics to speak about their personal experiences and relate them to their writing because it is assumed the two are related. The understanding is that social location is important “because the only thing we can write about with authority is ourselves” (Absolon and Willett, 2005, p. 97 quoting Allen, 1998). As much as research in academia has improved my ability to objectify my subjectivity, it is possible that my life experience may cause me to interpret things in a way that is different than the way others, Indigenous or otherwise, may understand them. Just as my identity in combination with my experiences causes me to see the world in a specific

way, I am able to reflect on my social location, and as settler academic as Paulette Regan states, “unsettle the settler within”. This consideration comes from and is assisted by several Indigenous authors and theorists whose work I have read over the past several years. Their experiences living as colonized peoples in the land that is rightfully theirs has led me to ponder the inequalities in Canadian society and in what ways they can be improved. In turn, helped by my careful reading of socioeconomic and race relations within Canada, and aided by extensive methodological training from Indigenous Studies, Anthropology and Cultural Studies, I will think critically about how my social location has been impacted by Indigenous-settler relations in Canada.

Although at one time, the settler and Indigenous populations would travel on their own paths, these trails have now become haphazard and treacherous. Due to the settler population’s ethnocentrism and opportunism, the metaphor that was literally beaded into the Kanienkehaka Kaswentham or Two-Row Wampum, has been forgotten. As a rapport between the Kanienkehaka and the Dutch, the importance of autonomy in relation to ideas of co-existence was stressed (Alfred, 2009, p.76). This treaty can be explained by the metaphor of “two vessels, each possessing its own integrity, travelling the river of time together” (Alfred, 2009, p.76). The symbolism on the wampum contained within the two parallel purple lines represents power, and the white background denoting peace (Alfred, 2009, p.76), but this alliance unravelled and eventually fell apart. As a result of this, the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the settler population has been strained for centuries. As settler scholar Scott Morgensen (2011) explains,

We are caught up in one another, we who live in settler societies, and our interrelationships inform all that these societies touch. Native people live in relation to all non-Natives in the context of power

relations of settler colonialism, though they never lose inherent claims to sovereignty as Indigenous peoples. Non-Natives live in relation to Native people—whether or not they know this, whether or not they recognize that Indigenous people exist—as though Native lands, societies, or cultures were theirs to inherit, control, or enjoy (p.1).

My very existence as a person living in Canada relates to the colonial history and continued existence of a nation-state that perpetuates colonialism. Like Regan (2010), I have found that “my own deepest learning has always come when I was in unfamiliar territory culturally, intellectually, and emotionally” (p.18). Because of these challenges, and the need to think critically about who I am and where I come from, I have grown as an individual, and as an emerging scholar. This thesis follows the path that I started as an undergraduate, using the theoretical approaches I learned to inform my outlook in such a way that it allows me to examine how Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges are represented and presented in the Toronto Zoo’s Canadian Domain. Furthermore, this information continues to guide my approach and methods, as evident in the theoretical concept of the “Other”.

THE OTHER

The idea of the Other is centred around the crux of binary oppositions, which incorporates a dual trajectory strategy—concepts, objects, terms and sometimes individuals—that are diametrically opposed. Binary oppositions not only have a “differential but also a hierarchal relationship between the two terms,” of which the first of the two terms is considered to be normative, while the other is not (O’Brien and Szeman 2004, p. 79). Superheroes demonstrate this phenomenon: they have been created so that the reader embodies the hero (the “us”) while not identifying with the villain and his or her accomplices (the “them”). This superfluous yet simplified example of how the Other functions is emblematic of Western society. Hall (1997b) explains the idea of

binary opposition, where a 'them' (the minority) is "represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes – good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic" – often simultaneously, is in direct opposition to 'us' (the majority) (p. 229).

In mainstream Canada, the idea of the Other has several illustrations based on the time periods and populations involved. This thesis will examine three. First, like many other nations, the mythology that Canada exhibits in relation to colonization is not the same as its reality (Saul, 1997, p.3). As a concept, the idea of the nation works "on principles of exclusion based on race, gender and sexuality" (O'Brien and Szeman, 2004, p.206-7). Those who do not meet the qualities deemed as normative by governmental officials, policy makers, and the community are automatically excluded from the nation and therefore perceived to be the Other. By this assertion, even though some Indigenous peoples are employed by government and national organizations, Indigenous peoples are overwhelmingly not considered to be part of the normative settler culture since they are not of the same ethnocultural background. Similarly, in settler nations that have a history of violence against their Indigenous inhabitants, national myths often ignore these violent origins (O'Brien and Szeman, 2004, p. 224). This is reflective of the Canadian national myth¹. This myth asserts that Canada is a peaceful nation, founded on the principles of multiculturalism. Yet, not only has part of Canada's identity been shaped by participation in international wars, but violent conflict is also a characteristic of what occurred within its borders. These disputes, such as the Red River Resistance (1869-70), the North West

¹ This mythology is discussed in Eva Mackey (2012) *Tricky myths: Settler pasts and landscapes of innocence*, and Eva Mackey (2001) *The house of difference: Cultural politics and national identity in Canada*.

Resistance (1885), the Kahnatesake/Oka Conflict (1990), the Gustafesen Lake Standoff (1995), the Ipperwash (1995) and Burnt Church Crises (1999-2001), and the recent Reclamation at Six Nations (2006) have involved Indigenous and settler relations. When additional events like the October Crisis (1970) are considered, they too have comprised settler strangers who were sub-Othered by the dominant culture. These incidents are proof that Canada is not the accepting nation that the government claims it to be domestically and internationally. Instead, this suggests that Canada as a nation is not as cohesive as portrayed in its international and domestic branding practices².

A nation can be described as “a group of people who share a language, culture, territorial base, political organization, and history” (Clay, 1990, qtd in B. Miller, P. Van Esterik, J. Van Esterik, 2001, p. 282). Because Canada does not have one solitary culture, it does not fit this definition of a nation (B. Miller et. al., 2001, 282). This concept of the nation can be examined further by looking at the ideas of settler scholar Benedict Anderson (2006), who states that a nation is “*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p. 6). Anderson argues that it is impossible to know most of the other people in one’s nation, as well as understand the differences in ethnicity and regional culture found throughout the nation. Culture is rooted in the development of a nation, since those from outside the dominant culture(s) are not considered to belong to the nation (O’Brien and Szeman, 2004, p. 214). Another way Canadian nationality is represented is through media outlets, specifically the

² For an exploration of this theme, see Richard Nimijean (2006), Evan Potter (2009), Scott Meis and David Milton (1998), and Norma Rantisi and Deborah Leslie (2006).

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) (1936-Present) and its French affiliate Radio-Canada (1936-Present). This Crown Corporation promotes the idea that there are similarities amongst Canadians regardless of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds, thereby literally broadcasting ideas of sameness and inclusivity into people's homes. However, the CBC does not provide an accurate depiction of regional identities as part of the multicultural national identity, specifically in regards to French Canada, which is why Radio-Canada was created. Although there is an Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN) (1992-Present), the fact that Indigenous interests —like those of the Francophones—are not transmitted as a piece of the dominant national narrative suggests that Indigenous peoples are not part of Canada. Based on these three conceptions of a nation, Canada cannot, and will never function as a cohesive cultural nation, since there are so few characteristics that tie and bind Canada's people and geography together into one cohesive unit. According to Anderson (2006), "nationalism thinks in terms of historical destinies..." (p. 149). However, because Canada is bound together as a civic nation and not a cultural one,³ Anderson's model of a nation does not apply.

The second notion of the Other relates to those characterized as "us," the dominant society who are people of European ancestry. Who consists of "them" has changed based on what historical period is being considered. At the period of first contacts, because of the rhetoric based on the paradigm of civilization, the "them" was always an Indigenous Other, who was seen as inferior to settlers. As time progressed and

³ Quoting Michael Ignatieff (1993), Donald Ipperciel (2007) says a civic nation is "a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values" (Ignatieff, 1993, p. 6 qtd in Ipperciel, 2007, p.396). Canada can be considered a civic nation because with the exception of Indigenous peoples, its population is united through displays of nationalism and a common political and value system.

the colonial stranglehold became stronger, the reserve system that was forced onto First Nations in the early nineteenth century confirmed their ex-centering, though Inuit and Métis have also been excommunicated from social, economic and political affairs. At the same time, there is a similar connection between the Indigenous and Francophone populations, as both groups are actively dismissed as not part of the key audience. *The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (1963) represents French-speaking Quebecois, asserting their right as a “founding people” to maintain their culture and language in Canada. Analogous to the Quebecois in this way, Indigenous peoples have never willfully accepted this marginalization and yet are still not integrated into mainstream Anglophone Canadian society. Nevertheless, the rhetoric exorted through the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988) suggests that Indigenous peoples have been amalgamated into Canadian culture. The institutions that feed dominant Canadian society are based on European cultures, which are evident through the prevalence of English and French as the official languages, and mandatory Christian holidays being celebrated nationwide. Although the Canadian government states that multiculturalism “has been a fundamental element in the make-up of Canada since its beginnings” (Citizen and Immigration Canada, 2012), this claim negates much of Canadian history. Ignoring the history of the land before the arrival of Europeans and the more than 350 years from then until Confederation notwithstanding, once Canada was established as a nation, immigration policies controlled which groups were allowed entry based on racialized notions. According to the government, this official multiculturalism policy can be explained as follows:

Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their

identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and discourages ghettoization, hatred, discrimination and violence. Through multiculturalism, Canada recognizes the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into their society and take an active part in its social, cultural, economic and political affairs. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010).

This appears contradictory, first by stating that the Canadian state is accepting of a myriad of cultures but then saying that multiculturalism is the means by which all people are integrated into one cohesive society. In other words, immigrants must assimilate into the dominant culture, which is based on Christian ideals and is primarily Anglophone. Since multiculturalism was implemented, Indigenous peoples were not included because the multiculturalism policy focuses on immigrants and not First Peoples. The continual resistance of Indigenous peoples to this multiculturalism model has led to them being ignored by the majority of the Canadian population, specifically the Anglophone majority of “us”.

However, once non-European migrants were permitted to immigrate to Canada in the late nineteenth century (Bélanger, 2006) what was considered Other began to transform. Within the “them” category of non-white Others a sub-divide occurred, wherein the dominant Other group is minority immigrants while Indigenous people comprise the Othered-Other. This binary divide exists because there is more respect shown to minority immigrants than to Indigenous peoples. This is evident through the existence of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the only governmental department established for peoples classified as Other: there is no Immigrant Affairs Canada department that surveils and controls recent migrants to the

country in the same way that the lives of Indigenous peoples are constantly under surveillance. This is not to say that non-white immigrants are treated equally to white immigrants (Thobani, 2009; Mackey, 2001), but rather they occupy a higher place in a sociocultural hierarchy than Indigenous peoples. This is evident in the fact that Indigenous people still face many institutionalized forms of oppression at the hands of the government, by the very fact that Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada exists, and for First Nations, that the *Indian Act* still remains a current piece of legislation in Canada. Thus, by defining Indigenous peoples as the Other, the Indigenous Other “came to stand for everything the Euro-Canadian was not” (Francis, 2000, p. 8). All settler-Canadians therefore “see Aboriginal people not merely as different, but as our “Other”; that is, as the mirror-image or alter-ego of ourselves. This “Othering” both denigrates and idealizes Aboriginal people...” (Barron, 2002, p. 229). This marginalization resulted in Indigenous peoples’ status as other-Others, or doubly Othered peoples. Indeed, Indigenous peoples occupy the lowest spots in a Canadian cultural hierarchy, which in turn treats them as objects to be studied rather than people.

Learn From the Other Rather Than About the Other

The importance of the concept of the Other is perhaps most evident in Anthropology, specifically sociocultural Anthropology, which historically and contemporarily focuses on understanding other cultures in order to understand one’s own (Robbins, 2001, p. 3; Delaney, 2011, p. 3). Because Indigenous cultures were seen as being different from Western cultures, nineteenth and twentieth century anthropologists would observe Indigenous peoples worldwide and make ethnocentric assumptions about

these peoples based on their own cultural lens that was “informed” by negative stereotypes about Indigenous peoples rooted in the past.

An example of this type of research is that of Allan Holmberg, who in the 1940’s studied the Sirionó of Brazil. Holmberg ascertained that because the Sirionó had no clothes, domesticated animals, arts and music, and maintained minimal spirituality, poorly-constructed shelters and were malnourished, that they were incredibly primitive people (Mann, 2006, p. 8-9). What Holmberg neglected to say when developing his conclusion was that in the 1920’s, settler-ranchers were actively trying to obtain Sirionó land while smallpox and influenza epidemics decimated 95% of the population (Mann, 2006, p. 10). Ultimately this resulted in much of the Sirionó way of life being forgotten. Holmberg’s error was not identified by other scientists and social scientists for several decades. “Holmberg’s Mistake”—the idea that Indigenous peoples are primitive and subordinate to Western peoples—is a fallacy that has been embraced “by those that hated Indians and those that admired them” (Mann, 2006, p. 13). The inferiorization of non-Western peoples that Holmberg “proved” justified Western greatness during the early twentieth century, and in many ways is still present today. This has ultimately led to a number of stereotypes about Indigenous people, which will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Rather than learning about Indigenous peoples based on the conclusions of non-Indigenous peoples, Indigenous Studies stresses the importance of learning from Indigenous scholars. This approach to learning about other cultures and ways of seeing the world can allow the non-Indigenous population to think more critically about the ongoing colonialism that occurs in Canada:

Learning *about* the Other is the most popular form of teaching about difference for colonizer or dominant groups. ‘Walking in other’s shoes’ allows the dominant group to empathize with, and therefore supposedly to understand, the point of view of the Other. (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p.476).

Because I am not Indigenous, I can only empathize what Indigenous peoples face in their daily lives. But being compassionate toward Indigenous issues is not the same as having lived experience as an Indigenous person. Utilizing Indigenous research paradigms and epistemologies in this thesis illustrates how I have learned from those that have been constructed as Other. By doing so, I wish to avoid “Walking the well intentioned road to hell, [where] Western scholars dedicated to the best interests of indigenous peoples often unwittingly participate in the Western hegemonic process” (Kincheloe and Sreiner, 2008, p. 141). By adopting Indigenous paradigms, I am trying to the best of my ability to be respectful of the lives, cultures and knowledges of Indigenous peoples when researching and analysing how they are (re)presented in a leisure and learning environment such as the Toronto Zoo.

THE INDIGENOUS-SETTLER HYPHEN

Inspired by the following reflection by activist Harsha Walia (2012), I believe that “From an anti-oppression perspective, meaningful support for Indigenous struggles cannot be directed by non-natives”. My understanding of my role is to work *within* the settler population to create awareness within that community. To use the analogy from the Two-Row Wampum, both groups travel together side by side and yet not touching, into a mutually beneficial future. As a settler, I should not interfere with Indigenous affairs because my very existence as a settler is a reason for Indigenous oppression: instead I should interact with people in the settler community in order to strengthen the

relationships between both groups. Like the white background of the Two-Row Wampum, a hyphen between the words Indigenous and settler appears at first to be the common thread binding the two words together, but upon more careful observation this punctuation symbol does not interlace as much as one would expect.

Not only is the hyphen joining two words together, but it is also a dialogical tool. As mentioned in “Rethinking collaboration: Working the Indigene-colonizer hyphen,” Alison Jones, a settler scholar from Australia, and Kuni Jenkins, a Māori scholar, discuss how collaborative, face-to-face dialogue between settler and Indigenous activists can be seen as an imperialist form of collaboration (2008, p. 471). Jones and Jenkins are suggesting that there should be a “less dialogical, and more uneasy settled relationship, based on learning (about difference) *from* the Other, rather than learning *about* the Other” (2008, p. 471). Here, the importance is the rejection of anthropological norms, while simultaneously using social locations to develop conclusions about working collaboratively. Using the phrase “*I work the hyphen*,” Jones describes the space enveloping the border between Self and Other: the space that affects the colonizer-indigene hyphen. This space “always reaches back into a shared past. Each of our names—indigene and colonizer—discursively produces the other” (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p. 473). In Canada, this is evident in the terms that are used to describe Indigenous peoples: Aboriginal, First Nations, Indian and Indigenous, are all settler-colonial terms developed by non-Native peoples to describe the Indigenous Other. These terms are used in favour of the names Indigenous nations have in their own languages for themselves, such as Ojibway/Ojibwe or Chippewa for Anishinaabe. The Indigenous-settler hyphen, therefore “marks a relationship of power and inequality that continues to shape

differential patterns of cultural dominance and social privilege” (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p. 473).

For Jones and Jenkins, this hyphen in collaborative research must always exist, because there must be a difference between each other and their own respective population for the sake of “political, practical and identity survival as *indigenous peoples...*” (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p. 475). This is not a rejection of working collaboratively, but rather writing from one’s own social location and always acknowledging that there is no true “us” when Indigenous and settler scholars work together. In my specific example, this would translate to the settler student-scholar (me) using Indigenous methods in my work but still qualifying my social location as non-Indigenous. This is done because the “us” cannot be substituted for the hyphen, but rather “name an always conditional relationship-between” (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p. 475). Or, more simply put, there is no “us”, but rather two distinct individuals from specific groups.

It has been said that there are two kinds of white people: those who have never found themselves in a situation where the majority of people around them are not white, and those who have been the only white people in the room. At that moment, for the first time perhaps, they discover what it is really like for the other people in their society, and, metaphorically, for the rest of the world outside the west: to be from a minority, to live as the person who is always in the margins, to be the person who never qualifies as the norm, the person who is not authorized to speak (Young, 2003, p. 1).

Because whiteness is the norm, white privilege is hardly recognized in Canadian society. In Canada, the lack of awareness of one’s position is illustrated by the general ignorance of the history of colonization in this country. As means to rectify and acknowledge settler privilege, provincial and territorial Ministries of Education—such as Ontario—are

updating and re-writing curricula to be more inclusive of Indigenous identities while providing a more comprehensive historical account of colonization in Canada.. In other words,

The desire for engagement must lead colonizer scholars to a deeper understanding of our own settler culture, society and history as deeply embedded in a relationship with the culture, society, and history of indigenous people...This orientation *to a relationship*—to the hyphen—rather than to an Other, is the most feasible posture for a colonizer collaborator (Jones and Jenkins, 2008, p. 282).

As the author of this research, I understand that my social location functions as a way for myself to utilize what I have learned, but also it informs the privileges that I have.

*

My analysis of how the re(presentation) of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous Knowledge functions in the Toronto Zoo's Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail comes from my social location and my own observational lens. This thesis and research complements my life experience, which is a way for me as a graduate student to decolonize my mind (Ngugi, 1986). As Martinique-born French revolutionary philosopher Frantz Fanon (1963) explains, "Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is clearly an agenda for total disorder. But it cannot be accomplished by the wave of a magic wand, a natural cataclysm, or a gentleman's agreement" (p.2). Indeed, the path to decolonization requires a substantial amount of un-learning to be done by the settler population. Individual, and later group and national decolonization by the settler population is essential for there to be any hint of social change in Canada in terms of the status Indigenous peoples occupy in society.

INDIGENOUS STEREOTYPES AND (RE)PRESENTATION IN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

And when he came to the place where the wild things are, they roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws till Max said, "Be still" and tamed them with the magic trick into all their yellow eyes without blinking once. And they were frightened and called him the most wild thing of all and made him king of all wild things. – Maurice Sendak, *Where The Wild Things Are*

STEREOTYPES FOUNDED IN MYTH/OLOGY

Indigenous peoples negotiate life within a nation that continues to negatively stereotype them. The origins of this mythos are a direct result of the varied relationships Indigenous peoples have had over time with the settler population. When thinking about myth or mythology, a person will consider “A traditional story, typically involving supernatural beings or forces, which embodies and provides an explanation, aetiology, or justification for something such as the early history of a society, a religious belief or ritual, or a natural phenomenon” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011c). This might include classic Greek mythological figures like Zeus, Hera, Athena and Hades, who were able to do extraordinary things due to their supernatural powers. In contrast, a myth can also be defined as “A widespread but untrue or erroneous story or belief; a widely held misconception; a misrepresentation of the truth” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011c). It is this definition that is important to how Indigenous peoples are seen in current Western society. As Roland Barthes (1982) explains, “myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the ‘nature’ of things” (p.94). Myths and mythologies about Indigenous peoples come from fallacious historical “fact” that is based in colonial attitudes. This so-called knowledge is

contained in a mythical concept [which] is confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations. One must firmly stress this open character of the concept; it is not at all an abstract, purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation, whose unity and coherence are above all duty to function (Barthes, 1982, p.93).

Thus, these caricatures of Indigeneity are not improving Indigenous-settler relations.

Instead, they reinforce counterfactual opinions that locate Indigenous peoples in a time and place that never existed.

Stereotypes of Indigenous peoples in Canada are therefore derived from a mythology that comes from pre-conceived and baseless notions of the Indigenous Other rooted in discrimination and prejudice. Taiaiake Alfred (2010) believes that

Canadians grow up believing that the history of their country is a story of the cooperative venture between people who came from elsewhere to make a better life and those who were already here, who welcomed and embraced them, aside from a few bad white men and some renegade Natives who had other, more American, ideas (p. ix).

This account of history that Alfred criticizes is one that emphasizes the ideas of multiculturalism and acceptance that is promoted by the government. As critical Canadianist academic Eva Mackey (2012) states, “Official versions of national history may be different from, in fact deeply contradictory to, individual and collective people’s acts of remembering specific events and processes” (p.311). How Indigenous peoples are seen in the present is directly related to their association with the settler population since the fifteenth century. This consociation can be divided into four time periods based on, although differentiated from, the works of John Ralston Saul and J. R. Miller⁴. The first, characterized by settler dependence on First Nations, occurred during the fifteenth and

⁴ In *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, J.R. Miller (2000) calls his three time periods of settler and Indigenous interactions Cooperation, Coercion and Confrontation, while John Ralston Saul (2009) calls his three periods A Métis Civilization, Peace, Fairness and Good Government, and the Castrati in *A Fair Country*. Although there is some overlap between the eras I developed and those developed by these authors, I feel that mine are more specific due to their primarily First Nations, rather than Indigenous focus.

sixteenth centuries. The second time period is illustrated by settler and Indigenous cooperation, taking place from the sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century. The third period began in the early nineteenth century and lasted until the end of the twentieth century, and is characterized by Indigenous subordination. The final time period started at the turn of the twenty-first century, and based on my personal observations over the past twelve years, can be explained by a combination of settler ignorance and ignoring of Indigenous peoples, which I call ignore(ance). These time periods are approximations however, since colonization in Canada manifested in different ways and varied times as settlement moved westward.

In historical and contemporary discourses,

Aboriginal peoples have been represented in curricula, research, and scholarship (if at all) as savage, noble, stoic, and most disturbingly, a dying race. Images and representations of Aboriginal people that predominate in media, popular culture, and research studies portray us not as we are, but as non-Aboriginals think we are (Absolon and Willett 2005, 108).

These stereotypes create an image that settler historian Daniel Francis (2000) calls the Imaginary Indian. Along with Francis, my objective is not to take these stereotypes, explain how they are incorrect and then replace them with constructions of what could very well also be archetypes (p. 5-6). Instead, I want to address these stereotypes to further the discussion of Indigenous representation in not only museums and galleries, but most importantly in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail in the Toronto Zoo.

Something or someone is stereotyped when it is “reduced to a few essentials, fixed in Nature by a few, simplified characteristics” (Hall, 1997c, p. 249). Because stereotypes of Indigenous peoples are based on imagined notions from the settler

population, the origins of these archetypes have not been challenged. Thus, the result is an inaccurate meta-narrative of what First Nations are supposed to be. However, this misconstrued rhetoric also applies when considering the “discovery” of the “New World”.

The prevalent chronicle of the history of North America begins with Christopher Columbus “discovering” America in 1492. This account is flawed in three ways. First, there is documentation of the Vikings arriving in North America, specifically Canada, in the eleventh century (Dickason, 2009, p.vii). Second, Columbus never set foot on the North American continent; the places he landed consisted primarily of Caribbean islands (LaLonde, 1997). Third, and most importantly, Columbus should not be given credit for “discovering” land that had been previously occupied by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. As settler academic Sherene Razack (2002) explains, “The national mythologies of white settler societies are deeply spacialized societies. Although the spatial story that is told varies from one time to another, at each stage the story installs Europeans as entitled to the land, a claim that is codified in law” (p. 3). European claims to Indigenous land are based on the idea that, as ‘heathens,’ Indigenous peoples did not own lands even though they used them. This idea was further entrenched through a series of Papal Bulls (Venne, 1998, p.3-4). Because Indigenous peoples were not Christians, they could be treated like land, water, or animals: things to be owned, manipulated, or even killed, and since no European nation wanted less than any of the others this was deemed acceptable (Venne, 1998, p.4). This overarching narrative of Indigenous peoples as things and not people (Venne, 1998, p. 5) impacted not only how the settler-invaders saw them, but also what terms were used to describe them. Believing he had located a

route to India, Columbus called the people he encountered *los Indios*, Spanish for Indian (Berkhofer, 1978, p.5). When Columbus landed in the Caribbean, “there were a large number of different and distinct indigenous cultures, but there were no Indians” (Francis, 2000, p. 4). This said, the term still maintains its legacy worldwide. In Canada, this is evident by the Canadian government’s use of the word, despite the fact it causes offense to some individuals.

Colonization in what would become Canada began with Giovanni Caboto in 1497 when he landed in what is now known as Newfoundland (Dickason, 2009, p.63). Like Columbus and arguably most explorers of the time, the primary reasons for exploring worlds new to Europeans were not solely based on competition between nations for economic gain, but because of religion as well. As emissaries of Christian nations, these men would often claim their findings were “new triumphs on behalf of God” (Thomas, 1993, p.59). This same attitude—the prevalence and importance of Christianity and the desire to ‘convert the heathens’—continued into the sixteenth century and informed Indigenous stereotypes.

FIRST NATIONS STEREOTYPES

In this paper, there are seven prominent stereotypes of First Nations that will be discussed: the Noble Savage, the Vanishing Race, the Living Fossil, the Savage, the Generic Indian, the Native Warrior and the Ecological Indian. Although among the most common stereotypes that pertain to First Nations, sexualized stereotypes are not relevant to this paper, and therefore they will not be discussed. Rooted in the Enlightenment, the Savage is one of the oldest First Nations archetypes in existence.

The Savage

The stereotype of the Savage brings to mind ideas of ferocity and war-mongering, yet this does not coincide with the definition of savagery. Between 1534 and 1541, French explorer Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) made three voyages to Canada, making contact with several Kanienkehaka settlements in and around the St Lawrence area (Dickason, 2009, p.74). In his final voyage, a relationship based on “fish, fur, exploration and evangelization” with the local inhabitants was established, continuing until the eighteenth century (Miller, 2000, p.31). Here there would be a mutually beneficial relationship in regards to fur, an indifferent relationship regarding fishing, an unconcerned relationship that stood so long as the First Nations’ interests were not compromised, and ignorance on behalf of First Nations concerning the final purpose (Miller, 2000, p.31). Cartier described the people he encountered as *sauvage*, a French term that could mean someone who is savage, “someone who resided in natural surroundings,” or “something that was not domesticated” (Miller, 2000, 31) depending on the context. By the seventeenth century, the term savage came into popular use in the English language and could be defined in the same way that one use it today (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011d). This term became commonplace not only in what would become Canada, but also in Europe where writers and scholars would write about North American events, despite not being there themselves.

The Savage stereotype portrays First Nations as being inherently war-like and vicious, when in fact they and Native Americans in the United States had the self-determined right to protect their homeland from European settler-invaders (Cornelius, 1999, p. 3-4). These Savages were obstacles to settlement and progress, thus killing them

was seen as justified due to their lack of civility and humanlike traits (Cornelius, 1999, p.4). This archetype validates the governmental opinion that the assimilation of First Nations children in the residential school system was permissible, since they lacked the *savoir-faire* of the settler population. Moreover, because this stereotype is connected with the idea of the cultivation of culture, it grew into the idea of the Noble Savage.

The Noble Savage

The Noble Savage archetype combines notions of nobility and savagery, suggesting that First Nations occupied a deviant social position in comparison to Europeans. The term is based on accounts from the contact period and “modern” writers like Michel de Montaigne, Desiderius Erasmus, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, presenting a romanticized view of First Nations living “close to nature, usually naked, in simplistic romantic harmony with nature” (Cornelius, 1999, p. 3). Writing during the French Renaissance, Michel de Montaigne’s (1533-1592) work can be seen as some of the first popular descriptions of Indigenous peoples. These portrayals are found in his essay, “Of Cannibals,” published in 1588. The depictions provided became the basis for current stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, even though Montaigne was telling people how not to behave towards Indigenous populations. For example, Montaigne writes that

This is a people amongst whom there is no commerce; no knowledge of letters; no science or numbers; no judges or politicians; no habits of service; no riches and no poverty; no contracts; no inheritance; no property; no employments except those of leisure; no respect for authority except within the family; no clothing; no agriculture; no metal; no use of wheat or wine (Black, Conolly, Flint, Grundy, LePan, McGann, Lake Prescott, Qualls, and Waters, 2006, p. 365).

Although initially it seems that Montaigne is attributing Indigenous peoples with having no worthwhile skills or knowledge, in actuality he is commenting on what he saw as a

much simpler life. Montaigne's point of view is built on the misinformation of other writers from his time. In actuality, Indigenous groups did have governance systems, did practice agriculture, and had knowledge of the world around them, including the Haudenosaunee who Cartier had connections with. Furthermore Montaigne states, "The laws of nature, however, govern them still, not as yet much vitiated with any mixture of ours; but 'tis in such purity that I am sometimes troubled we were not sooner acquainted with these people, and that they were not discovered in those better times..." (Black et. al., 2006, p. 365). Montaigne is referring to a state of utopia and innocence, a misconception of Indigenous peoples lives prior to contact. Through these excerpts, it is clear that Montaigne created a stereotype of Indigenous people who lived in an Eden-like state, when in reality, no such time and place ever existed. At the same time, much of what people understand is based on events and notions from the past. Because it was thought that the so-called New World was, in fact, Eden, much of what was assumed about Indigenous peoples came from these presumptions rather than interactions between the settler and Indigenous populations. What Montaigne says in relation to Indigenous peoples can be correlated with the prose of Rousseau.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a Genevan philosopher, like Montaigne made claims about Indigenous peoples that not only had clout during his lifetime but also endures in the present. For example, Rousseau observed a form of inequality that he termed

natural or physical, because it is established by nature and consists of the differences in age, health, bodily strength, and qualities of the mind or soul...We cannot ask what the source of natural inequality is, because the answer is announced in the simple definition of the word (Rousseau, 1754).

As a humanist, Rousseau did not think that Indigenous peoples were as different from his European cohort as others postulated. Instead, Rousseau called for Europeans to treat Indigenous peoples better. Because the biological knowledge of the time could not examine physiological difference at the genetic level, it was assumed that people who looked dissimilar physically were substantially different biologically. In turn, it was postulated that a correlation existed between skin colour, bones and brains in terms of intelligence. Rousseau also gave his fellow Europeans a warning about how the colonization process was damaging Indigenous peoples: “Leave civilized man the time to collect all his machines around him, and there is no doubt he would easily overcome savage man” (Rousseau, 1754). Rousseau is not using the word savage to infer violence, but rather someone who is not cultured in the same way as Europeans. Furthermore, Rousseau is inferring that it is Europeans that are the savage ones, because they have the desire to eliminate the Indigenous populations for their own benefit. Rousseau’s assertions are inherently flawed because he believes that Indigenous peoples possess a certain purity and innocence related to the Garden of Eden. Although Rousseau’s analysis of Indigenous people does have some notable views through a postmodern lens, it is not damaging in the same ways as the writings of other European scholars during that period.

Both Montaigne’s and Rousseau’s writings contributed to the Noble Savage archetype. Because Indigenous Knowledge requires a relationship with nature, it appears that First Nations are viewed as fundamentally freer than Europeans. Since they are seen as being closer to nature, First Nations were considered inferior by Europeans, who saw themselves as much more civilized (Mackey, 1998, p. 158). This argument is also related

to how First Nations are connected to the Canadian national narrative and Canadian nationalism. As Eva Mackey (1998) explains, Indigenous peoples, cultures and artefacts

have the unique quality of being entirely Canadian in their origin and character. Native people are perceived to be actually linked to the land, and...the land is a primary symbol of the nation. The construction of Native peoples as “heritage” also means they are caught in the past (p. 161).

This idea of Indigenous persons being stuck in the past, although informed in some way by the works of Montaigne and Rousseau, comes primarily from the nineteenth century. As a result of the settler-imposed location of Indigenous peoples as a part of nature that exists in the past, they are seen as Noble Savages as well as Living Fossils.

Living Fossils

Thoughts of skeletal and decrepit peoples can be related to the Living Fossils stereotype. This archetype suggests that the Indigenous persons living today are relics from an existing people, who, for the most part, are long since dead (Cornelius, 1999, p. 5). This account can be explained by using two examples. First, part of the colonial mandate was to exterminate, and failing that, assimilate Indigenous peoples so they no longer existed. In 1850, the Province of Canada passed *An Act for the better protection of the Lands and Property of Indians in Lower Canada*, and *An Act for the protection of the Indians in Upper Canada from imposition*. The goal of these acts was to look after the property occupied or enjoyed by Indians from trespassing or injury, with the intention of protecting First Nations’ rights, and in the case of the former, to define what did and did not constitute Indian according to the law (Miller, 2000, p. 137-8). Following this—and ignoring First Nations’ views on the matter—the *Act for the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes in the Canadas* was passed in 1857, proscribing methods for Indians to

abandon their Indian status and become full citizens of British North America (Miller, 2000, p.139-40). It was not until the newly-formed nation-state of Canada developed the *Indian Act* in 1876 that the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the settler population became wholeheartedly negative. When the *Indian Act* was introduced there were 100 amendments, but over the next thirty years there were ninety-five additional amendments added that described what Indians could and could not do according to the law (Richardson, 1994, p. 95). This included the implementation of the band council system, forcing Indians to relocate to reserves, preventing three or more Indians from congregating together, prohibiting selling certain goods and alcohol to Indians, forbidding Indians from selling their crops, making children attend residential schools, enfranchising Indians without their consent, and making illegal many Indigenous ceremonies and rituals (Richardson, 1994, p. 97-105). These rules were devastating to the First Nations, and through residential schools especially, severely impacted their ability to maintain their cultures and languages. The *Indian Act* can be seen as one of the most impactful written declarations of a relationship between the settler and First Nation population because of how it subordinated Indians according to the desires of the Canadian state. The validation of the *Indian Act* as official governmental policy came from the idea that non-White peoples were seen as biologically inferior to those with European ancestry, which is the second way the Living Fossils archetype is framed.

Due to advances in scientific knowledge during the nineteenth century, more ideas about biology and racial difference were popularized. In the 1820's Samuel George Morton began measuring the cranial capacity of skulls, believing that the larger the skull, the more intelligent someone was, a theory known as phrenology (Robbins, 2001, p.

208). Morton's results indicated that whites from Northern Europe had the largest skulls and therefore were the most intelligent, and were therefore socially and biologically superior (Robbins, 2001, p. 208). It was not until 1977, when Stephen Jay Gould found several methodological flaws in Morton's work—many that Morton did purposefully—that Morton's hypothesis was disproved (Robbins, 2001, p. 208-9). As a groundbreaking text, Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) *The Origin of Species* (1859) changed the way people saw human evolution, and in turn racial difference. Darwin's text was twisted in such a way that evolutionary theories were applied to ethnic groups in what became known as Social Darwinism. Furthermore, the statistician Francis Galton, Darwin's nephew, was an originator of eugenicist theory. He ascertained that the intelligence of people was inherited, since in his study of eminent British men, reputed men were more likely to have prominent sons and brothers; however, Galton's study neglected environmental factors as an indicator of these men's status (Robbins, 2001, p.212). Even though the hypotheses of Morton and Galton were notably flawed, they still became part of the basis for asserting the racial inferiority of Indigenous peoples.

Racial theory was applied so that for “whites, ‘Culture’ was opposed to ‘Nature,’” and “whites developed ‘Culture’ to subdue and overcome ‘Nature’” (Hall, 1997b, p. 244). For non-whites on the other hand, “‘Culture’ coincided with ‘Nature’” so the two were interchangeable (Hall, 1997b, p. 244). Thus, if the differences were ‘Cultural’ they could be altered, but if they were ‘natural’, they were permanently fixed (Hall, 1997b, p. 245). This form of representation—called naturalization—was “designed to *fix* ‘difference’, and thus *secure* it forever” (Hall, 1997b, p. 245). The so-called racial dissimilarities of Indigenous peoples during this time can be linked to two general ideas that pertained to

most non-whites: first, that they were innately lazy and thus were only able to work as servants, and second, that they were naturally primitive and without culture (Hall, 1997b, p. 244). These beliefs—considered scientific at the time—were the justification by the colonial powers for the subordination of Indigenous peoples and all non-white minorities.

British novelist Charles Dickens (1812-1870) echoes these sentiments in his essay “The Noble Savage” (1853) where he states,

I beg to say that I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage. I consider him a prodigious nuisance and an enormous superstition. His calling rum firewater and me a pale face, wholly fails to reconcile me to him. I don't care what he calls me. I call him a savage, and I call a savage highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth” (Dickens, 1853 qtd in Black, Conolly, Flint, Grundy, LePan, Liuzza, McGann, Lake Prescott, Qualls, Waters, 2007, p. 988).

Dickens' comments reflect much of what was thought of Indigenous peoples at the time: because they were uncivilized, and according to the settler population uncultured, they deserved to be assimilated into settler culture. This excerpt also illustrates that although racial differences were important in discriminating against the Other, cultural and societal distinctions were the most prevalent. Even if biological variances between groups did not exist, contrariety attributed to religion, language or behaviour would reinforce hierarchal differences in society (Marks, 2005 p. 163). These discrepancies were perpetuated and reinforced through the establishment of cultural institutions following Confederation.

By virtue of cultural centres, galleries and museums often containing artefacts from the past, the existence of Indigenous peoples is considered part of the past. The most common examples from Indigenous material culture come not from decades but usually centuries past. In a parallel example, Cornelius (1999) explains that many museums—using the Museum of Natural History in New York City as a case study—

focus simultaneously on Indigenous peoples and dinosaurs, providing the message that just like dinosaurs, Indigenous peoples are also extinct (p. 5). At the same time, sometimes First Nations are represented in such a way that they are on the verge of becoming extinct, rather than being victims of genocide.

Vanishing Race

Similar to the Living Fossils archetype is the Vanishing Race stereotype, which asserts that any remaining First Nations are the living relics of nearly-extinct peoples. Recalling mental images of emaciated people with extreme pallor, the Vanishing Race stereotype is based on the nineteenth century idea that Indigenous peoples in the Americas were going to become extinct (Cornelius, 1999, p.4). As evidence of this idea, artists like Paul Kane, Fredrick Arthur Verner, Edmund Morris and Emily Carr provided visual representations of cultures they assumed were in the process of dying out forever (Francis, 2000, p.24). During the late nineteenth century, the policies related to First Nations were either to assimilate or exterminate them (Cornelius, 1999, p. 4). In Canada, the *Indian Act* (1876-present) was legislated to control various aspects of First Nations life including assembly, spirituality, Indian status, and the rights to land on reserve. In the 1830's First Nations were forced onto reserves in order to remove them from resource-rich lands, while simultaneously "protecting" them from what was thought to be their inevitable demise (Alcantara, 2003, p.398). In the present, some people from the settler population still believe there is the possibility of Indigenous peoples becoming extinct despite the fact they have survived over 500 years of colonial interference. Similarly, there is the idea in the settler population that Indigenous peoples alive today are part of a monoculture.

The Generic Indian

The Generic Indian, as described by Cornelius (1999) is one that wears feathers and lives in a tepee (p.5). This stereotype has been developed by decades of misrepresentation through media, film, artwork and cartoons, creating the “misconception that there is one homogeneous Aboriginal culture in Canada, when in fact there are many” (Howard and Proulx, 2011, p. 2). Not all First Nations lived in teepees historically, and presently “Most Native people in Canada do not live in teepees. As citizens of the twenty-first century with a long history of colonization, many live in poverty in small, unromantic homes on reserves, in apartments and houses in urban centres, or on the streets” (Mackey, 2012, p. 322). In fact, according the Assembly of First Nations, a national organization that recognizes all First Nations in Canada, there are over 630 First Nations (Assembly of First Nations, 2012). Each of these nations has distinct cultures, languages, traditions, and individuals that define them and their members. Settler historian James Maurice Stockford Careless (1969) writes that there is a “tendency to treat people as groups and communities rather than as individuals and citizens” (p. 4). Although Careless’ argument refers to the entire population of Canada, the fact that the government homogenizes Indigenous peoples who are not homogeneous ultimately suggests that Canada’s official policies on multiculturalism prohibit Indigenous nations from being recognized as sovereign. Because this is ignored by the majority of the settler population, this suggests that settlers are profoundly uninformed about the cultural differences among First Nations. The stereotype of the Generic Indian can also be examined through people labeling Indigenous cultures “pan-Indigenous” using an all-encompassing language. These portrayals are incorrect because it is not

Indigenous culture but Indigenous cultures; not Indigenous spirituality but Indigenous spiritualities, and it is also not Indigenous language but Indigenous languages. The overarching narrative in Canadian society and in academia is to treat Indigenous peoples like they are part of a monoculture. The reality is that there are multiple Indigenous cultures, many Indigenous spiritualities, and numerous Indigenous languages in Canada today.

The Ecological Indian

Despite the fact that the Ecological Indian shares the attribute of being close to nature with the Noble Savage stereotype, it is different in that it is seen as an environmental steward, rather than a First Nations person caught in the past. The idea of the Ecological Indian can be traced back to two non-Indigenous individuals masquerading as First Nations in the twentieth century. Grey Owl, a white man who constructed himself as an Anishinaabe conservationist, believed that First Nations should be

characterized as the guardians of the wilderness—and that they should be set to work as forest rangers and game wardens; their technical knowledge, accumulated during thousands of years of study and observation, could be of immense value... (Smith 1982, p. 164 qtd in Francis, 2000, p. 139).

This view of First Nations as guardians of the wilderness became incredibly damaging because although it was rooted in good intentions, it still links them to a stereotype that was not representative of their cultures and opinions as individual human beings.

Evidentially, according to this misplaced idealism,

Native people, living close to nature, learned a reverence and responsibility for it. They were conservationists by instinct. The greening of the Indian begins with Grey Owl. To him belongs the credit for affirming, if not creating, the image of the Indian as the original

environmentalist, an image which has gained in strength in the years since he expressed it (Francis, 2000, p.140).

This conception of the First Nation-turned-environmental steward was echoed further in the late twentieth century when the environmental movement began to take shape.

In the early 1970's, Iron Eyes Cody—another white man who was “acting Indian”—appeared in a commercial with a single tear trickling down his face because someone was littering at the side of a highway. This commercial is discriminatory and offensive because Iron Eyes Cody was “playing Indian”, something that is particularly insulting to Indigenous peoples whose cultures are being appropriated by the settler population (Diamond, 2009). Since that commercial, the stereotype of First Nations being guardians of the land—always caring for it, and wanting to make sure it thrives more than their own cultures—has remained. Even though it is true that many Indigenous peoples who practice their traditional spiritualities have a connection to the land, that does not mean they all do. This stereotype has not only created the idea that all Indigenous peoples are keepers of the land, it is also an example of how it is permissible for non-Indigenous peoples to pretend that Indigenous peoples are, quite literally in terms of culture and ethnic heritage, something they are not. The image of the exotic Indigenous Other is something desired by the settler population, but the reality of living as an Indigenous individual in Canada is not nearly as glamorous as it appears, since many face poverty, health issues and racial discrimination in their day-to-day lives. Although these are fairly well-known attributes that affect Indigenous peoples across the country, “In spite of the great inequalities that persist today between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians (e.g. lack of running water and decent housing in communities like Davis Inlet), there are many in non-Aboriginal society who perceive a certain richness in

‘native life’” (Barron, 2002, p. 234). Interestingly, this idea is contrasted completely when the Native Warrior stereotype is considered.

The Native Warrior

The most popularized archetype of First Nations is the Native Warrior, which has a presence in film, and is perpetuated mostly in the media. This stereotype, according to Heather Smyth (2000), uses and “rearticulates colonial stereotypes of Native violence, treachery, and Savagery” (p. 59). In many ways, this archetype is bolstered by the modern media when First Nations take action to protect their territories. First Nations warriors are depicted as being violent, not listening to authority, unwilling to negotiate and uncivil to the non-Indigenous population. This archetype also “exposes Canadian racism and challenges the notion that Canada is a peaceful, liberal democracy” (Smyth, 2000, p.59) since these events symbolize or are emblematic of police and military violence against First Nations. Likewise, these events illustrate that Canada is not the accepting and multicultural nation that it brands itself as being. The fact that there are still so many stereotypes about Indigenous people that exist, and that these archetypes remain as part of Canadian society reinforces the idea that there is a disconnection between how Indigenous people live in Canada and settler knowledge of Indigenous peoples.

The prevalence of these archetypes in Canadian society today illustrates how, for the most part, Indigenous peoples are stuck in a marginalized position compared to the rest of the Canadian population. Not only do these stereotypes appear in film, television, music, cartoons, and fiction but in Canadian cultural institutions as well. The place that these archetypes are the most damaging is within academia, where contemporary scholars such as Tom Flanagan or Frances Widdowson and Abel Howard, whose book is

examined in Chapter Five, subordinate Indigenous people. This suggests that Canada, and by extension the majority of Canadians, is either content to keep Indigenous peoples on the periphery of society, or at the very least is ignorant of the fact that these stereotypes lack credibility in defining Indigeneity today. The presentation of these stereotypes in museums and art galleries, which is to be examined in the next section, can model how Indigenous peoples are represented in other kinds of cultural institutions, including zoos.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

If, “On a bad day, mythology encourages the denial of reality” (Saul, 1997, p. 3), then national institutions, as constructors and representors of culture and national identity, perpetuate and reinforce incorrect identities of Indigenous peoples through the objects they choose to exhibit. The politics of representation, according to settler cultural theorist Henry Giroux (2006), focus on how exhibits can “mobilize meanings in order to suppress, silence, and contain marginalized histories, voices, and experiences...” (p. 234). By being cognisant of how people or objects are being portrayed, curators can produce exhibits that display objects in a way that does not Other the people whose cultural artefacts are being presented. This is due to the relationship a word has to its meaning, and how the meaning is based in history and the social group it comes from (Nealon and Searls Giroux 2003, p. 25). The historical relationship between a word or image and its meaning(s) can “reproduce and naturalize existing relations of social power’ (O’Brien and Szeman 2004, p. 78). The interpretation of a word or image may be the result of the way the concept interacts with the society it is in. Thus, institutions are not only seen as places “of struggle in challenging dominant modes of racial and colonial authority but also pedagogical resources to rewrite the possibilities for new narratives, identities and

cultural spaces” (Giroux, 2006, p. 234). Cultural institutions can, if their exhibits are presented in a culturally relative way, be sites of decolonization. However, the decolonization of the museum, the gallery and the objects found in such locations is a more recent phenomenon. In the past, museums and galleries help reinforce stereotypical depictions of Indigenous peoples through the arrangement of exhibits and artefacts.

Because of the colonial doctrines that legitimized the settling of North America, many Indigenous historians believe that “The experience of Indigenous peoples in North America is artificially historicized by the recently constructed national borders of Canada, the United States, and Mexico” (Rickard, 2002, p. 116). These constructed nations therefore require a means of representing their legitimacy and government-fostered national identities through the use of cultural institutions such art galleries and museums. The history of these institutions illustrates the colonial mindset that authorized the settlement of Canada as well as its current occupation by the settler population. This reflects how the objections and opinions of Indigenous peoples did not matter to people from Western nations when objects from their culture were selected and included in cultural institutions. The objects in museums and galleries are “the ‘material culture’ of peoples who have been considered, since the mid-nineteenth century, to have been the appropriate target for anthropological research” (Lidchi, 1997, p. 161).

Although national institutions provide the opportunity for visitors to learn about different peoples, cultures, animals, and plants through their displays, the patron’s experience varies greatly based on age, education, language, culture and upbringing. Because the visiting public to museums and galleries has expanded from its original composition—primarily white Europeans and North Americans—so too has the content

and the style of presentation of the objects on display. Specifically, “if this new audience includes those communities which the museum represents, or their descendants, then the museum’s representations may have to concord with the sense of self this new constituency holds in addition to that of the wider public” (Lidchi, 1997, p. 202). By increasing the viewing audience of museums and galleries from the settler population to include marginalized peoples, the national institution becomes a place of contact between different groups. As a result, museums and galleries create specific narrations and use particular means of classification that are based on anthropological theory which “do not simply reflect natural distinctions but serve to create cultural ones, which acquire their cogency when viewed through the filtering lens of a particular discipline” (Lidchi, 1997, p. 161). As the principles of early anthropology focused on describing, categorizing and inferiorizing non-Western peoples, what was presented in galleries and museums reflected the preconceptions of the Indigenous Other that were prevalent at the time.

Objects in museums and galleries collected up until the mid-twentieth century “were mostly made or used by those who at one time or another were believed to be ‘exotic’, ‘pre-literate’, ‘primitive’, ‘simple’, ‘savage’, or vanishing races,” or, in other words, Indigenous peoples (Lidchi, 1997, p. 161). Although the depiction of non-Western peoples in museums and galleries has changed over time, the fact that cultural misrepresentations are still found in cultural institutions allows the visitor to continue stereotyping First Nations in a negative way. In the early 1800’s, several painters exhibited their portraits of First Nations to much critical acclaim; among them was Paul Kane, who created “paintings of picturesque Indians in elaborate costumes of feathers and buffalo hide, his audience found confirmation of a fascinating wilderness world

inhabited by fiercely independent, entirely mysterious people” (Francis, 2000, p. 20). The First Nations he depicted fit the stereotype of the Noble Savage, someone close to nature and freer than the so-called civilized man. Kane and others decided to paint First Nations because it was believed they were going to disappear by the twentieth century due to disease, starvation, and their general inferiority (Francis, 2000, p. 23). The reason for portraying them in such a way ties into the Vanishing Race stereotype; if there was no proof that these people existed, they would be forgotten when they died out, making First Nations popular subjects for portraiture. The portraits displayed an exotic, Indigenous Other that was likely going to disappear. This belief not only drew crowds to exhibitions, but was also something of a novelty since many settlers would not encounter Indigenous peoples in their day-to-day lives, especially after the implementation of reserves. By creating paintings or exhibits featuring Indigenous peoples, artists like Kane and his contemporaries “were taking possession of the Indian image. It was now theirs to manipulate and display in any way they wanted. The image-makers returned from Indian Country with their images and displayed them as factual representations of the way Indians really were” (Francis, 2000, p. 43). These artists were not only constructing the image of the Indian in a way that was often incorrect, but the legacy of their work reinforced stereotypes and continues to sustain them, since many of these paintings are still on display in galleries across Canada and around the world. Exhibitions and works in galleries and museums function as a language since specific objects are displayed “to produce certain meanings about the subject-matter of the exhibition” (Hall, 1997a, p. 5).

Settler academic James Clifford (1997) borrows the term “contact zones” from Mary Louise Pratt, who defines it as “the space of colonial encounters, the space in which

peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving coercion, radical inequality and intractable conflict” (p. 192). Thus, when the material possessions of Indigenous people in some museums and galleries are displayed in particular ways, the objects represent the disparity between the settler and Indigenous populations. This synecdochal method of creating meaning, where one thing is used to connote understanding for the whole, resulted in the misinterpretation of Indigenous peoples. Non-Indigenous curators would provide a description of the object being displayed, without asking the object’s creator what the significance was. Thus, like the accounts from early colonists and explorers, what is stated about an object and therefore an entire group of people, was in many cases incorrect. For Indigenous peoples,

the objects and subjects of museums are collected by someone else, then absorbed or transformed to disappear or reappear as something else. The past is re-presented in interpretations of history, culture, and national formation that construct Indians as figures defined and confined by difference (Valaskakis, 2005, p. 73).

In many ways however, the settler population is not aware of these prevarications—intentional or unintentional—because they see national institutions as places that represent the truth.

The meaning of objects within a national institution depends on several factors, including the decade and the viewer’s social location, since cultural shifts between decades and generations result in varied interpretations of objects. Thus,

the only thing that endures unchanged is the physical existence of the objects...All other factors that contribute to the complex phenomenon of an object within a museum are variable. The creator of a work of art lived during a particular period and in a particular place, and adhered to cultural traditions, that, more than likely, differ from those of contemporary museum visitors (Jonaitis, 2002, p. 17).

What was once seen by curators as being proof of primitivism and savagery, is now viewed as being examples of Canadian multiculturalism. Although the position of Indigenous peoples in Canadian society has changed dramatically over the past two hundred years, Indigenous peoples may still object to their objects being on display.

To coincide with the 1988 Olympics, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary produced “The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada’s First Peoples”, an exhibition that was met with a great deal of controversy from First Nations and white Anglophones. In 1992 the report on the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, a national group organized by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association, was released, responding to issues raised by the Glenbow’s exhibition (Jessup, 2002, p. xx). The general synopsis of the report was for there to be an “increased ‘dialogue’ between curators and native peoples and ‘partnership’ – a sharing of responsibility for the management of cultural property,” where individual museums should establish different working relationships with Elders, spiritual leaders, communities or cultural organizations (Lidchi, 1997, p. 203). Additionally, exhibitions should be changed so that old stereotypes of Indigenous people, such as the Noble Savage, the Vanishing Race, the Living Fossil, Savage and the Generic Indian were no longer present (Jessup, 2002, p. xx). Although the guidelines set forth in the report were certainly admirable, changing existing exhibitions and educating museum and gallery staff to create inclusive material is fraught with challenges, since representing cultures outside of one’s own can be difficult. It can be argued that many intentionally settler-biased exhibits have been removed from or altered within national institutions in an effort to promote partnerships and dialogue between Indigenous peoples and curators.

In previous decades or centuries, there was a high degree of segregation amongst groups and individuals, not only based on racial differences, but cultural ones. Although mandated and voluntary separations between cultural groups still exist—for example reserves, ethnic neighbourhoods in large urban centres, financial differences within communities and so on—the fear of miscegenation was a more prominent idea in the past than it is in the present. Indigenous art and artefacts were kept separate from Canadian art and artefacts because of what I see as notions of Western superiority and differences in style. This has led to the idea of history proving “that the phrase ‘separate but equal’ is an oxymoron; as long as First Nations art remains segregated from other types of art, it will not be perceived as equal by those who visit museums” (Jonaitis, 2002, p.18). Therefore, in institutions where there is a lack of integration of Indigenous and settler art and artefacts not only reinforces the idea that Indigenous peoples and settlers are not equal in their ability to create art, but the display of this art physically represents this difference. This illustrates how “Too many exhibits present First Nations work in isolation from the globalized world, creating a false image of separation and expressing a historicity that does not exist” (Jonaitis, 2002, p. 21).

Cultural institutions are politicized spaces because artefacts are grouped in thematic exhibitions, which “are discrete events which articulate objects, texts, visual representations, reconstructions and sounds to create an intricate and bounded representational system” (Lidchi, 1997, p. 168). The amount of governmental funding an institution is granted will impact the message the curators are aspiring to deliver, and in turn may prohibit exhibits that criticize the government. These places are also subject to the viewer’s gaze; specifically how the public analyzes and examines what is being

shown to them. Thus, “A museum space is not neutral” (Rickard, 2002, p.115), and the same can be said of all Canadian galleries and cultural centres. Similarly, the objects and works of Indigenous peoples and their correlation with colonization and decolonization is important to how cultural institutions function.

As Tuscarora visual historian and curator Jolene Rickard (2002) notes, “The inclusion of First Nations work in public art museums in Canada represents simultaneously a colonizing act and a decolonizing act” (p.115). It is a colonizing act because the inclusion of artefacts represents the collection and categorization of non-Western peoples associated with nineteenth century anthropologists. Furthermore, many specimens were collected without the approval—and sometimes even knowledge—of the peoples that created them. The ersatz inclusion of First Nations’ work in cultural institutions on the other hand, is a decolonizing act because the artefacts are given a simulacra space “equal” to the rest of what is on display. For Indigenous artwork this is particularly well-illustrated, since many pieces speak out against colonialism. At the same time, one has to wonder if this is true acceptance or merely tokenism. Indigenous art is constantly in a liminal state since it is incorporated into Western cultural institutions while simultaneously rejecting colonization through realistic depictions of the colonial process. This in-between state must always be accounted for when interpreting Indigenous artefacts to comprehend the entire message of the piece.

The display and interpretation of items varies based on the kind of institution they are found in and the individual(s) responsible for curating the exhibit. As esteemed Anishinaabe scholar Gail Guthrie Valaskakis (2005) explains, “In museums, artifacts are arranged in cases or tableaux and listed, classified or labelled in exhibits. It is assumed

that by looking at and reading about the material items, outsiders can understand the meaning of the cultural practices they represent” (p. 73). This form of passive learning makes it more difficult to engage the visitor since they need to read text in order to understand the significance of the object. Additionally, this is a method of presentation used by Western curators to display objects, but it does not work for all peoples. Indeed, “For Native people, the meaning of objects is never read off the surface or confined to the texts of the artifacts and images being displayed. The meaning of artifacts and the Indians they portray are continually negotiated within a context of tribalized difference...” (Valaskakis, 2005, p.73). Thus, for Indigenous peoples, an artefact in a cultural institution is being compared to what one is familiar with in their own culture. For example, if one was to compare a beaded moccasin from one nation to another, a First Nations person would likely comment on the differences in the construction of the moccasin and the different patterns in the beadwork rather than read about the purpose of the moccasin in real life. Because an Indigenous person is much more likely to understand the cultural significance of certain objects—especially if they use ones that are very similar in their own culture—the text provided by a cultural institution would not be necessary. There are also notable concerns with this method, as exemplified with the totem poles in the Canadian Museum of Civilization’s Great Hall. Because there is no written explanation of their significance, museum guests are expected to interpret the meaning and symbolism of the poles, a challenging and possibly ethnocentric task for peoples unfamiliar to West Coast First Nations cultures. If the CMC provided an audio recording, then the symbolism of the poles can be explicated using orality, a key tenet of Indigenous

cultures. At the same time, the inclusion of Indigenous cultural artefacts in national institutions symbolizes something else when considering the idea of heritage.

The Oxford English Dictionary (2011b) defines heritage as something that can be inherited, especially property or land, and can be characterized by how it is exploited or preserved in cultural institutions and tourist attractions (Mackey, 2001, pg 77). Thus, the idea of heritage revolves around the idea of inheritance of property as well as a representation of national culture. If Indigenous cultures and therefore material objects are representative of Canadian heritage and are thus part of Canadian culture, then Indigenous cultures are “thereby transformed into a form of *cultural property* that the Canadian nation has inherited” (Mackey, 2001, p. 77). Mackey’s critique infers that Indigenous cultures have been absorbed (read: assimilated) into the greater Canadian historical narrative, which is problematic since many do not see themselves as part of Canada, but rather from a distinct nation within another nation-state. Although one can argue that there are certain aspects of Indigenous cultures that can be associated with Canadian culture—Bill Reid’s *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii* on the twenty dollar bill, many place names for towns, cities and bodies of water, the national sport of lacrosse and so on—Canada and Canadian culture are arguably based on European norms, values, laws and traditions rather than those from Indigenous peoples. To include Indigenous peoples in cultural institutions speaks of tokenism and colonialism rather than true integration and acceptance: “To claim Aboriginal culture and people as Canada’s heritage provides a longer continuum and tradition of culture for the nationalist cause. Native people and their culture and artefacts have the unique quality of being entirely Canadian in their origin and character” (Mackey, 2001, p.78). This nationalist cause is reinforcing ideas of

colonization and subordination, which goes against the official multicultural policy that Canada has adopted. However, since many people of the settler population are ignorant of Canada's history in relation to Indigenous peoples, it is possible that they would not recognize this opinion of cultural institutions. This narrative thereby creates "a body of stories and myths with which people identify and stand for, or *represent* the shared experiences, sorrows, and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to a nation" (Mackey, 1998, p. 150-1). With an increased inclusion in national institutions and public culture, Canadians are encouraged to examine Indigeneity even though it is not part of the national culture. First Nations, Métis and Inuit are nearer to the Canadian narrative than they have ever been before, but are still separated from it. Incorporating Indigenous peoples in museums, galleries and cultural institutions includes them in the Canadian narrative, but unfortunately helps contribute to a national identity that ignores them.

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Many of the stereotypes attributed to Indigenous people have a basis in previous centuries and thus have become easily recognizable images in media and fiction. Deconstructing these fictional fabrications must extend past denouncing them as not being true. Getting rid of the associations linked to particular images and artefacts and the meanings that correspond with them is not a simple process. In order to change these relationships, one must alter the perceptions of the audience. Although it may be easy to influence a small number of people, persuading a large number of people like the Canadian settler population, must be done over an extended period of time. Thus, the "negative representations can't be undone without attending to their underlying politics, including the contexts from which they're produced" (O'Brien and Szeman, 2004, p. 82). Although this chapter focused on museums and galleries, these stereotypes have been

conjugated in similar patterns in zoo exhibits over time. Although there are fundamental differences between zoos and cultural institutions like museums and galleries there are some very important similarities, namely that they create and disseminate representations of the nation and are used as a teaching tool for people to learn about the nation.

Although many would believe that only animals have been present in zoos, non-European Others have also been included in zoo exhibits over time.

THE HISTORY OF ZOOS

Somethin' tells me
It's all happening at the zoo.
The monkeys stand for honesty,
Giraffes are insincere,
And the elephants are kindly but
They're dumb.
Orangutans are skeptical
Of changes in their cages,
And the zookeeper is very fond of rum.
Zebras are reactionaries,
Antelopes are missionaries,
Pigeons plot in secrecy,
And hamsters turn on frequently.
What a gas! You gotta come and see
At the zoo.
– Simon and Garfunkel, “At the Zoo”

When thinking about a zoo, one sees a place where animals are in cages, enclosures or exhibits, fed on a regular schedule, and often with only one species in each location. This is not an accurate representation of how animals interact in the wild, since they are free to move about in their territories and must fight for their survival. Some people or organizations, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, do not like zoos, calling them inhumane, barbaric and unfair since animals are not able to act like they would in the wild (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, 2012). Others may argue that “From their inception, zoos have given human beings the chance to view amazing creatures up close” (Croke, 1997, p. 19) in a way that they could not without travelling the world. Additionally, professional zoo organizations like the Canadian Association for Zoos and Aquariums suggest that zoos provide opportunities for the conservation of endangered animals, educating the public about animals, and the human impact of animals and the environment. Although they do not fit the same definition as other cultural institutions because they focus on the “interaction between humans and

animals” rather than animals or humans alone, zoos are still important sites for learning about the nation. The history of zoos is a long one, and important when considering how the Toronto Zoo functions as a Canadian institution, and in turn how that relates to the content about Indigenous Knowledge (re)presented in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

HISTORY OF ZOOS

The history of the cultural institutions we recognize today as zoos has changed substantially over time. The earliest zoos emerged in the 20th century BCE in Mesopotamia, but there is little information about what animals were kept or how they were taken care of (Croke, 1997, p. 129). These zoos would keep animals from different geographic areas, but it is unlikely the creatures would have been from multiple climatic zones. Not only was global exploration difficult during this period, but if the animals survived the journey it is unlikely that their diet could be replicated in a foreign environment. It was not until the colonial period however, that animals were brought back to Europe in great numbers. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the possession of non-native and large predatory animals “reinforced the impression of their owners’ power, particularly when ferocious and shown in pairs” (Baratay, 2002, p. 19). By commanding and controlling these unfamiliar and relatively unknown creatures, menagerie owners were seen as masters of the unknown, in the same way that the explorers were gaining mastery of new lands. This domination of others relates directly to the language developing and becoming more popular during this era.

The term *exotique* first appeared in French literature in the mid-sixteenth century, and “was used to describe objects from distant lands” (Baratay, 2002, p. 29), but over

time the etymology of the word changed. Cultivated from the French, the word exotic in the English language “was initially used to designate a more or less barbarous foreigner; from 1645 its use extended to plants or animals from other continents and, in 1650, to distant lands themselves” (Baratay, 2002, p. 29). The fact that landforms, objects and animals were deemed exotic is significant: by correlating the Other with non-human things, Europeans were equating the global populations of Indigenous peoples with animals. Not only were colonizers demonstrating supremacy over other creatures and lands, but they were justifying the subordination of the Other, an idea exacerbated by authors of the time.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau theorized that nature was “a haven of peace protected from the corrupting city. A beautiful garden was therefore no longer one that kept nature in check, but one that restored its many facets to it” (Baratay, 2002, p. 77). Rousseau’s philosophizing here is linked to the Noble Savage stereotype, wherein Indigenous peoples are in harmony with the earth because of what was thought to be their “original” state. With the establishment of the United States of America in the late eighteenth century as well as Upper and Lower Canada, zoos began to be structured in a way that people would recognize today.

Although zoos similar in function to contemporary ones became popular in Europe during the mid-eighteenth century (Croke, 1997, p. 142), it was not until after the American Civil War that zoos began to appear in North America (Croke, 1997, p. 144; Baratay, 2002, p. 92). As the United States and Canada became established as nation-states, the number of zoos began to increase. As Baratay (2002) argues, the zoo narrative is

linked to vast parallel histories of colonization, ethnocentrism and the discovery of the Other; violence in human relationships and the moderating effect of the civilizing process on morals and behaviour; the creation of collective memory such as museums; the complication of social practices; the development of leisure activities. To tour the cages of a zoo is to understand the society that erected them (p. 13).

The societies that built zoos in North America were rapidly expanding their populations and undergoing social change. There were numerous racial and ethnic tensions, not only between European settlers from different nations, but also settlers and non-white immigrants, as well as the entire settler population and Indigenous peoples. Therefore, “in the 19th century, public zoos were an endorsement of modern colonial power. The capturing of animals was a symbolic representation of the conquest of all distant and exotic lands” (John Berger qtd in Jensen, 2007, p. 45). It can be argued that the colonies-turned-nations in North America were also participating in colonization within their boundaries simultaneously. Even though the colonial process began with European nations, it continued in the ways the United States and Canada tried to eliminate and assimilate their Indigenous populations. By the nineteenth century, the exotic status of the non-white Other, and in particular the Indigenous Other, had become so profitable that Indigenous peoples were housed in zoos like animals (Baratay, 2002; Clifford 1997; Lidchi, 1997).

Human Zoos

Human Zoos locked up human beings inside cages and exhibits for the pleasure of the Western urban viewing public. By dehumanizing Indigenous peoples in such a way, human zoos contributed to subordinating and Othering Indigenous peoples worldwide. As Stuart Hall (2006) explains, we can look back at human zoos as a “particular way

of *representing* “the West,” “the Rest,” and the relations between them” (p. 165). The West positioned “the Rest”, that is the non-white Others, in a way that they were bestialized. Because the West located itself as superior and the Others as inferior, “the discourse of ‘the West and the Rest’ could not be innocent because it did not represent an encounter between equals... The Europeans stood, vis-à-vis the Others, in positions of power. This influenced what they saw and how they saw it, as well as what they did not see” (Hall, 2006, p.168). This position naturalized the Social Darwinist and eugenicist beliefs of the time, whereby Western peoples classified the Other as subsidiary to reinforce the idea that the Other was substantially different from the West. Therefore, “The knowledge which a discourse produces constitutes a kind of power, exercised over those who are ‘known’. When that knowledge is exercised in practice, those who are ‘known’ in a particular way will be subject (i.e. subjected) to it” (Hall, 2006, p.169). Because Indigenous peoples were subordinated through the norms of the settler population, there was no recourse for their actions.

During the colonization period, “The desire to own exotic animals was consistent with an increasing desire to collect all living things, everything from plants to human beings” (Baratay, 2002, p.38). Christopher Columbus and Hernan Cortez brought Indigenous North Americans back to the Spanish court (Baratay, 2002, p. 38) after their explorations of the so-called New World. During his exploration of the Arctic in the sixteenth century, Martin Frobisher “captured” several Inuit: though most did not survive the trip across the Atlantic, the ones that did usually died abroad from European diseases (Dickason, 2006, p.25-6). Although it is not true for all Indigenous peoples, some of the individuals brought to human zoos were forcibly kidnapped (Clifford, 1997, p. 198). This

was seen as “the best possible proof that an explorer had actually reached the lands he claimed” (Dickason, 2006, p. 25). Because they were dehumanized, these people could be trapped, collected and put on display rather than given the agency to make their own choices, a practice that continued well past the colonial period.

In the nineteenth century ethnographic exhibitions were rooted in the same principles as zoos, where exotic beings were displayed for the urban viewers in the West. George Catlin, a painter, toured with his paintings of Indigenous peoples and included ‘living specimens’ in his exhibition (Baratay, 2002, p. 126) to increase the spectacle. In that century, circuses and zoos exhibited persons with deformities along side peoples of non-white ethnic groups (Baratay, 2002, p. 126), ultimately suggesting that non-Western individuals were not only Othered figures, but also ‘freaks of nature’. Carl Hagenbeck, an animal trader, began an ethnological show business that had fifty-four shows between 1874 and 1913 (Baratay, 2002, p.127). While there were only fifteen shows produced by the company in the years leading up to 1931, another exhibit was featured in the 1931 Paris World’s Fair (Baratay, 2002, p.127). The number of shows that occurred affirms that displaying an exotic Other would be financially beneficial for Hagenbeck and other racial entrepreneurs. In the Exposition Universelle exhibits in Paris (1867 and 1889), the St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exhibition (1904), and the British Empire Exhibition (1924-5), people from “the colonies” were brought to Europe. These supposedly exotic non-Western peoples were put in “authentic” villages where

they were asked to re-enact, for the viewing public, their everyday lives. These people were classified in terms of the geography of the exhibition, but equally, sometimes, according to putative notions of their ‘relationship’ to each other in evolutionary terms (Lidchi, 1997, p. 196).

These exhibits were constructed around the race-based principles of the time, wherein those who were seen as less biologically developed were lower on a hierarchal pyramid, with white Europeans at the top. Because they were seen as less evolved than Western peoples, human zoos as a practice were self-justifying. This subordination of non-European peoples can also be seen when examining the death of the zoo inhabitants. Five Labrador Inuit and their children, part of a show from 1880-1881, died of smallpox after their involvement in Hagenback's show (Baratay, 2002, p.128). Although he said that he was "a friend to all men, and you can imagine how this tragedy affects me," Hagenback did not cancel his shows after hearing the Inuit had passed away (Baratay, 2002, p.128). By not postponing his show out of respect for the dead, Hagenback clearly did not value the lives of the Inuit who died. Instead, his attitude shows that their deaths were less upsetting than if a cherished family pet had died. Because the shows contained Indigenous Others rather than Western peoples, there was no need to be in mourning since their lives were not seen as important. This was not an isolated incident: other Indigenous people involved in Hagenback's shows died as a result of the diseases they were exposed to in Europe (Baratay, 2002, p. 128-9). Hagenback's point of view was that "the show must go on," and it certainly did. Human zoos gave the public as well as scientists and anthropologists a way to watch the Others who were viewed as primitive and savage, thereby proving Western superiority over colonized peoples (Lidchi, 1997, p.168).

As time went on, more people began to reject the idea of human zoos, calling them barbaric and inhumane (Keller, 2006). For example, the Congolese man Ota Benga lived in the Monkey House at the Bronx Zoo in 1906 (Keller, 2006). Benga and other

non-white peoples kept in cultural institutions for the viewing public “served the function of the spectacle, a site for the projection of fear and desire in the form of stereotypes” (O’Brien and Szeman, 2004, p. 80). Because he lived with other non-human hominoids, Benga was seen as being equivalent to an ape and therefore less than human. But black clergyman Reverend James H. Gordon, called for Benga’s release, saying “Our race, we think, is depressed enough, without exhibiting one of us with the apes. We think we are worthy of being considered human beings, with souls” (Keller 2006). Benga was eventually released, but never returned to Africa because he committed suicide in 1915 (Keller 2006). In such a racialized period of time, one could argue that non-white peoples were unable to become cultured since they lacked the genetic ability to do so. In other words, the Other was not able to undergo advancement to become civilized: “Progress, in Western thought, has often been seen as a matter of subduing, mastering and transforming nature – of making wilderness into civilisation (Merchant 1994: 2; 1995 qtd in Mackey, 2001, p.79). What is perplexing is although the popularity and moral acceptance of human zoos decreased over time, there are reports of contemporary exhibits bearing similar qualities.

In 2005, the Augsburg Zoo in Germany came under harsh criticism for its African Village Festival, where African food, music, stories, drummers and crafts would be on display in proximity to African animals (BBC News, 2005). Barbara Jantschke, the zoo’s director, is reported as not seeing anything wrong with the exhibit, since African products, rather than the people are on display (BBC News, 2005). At the same time, Jantschke stated that the zoo was a perfect place to stage the exhibit because it would portray the “exotic atmosphere” that was needed for the festival (BBC News, 2005).

German activists and academics blasted the zoo for the exhibit. As University of Cologne history professor Norbert Finzsch explains, “The way Africans and African Americans in Germany are perceived and discussed, the way they are presented on billboards and in TV ads prove that the colonialist and racist gaze is still very much alive in Germany” (BBC News, 2005). Despite the requests for the exhibit not to occur, it did. This clearly illustrates that “Zoos may look very different today, but some Victorian impulses still thrive. We exhibit our mastery over the world with elaborate pavilions that bring the cycles of nature indoors” (Croke, 1997, p. 96). Indeed, this desire to show mastery over the earth and its creatures is a common tenant of contemporary Western life.

MODERN ZOO POPULARITY IN THE WEST

Regardless of what is put on exhibit, zoos are popular attractions that offer the promise of learning in a leisurely environment. Six hundred million people visited some 1000 established zoos worldwide in 1995 (Baratay, 2002, p. 9), which demonstrates their informative and entertaining nature. In Canada, attendance figures are even more staggering, despite the fact that the overall number of accredited zoos and aquariums is quite small. In 1989 for example, zoo “attendance figures were double those of museums, and triple those of libraries” (Baratay, 2002, p. 9). Presently, the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ twenty-seven accredited institutions boast attendance of eleven million visitors each year (CAZA, 2012; CAZA, 2011, p.5).

The demographics of zoo attendees are important not only for marketing purposes, but also for what age group(s) to design the zoo’s content for. The American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) concluded based on forty visitor and attendance studies from twenty zoos and aquarium in the late 1990’s, that the typical zoo visitor is “a

married woman under thirty who is accompanied by a child or children. She has graduated from college, and her family income is \$43,000. From several other zoo surveys, we know that she won't read many informational signs" (Croke, 1997, p. 96). Similarly, "According to the AZA study, zoogoers tend to have higher income and levels of education than average, with 38% having graduated from college and 12% having received a post-graduate degree" (Croke, 1997, p.96). These results suggest that because the parent is educated, they are more likely to bring their children to a location that offers them the chance to learn and explore. At the same time, "Visitors are finicky about reading signs; big and simple illustrated ones garner the most attention" (Croke, 1997, p. 97). Reading text and learning passively is not nearly as exciting as watching an animal, especially if the animal is active. Despite this, zoos market themselves as educational institutions where people can learn about animals, the environment, and how the human-animal dynamic can affect Earth's biodiversity. Using specific marketing techniques the Toronto Zoo entices zoogoers to visit by offering a leisurely learning environment to their guests.

Toronto Zoo

As one of the largest zoos in the world, the Toronto Zoo encompasses 710 acres of the Rouge Valley area of Scarborough, Ontario (Toronto Zoo, 2011). Inside of its seven zoogeographic regions, the Toronto Zoo has approximately 5000 animals representing around 500 species (Toronto Zoo, 2011). This diversity of species has increased since the zoo's opening in 1974, making the institution a major tourist attraction for Toronto, with over 1.2 million visitors annually from 2006 to 2010 (Toronto Zoo, 2010, p. 21). Education and learning are essential parts of the experience

for guests at the zoo, through informative placards and signs as well as interactions with zookeepers and other zoo staff. The Toronto Zoo's vision is to "be a dynamic and exciting action centre that inspires people to love, respect and protect wildlife and wild spaces" (Toronto Zoo, 2011). The Toronto Zoo's mission is logical given how zoos function in Western countries in the present: the zoo wants to draw people in by offering a variety of species from around the world, but also focus on how humans affect their local environments.

The Toronto Zoo's geographic location is vital when considering the Indigenous content that has been included in the zoo, because Indigenous Knowledge is very location and community specific. The Toronto Zoo is found on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of New Credit who claim the land from 10,000 years ago, and can provide documentation in the form of maps dated to 1695 (King, 2011). In 1844 two Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation chiefs, John Jones and Joseph Sawyer wrote,

The extent of country owned and possessed by the River Credit Indians from time immemorial, extended as far down as the river Rouge thence up the said river Rouge to its source, thence Westerly along the dividing ridge between Lake Huron and Ontario to the head waters of the Thames thence southerly to Long Point on Lake Erie, thence down Lake Erie, Niagara River, and Lake Ontario to the place of the beginning (King, 2011).

The Mississaugas' written documentation of their inhabitancy that pre-dates the majority of the settlement in the Toronto area is important to Western systems of governance and land occupation. Additionally, their habitation is imperative when considering the Indigenous content the Toronto Zoo contains and is planning for. Although there is no narrative at the Toronto Zoo about the original inhabitants of the Rouge Valley and surrounding area, the Toronto Zoo does include information about Indigenous peoples in

its Canadian Domain and Tundra Trek⁵ zoogeographic regions. How the public interprets and absorbs that information, however, is related to how zoos function as educational institutions.

ZOOS AS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

By virtue of zoos being an attraction to see animals and not other cultures, the following research is tangential since Indigenous content does not appear to be a crucial focus of zoos according to the mandate of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. I believe there is a possibility that this study can be modified so that its methods reflect how children see the content in the Canadian Domain as it relates to Indigenous Knowledge. In a sociological study, Brady Wagoner and Eric Jensen (2010) investigated how children ages 9-11 attending the London Zoo responded to the educational programming they received by examining pictures of specific animals the children drew before and after the educational sessions. In the study's methods, the goal was to have the children go from an initial state, where "certain conditions (e.g. an educational presentation at the zoo) trigger a constructive process (e.g. thinking about "habitats") which results in the emergence of new ideas (e.g. a new concept of animal habitats)" (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.67). Wagoner and Jensen (2010) conclude that there was a noticeable difference in one third of the students' understandings, and also state that there may have been a change with the other children; but due to flawed methodology they are not sure about the rest of the test subjects (p.68). Wagoner and Jensen's study suggests that learning can be done at a zoo quite easily if it is done in a way that engages children appropriately: although these children visited parts of the zoo

⁵ Because of the scope of this assignment, Tundra Trek could not also be examined as there would be too much information to analyze. It is a possible consideration for research I may do in the future.

before and after their educational programming (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.66), the children did not respond otherwise to the information presented in the zoo exhibits. Furthermore, the children's preconceived notions based on what they had seen and experienced in their lives impacted their drawings, as illustrated by the example of the sloth.

One of the groups of children did not see the sloths at the zoo before their talk, and if the children drew anything (many left their papers blank, or wrote things like "don't know", "not sure" or "?") it was relatively vague (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.71). However some students drew the sloth in a habitat beside an igloo, and/or wrote that it lived in a habitat that was cold or contained ice (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.71). One student wrote in their pre-presentation questionnaire that "saw it [a sloth] on the film *Ice Age* → next to caves, woods" (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.71). Sid, one of the characters in the *Ice Age* franchise is a giant sloth, an animal that lived during the ice age. Therefore,

Without other information, these pupils were utilizing Hollywood movies as symbolic resources to contextualize their understanding of the sloth and its habitat. In other words, they filled in the gaps in their knowledge with whatever resources were available to them. This finding points to the role of mass media in structuring pupils' knowledge towards animals and their habitats (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.71-2).

This suggests that there could be a connection with what people watch in the media and how it impacts their perceptions of the world around them. It is hypothetically possible that there could be similar results with adults given Wagoner and Jensen's conclusion.

If children and adults attend a zoo that contains Indigenous content, it is unlikely that they will absorb the information presented if the only option for learning is through reading signs and placards. Preconceived notions of Indigenous peoples from the media

and film—which overall rely on the stereotypes of the Noble Savage, the Vanishing Race, the Living Fossil, the Generic Indian, the Savage, the Ecological Indian and the Native Warrior (as well as sexualized depictions, which this project does not include)—are damaging to Indigenous peoples because uninformed individuals believe that these stereotypes are real. Just as the children thought sloths live in cold climates, children and adults could think that Indigenous peoples are distanced from the settler population based on how they have been portrayed in the media. As a result, I hypothesize that if someone encounters culturally insensitive, stereotypical or incorrect Indigenous content at a zoo, children and adults would not be able to critically assess the material. In turn, these individuals would absorb, or learn information that is detrimental to Indigenous peoples, thereby reinforcing negative stereotypes that Indigenous people must navigate daily.

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Zoos have changed greatly over time, from their original conception to a rudimentary version of modern zoos in the Victorian era, to the present style devoted to education and conservation. At first, zoo animals were captured from the wild and crossed continents in ways that often resulted in fatalities. The animals that survived became representations of human superiority over the natural world. In the present, animals do not come to zoos by the same means; instead breeding animals are shared between institutions. At the same time, humans are no longer a focal point in zoos or ethnographic exhibits like they were before. People are not kidnapped as a means of showing their inferiority to Europeans or settler-invaders. Although one may argue that human zoos do exist in modern renditions by putting on cultural events in zoos with

“authentic people”, or when watching reality television, the level of corruption that was present in the last century is not commonplace today.

Instead, zoos are seen as a site of learning and discovery, utilized by families and school groups to teach children and adults about animals, their habitats and the impact humans can have on the biodiversity of the planet. The Toronto Zoo, as one of the largest zoos worldwide and one with millions of visitors annually, can also be a place of learning in a leisurely environment. However, how Indigenous peoples fit into the Toronto Zoo, and what zoo guests can learn about the Indigenous population within Canada, may not be as straight forward as expected.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

“Tell me you’re sorry,” she said.

“Sorry for what?” I asked.

“Everything”, she said and made me stand straight for fifteen minutes, eagle-armed with books in each hand. One was a math book; the other was English. But all I learned was that gravity can be painful.

– Sherman Alexie, “Indian Education”.

Indigenous Knowledge is also known as Traditional Knowledge, Native Science, Indigenous Science, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and Traditional Environmental Knowledge. Because particular scholars prefer the use of different terms, these words will be used interchangeably throughout the paper when citing the work of individual authors. In an effort to remain consistent and eliminate confusion, I use the term Indigenous Knowledge (IK). Indigenous Knowledge is specific local knowledge that has been learned, maintained and expanded upon by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. This chapter does not discuss how Indigenous peoples use Indigenous Knowledge or assess traditional methods, since I believe it is not my right to do so⁶. The overall purpose of this chapter is to explain what Indigenous Knowledge is, how it is learned and taught, and how it differs from Western epistemologies from the perspective of Indigenous scholars. I will discuss how Indigenous Knowledge has been devalued by the settler population, looking specifically at “Traditional Knowledge: Listening to the science” by Albert Howard and Francis Widdowson, which I will then contrast with a discussion of how IK can complement Western ways of knowing. I will then close the

⁶ As a non-Indigenous person, I have not learned IK using practical or hands-on methods from elders, thus any commentary I would provide about IK in practice would likely be incorrect, being based on “my very own, equally misguided, version” (Francis, 2000, p.6).

chapter with a discussion of how the Toronto Zoo's Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail defines Indigenous Knowledge.

Along with Absolon and Willet (2005), I believe that “researching Aboriginal knowledge and Aboriginal peoples without the consent of the Aboriginal community is unethical”, because “Aboriginal peoples have been misinterpreted and exploited for countless generations as the subjects of academic, ‘scientific’ studies conducted by non-Aboriginals” (p. 106). In terms of this thesis, the perspectives of the Indigenous scholars Marie Battiste, Sákéj Youngblood Henderson, Gregory Cajete, Leroy Little Bear, Joe Kincheloe, Shirley Steinberg, Leslie Brown, Susan Strega, Leanne Simpson, Vine Deloria Jr. and Makare Stewart-Harawira are used to present a theoretical approach to IK. Informed by their backgrounds and lived experiences, these scholars provide a basis for identifying what Indigenous Knowledge is. With this academic approach to IK, the reader does not need to be immersed in an Indigenous culture or cultures. These viewpoints are then contrasted with the Toronto Zoo's (re)presentation—the simultaneous presentation and construction—of Indigenous Knowledge in its Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

PROBLEMS WITH CREATING A DEFINITION

Although this thesis attempts to clarify what Indigenous Knowledge is, some Indigenous scholars, namely Mi'kmaq educator Marie Battiste and Chickasaw scholar Sákéj Youngblood Henderson, believe that providing a definition is part of a Eurocentric thinking process. Eurocentrism can be traced back to the colonial period, where “it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in

comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures” (Said, 2004, p. 7). The supremacy over non-European peoples that developed during this time also resonates in the present, where Western epistemologies, which are rooted in European ways of knowing, are still held as superior to those of other cultures. Thus, Eurocentrism is

the imaginative and institutional context that informs contemporary scholarship, opinion, and law. As a theory, it postulates the superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans. It is built on a set of assumptions and beliefs that educated and usually unprejudiced Europeans and North Americans habitually accept as true, as supported by “the facts,” or as “reality” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p. 21).

Much of the knowledge obtained by Indigenous peoples worldwide has been disregarded by settler-invaders as being inferior, since it does not rely on the same concepts as Western forms of knowledge. The tendency to systematically categorize and sort life forms, objects and concepts causes Western thinkers to constantly explain and define everything around them. As a result, “Eurocentric thought demands universal definitions of Indigenous knowledge, even though Indigenous scholars have established no common usage of the term” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p. 36). Academically, this a considerable issue, since in order for the reader to understand what Indigenous Knowledge is, a Western scientific tradition that Battiste and Youngblood Henderson are rejecting has to be adopted. For myself as an author, this puts me in an uncomfortable position: to define Indigenous Knowledge is to in effect rebuff Indigenous ways of knowing in favour of my own Western orientation. The consequence of this is that this chapter focuses primarily on certain authors’ descriptions of IK based on their own cultural affiliations and knowledge, rather than a unified, global concept. I believe this is more aligned with Indigenous thought processes, yet gives an explanation for the reader.

This is valuable since “From the Indigenous vantage point, the process of understanding is more important than the process of classification” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p. 37). This manner of comprehending rather than classifying is fundamental to describing Indigenous Knowledge.

Description of Indigenous Knowledge

In its most basic form, one can describe Indigenous Knowledge as being developed by Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2008, p. 499). How and where that knowledge is obtained varies depending on the nation, although it refers “to a multidimensional body of understandings that have – especially since the beginnings of the European scientific revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries – been viewed by Euroculture as inferior and primitive” (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 2008, p. 136). This intricate body of knowledge is highly sophisticated, and could be seen as having some parallels to Western knowledge.

As a matter of fact, IK is

a complex and dynamic capacity of knowing, a knowledge that results from knowing one’s ecological environment, the skills and knowledge derived from that place, knowledge of the animals and plants and their patterns within that space, and the vital skills and talents necessary to survive and sustain themselves within the environment (Battise, 2008, p. 499).

The tendency of Western thinkers to believe that IK is a menial form of knowledge stems from the fact that the ways in which Indigenous Knowledge is collected is wholly dependent on the environment that a nation lives in. For Western scientists, this localization of knowledge opposes the idea that the scientist and their subject should be separate (Lewontin, 1990).

A misconception about IK is that it is a simplistic form of knowledge, which is why it is devalued in comparison to Western ways of knowing. As Vine Deloria Jr. (2003) explains, Indigenous Knowledges “are actually complexes of attitudes, beliefs, and practices fine-tuned to harmonize with the lands on which the people live” (p.69). This knowledge is not only highly localized—since individual plant and animal species vary in their concentrations and behaviours based on their surrounding habits—but also extremely dependent on which Indigenous culture is situated in that area. Although some nations may have some similarities, differences in culture and spirituality would change how individual species of flora and fauna are used and interacted with. Thus,

Ecological knowledge is conceptualized as a way of understanding the web of social relationships between a specific group of people (whether a family, clan, or tribe) and a place where they lived since their beginning. Many Indigenous peoples speak of their knowledge in terms of the “operating instructions” for the land, given to them from time to time by the Creator and the spirit world, not just through revelations or dreams but also through frequent contacts with the minds and spirits of animals and plants (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p. 44-5).

This way of negotiating the natural environment has allowed Indigenous peoples to survive, not only before the contact period but in the present, as well. These distinctive epistemologies illustrate how Indigenous Knowledge functions as

a metaphor for a wide range of tribal processes of perceiving, thinking, acting, and “coming to know” that have evolved through human experience with the natural world. Native science is born of a lived and storied participation with the natural landscape. To gain a sense of Native science one must *participate* with the natural world (Cajete, 2000, p. 2).

How an Indigenous person that maintains IK interacts with their environment is a highly individualized process, but the stress on interconnectedness and collaboration is

very important. Tewa academic Gregory Cajete (2000) identifies a list of twenty-three different methodological elements that have allowed for such learning to be practiced, many of which, for example, observation, experiment, objectivity, appropriate technology, interpretation and explanation (p. 67-71), can resonate with Western peoples' approaches to learning and knowledge acquisition. Indigenous Knowledge is constantly being built upon, becoming more enriched as time progresses. It is passed down from adults to young adults or children in "informal tutor -student relationships within the extended family or clan" (Cajete, 2008, p. 490). Again, the principle of interconnectedness is being practiced, where kin and social groups are sharing their learned experiences with younger generations in order for the existing knowledge to continue to grow and be relevant for future generations. In summation, Indigenous Knowledge can be explained as knowledge that is based on long-term habitation of a specific place and a relational awareness of the surrounding world, which in turn forms and maintains norms, social values and governance (Dei, Hall and Rosenberg, 2000, p.6). Despite the multifaceted and highly specialized processes related to it, many settler individuals devalue IK when they should be respectful of it.

WESTERN KNOWLEDGE AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AS COMPLEMENTARY SYSTEMS

As prominent Dakota historian Vine Deloria Jr. (2003) states,

To recognize or admit differences, even among the species of life, does not require that human beings create forces to forge or gain a sense of unity or homogeneity. To exist in a creation means that living is more than tolerance for other life forms—it is recognition that in differences there is the strength of creation and that this strength is a deliberate desire of the creator (p. 88).

Because some Western peoples see Indigenous Knowledge as non-academic and therefore invalid, there is a debate in regards to its relevance in Canada and

internationally. This section will examine how Indigenous Knowledge and Western knowledge differ in policy and practice and take a detailed look at why many Western thinkers undervalue its importance. Science can be defined as “The state or fact of knowing; knowledge or cognizance *of* something specified or implied” in addition to “Knowledge acquired by study; acquaintance with or mastery of any department of learning” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011e). The concept of Western science can be explained through what are known as the natural (biology and earth sciences) and physical sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics, astronomy) and are “restricted to those branches of study that relate to the phenomena of the material universe and their laws, sometimes with implied exclusion of pure mathematics” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011e). As Blood intellectual Leroy Little Bear explains, “Science has been and can be defined many different ways of depending on who is doing the defining. But one thing that is certain is that “science” is culturally relative. In other words, what is considered science is dependent on the culture/world view/paradigm of the definer (Little Bear, 2000, p. ix). As Little Bear (2000) continues, “Western paradigmatic views of science are largely about measurement using Western mathematics” (p. ix), which is one of the primary differences between Indigenous and Western science. Western science is classified by the importance of quantitative observation using numbers and hard data. Thus, by saying Indigenous Knowledge does not qualify as science, Western scientists and researchers are projecting the idea that other kinds of knowledge like IK are not important in helping to understand how the Earth functions.

There are many similarities between the approaches of Western and Indigenous knowledges—like qualitative forms of observing—that may not be immediately apparent

to Western audiences. IK “is scientific in the sense that it is empirical, experimental, and systematic. It differs in two important respects from Western science, however: traditional ecological knowledge is highly localized and it is social” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p.44). As a result of knowledge that focuses on centuries of observations in a particular area, patterns can be recognized that could not be discovered using methods from Western science. This is because

Indigenous peoples have accumulated extraordinary complex models of species interactions over centuries within very small geographical areas, and they are reluctant to generalize beyond their direct fields of experience. Western scientists, by contrast, concentrate on speculating about then testing global generalizations, with the result that they know relatively little about the complexities of specific, local ecosystems. As a consequence of these different levels of analysis, the Indigenous people who have traditionally lived within particular ecosystems can make better predictions about the consequences of any physical changes or stresses that they have previously experienced than scientists who base their forecasts on generalized models and data or indicators from relatively short-term field observations (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p.44).

This highly specific way of knowing focuses on balance and reciprocation, two ideas that have allowed Indigenous peoples’ knowledges to be successful. These incredibly detailed and specified models are a strength of IK, and can be important to Western cultures as well. These

patterns, cycles and happenings are readily observed on and from the land. Animal migrations, cycles of plant life, seasons and cosmic developments are detected from particular spatial locations... Each tribal territory has its sacred sites, and its particular environmental and ecological combinations resulting in particular relational networks (Little Bear, 2000, p. xi).

The relationships between people within tribal groups, as part of Indigenous nations and humanity as a whole are valuable within Indigenous worldviews for the survival of the planet. This is contrasted with Western points of view coming from Christianity, where

there is only one truth and only one way of doing things. Western knowledge, then, “is committed to increasing human mastery over nature, to go on conquering until everything natural is under absolute human control” (Cajete, 2000, p. 16). This is not a sustainable process, which is evident in the changes to the Earth’s climate resulting from global warming.

As alluded to earlier, “card-carrying Western scientists believe that non-Western societies relate to nature only in ways categorized anthropologically as folk tales or cultural technology, and that these ways are not science in their experience of the term” (Cajete, 2000, p. 77-8). The ethnocentrism of some Western peoples has caused Indigenous Knowledge to be dismissed due to the differential principles it has from Western science. Because Indigenous peoples are ignored in Canadian society, Indigenous “knowledges, histories and experiences have been left out of academic texts, discourses, and classroom pedagogies, or have been erased by them” (Dei et. al., 2000, p. 5). Due to the pyramided ideas concerning knowledge that occur when Indigenous and Western epistemologies are compared,

In the research context, it acknowledges that knowledge production has long been organized, as have assessments of the ways producing knowledge can be “legitimate,” so that only certain information, gathered in certain ways, is accepted or can qualify as “truth”. Historically this has meant that those on the margins have been the objects but rarely the authors of research, and the discomfort that those on the margins feel about adopting traditional research processes or knowledge creation has been interrupted as their personal inability or failings (Brown and Strega, 2005, p. 6-7).

The journey searching for truth—Western, imperial, ethnocentric “truth”—comes at the expense of ignoring other ways of seeing the world. Moreover, it overlooks the fact that without the knowledge of Indigenous peoples, the colonies in what would become

Canada and other nations would never have existed. The settler-invaders of the colonial period, lacking an understanding of the flora, fauna, landforms and climates of these geographic regions, would certainly have perished without the supposedly inferior Indigenous Knowledge. This fact is either disregarded or conveniently forgotten by some members of the academic community, illustrating how Indigenous epistemologies are dismissed as irrelevant.

How Indigenous Knowledge is Overlooked in Canada

Nowhere is this more clear in the Canadian context than in “Traditional Knowledge: Listening to the science,” a chapter from Albert Howard and Frances Widdowson’s (2008) book *Disrobing the Aboriginal industry: The deception behind Indigenous cultural preservation*. Using contested scholarship, Howard and Widdowson argue that Indigenous Knowledge is an archaic way of making sense of the world, and it should not be given clout in contemporary society. For example, the two authors argue that because IK does not involve data that can be compared with other studies and evaluated publically (Howard and Widdowson 2008, p.237), it cannot be considered a valued method of information collection. Widdowson and Howard forget that an important part of the scientific method involves qualitative data, which is based on subjective qualities such as colour, odour, feel or sound, and these traits are akin to methods used in gathering Indigenous Knowledge. In another section of the chapter, Howard and Widdowson dismiss Indigenous beliefs concerning the melting of sea ice, but the quotations they provide are full of brackets (2008, p. 237). Although square brackets can be used to insert editorial notes into quotations (Fogarty, 2011, p. 144), if every single quotation contains editorial additions it delegitimizes the argument, since

content must be added for it to be dialectic⁷. Likewise, Widdowson and Howard dismiss IK, calling it static and repetitive of ancient ways (2008, p. 239) that they consider primitive. However, the entire nature of Indigenous Knowledge is built on existing, constantly evolving knowledge that creates a greater understanding of the world for the community (Cajete, 2000, p. 81). This practice is also employed by Western scientists who base scientific theories are based on the hypotheses of earlier works. The minimal level of ‘scholarship’ in this chapter—and I would argue is representative of the book as a whole—illustrates how some Western scholars are afraid of allowing the Indigenous Other to occupy a position in society that is equal to that of the settler population. This is not the case with all peoples of non-Indigenous heritage, since certain groups have begun to rely on Indigenous Knowledge as a means to not only help, but in many ways improve Western approaches to scientific practice.

How Indigenous Knowledge Could Be Included Within Western Educational Paradigms

People with culturally-relativist approaches to learning would argue that Indigenous Knowledge only has a place in Indigenous communities, while some Indigenous scholars believe that there are certain lessons from IK that are relevant to all peoples. The Indigenous thinkers who argue for introducing the settler population to some aspects of Indigenous Knowledge believe it will strengthen the overall social fabric of society through a process of decolonization. These Indigenous scholars advocate

for the recovery and promotion of Indigenous Knowledge systems as an important process in decolonizing Indigenous Nations and their relationships with occupying states, whether those strategies are applied

⁷ This is a lazy form of scholarship practiced by Howard and Widdowson, suggesting that they were unable to find excerpts to clearly illustrated their point of view.

to political and legal systems, governance, health and wellness, education, or the environment (Simpson, 2008, p. 15).

In doing so, this can help assist Indigenous communities in their journey towards an autonomy recognized by the Canadian state. For example, Maori theorist Makare Stewart-Harawira (2005) states that

As educators seeking to develop radical pedagogies of hope and transformation, a critical response and collective responsibility is surely to uncover the truths that are embedded within these and similar ontologies and pedagogies, and to proclaim them in our schools, our colleges, our universities and public arenas as a response to the rampaging consumerism and rank individualism that dominates our politics, institutions and pedagogical practice, and as a proactive endeavour towards a different future (p. 161).

Including Indigenous Knowledge in provincially and territorially-run curricula as well as institutions of higher education will benefit all students, Indigenous and otherwise. As Cherokee political scientist Jeffrey Cornassel (2011) explains, insurgent education “is about raising awareness of Indigenous histories and place-based existences as part of a continuing struggle against shape-shifting colonial powers”. This approach will also assist non-Indigenous students because it will cause them to think more critically about where they come from and the history of their nation. Furthermore “the Indigenous perspective is more inclusive and moves far beyond the boundaries of objective measurement,” honoring key tenets of Indigenous Knowledge (Cajete, 2008, p. 491).

Exactly how IK can be integrated is dependent on the institution and the ages of the students it serves, but nevertheless there are five general methods that demonstrate the benefits of incorporating Indigenous epistemologies into Western systems. These can be summarized as 1) rethinking the purpose of oneself as an educator; 2) focusing attention on the ways knowledge is produced and legitimated; 3) encouraging the construction of just and inclusive academic spheres; 4) producing new levels of insight; and 5)

demanding that educators at all academic levels become researchers (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 2008, p. 147-9). Although adopting these frameworks and ways of knowledge acquisition cannot, and should not be implemented too rapidly, there is still the potential that they will fail. However, putting some of these epistemologies into service now will help Indigenous students who are enrolled in Western institutions. If Indigenous peoples are willing to share some of their teachings, there is the possibility that this could erase some of the tensions between the Indigenous and settler populations. At the same time, by only incorporating a portion of these knowledges into educational institutions, Indigenous cultures may be seen as self-tokenizing. Ultimately, what is or is not integrated into settler education systems depends on the the knowledge keepers, elders and Indigenous communities, rather than the desires of settlers to learn more, no matter how well-intentioned. Arguably, by including an exhibit about Indigenous Knowledge in the Canadian Domain, the Toronto Zoo can be viewed as an institution that recognizes the importance of Indigenous Knowledge to all peoples. At the same time, whether or not Indigenous Knowledge is described by the Zoo in a way that reflects the academic traditions expressed by Indigenous scholars has yet to be seen.

THE TORONTO ZOO AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

The way the Toronto Zoo explains Indigenous Knowledge differs from the aforementioned description of lived experience in a local environment that is passed on to younger generations and in turn impacts the entire community's social values and

culture⁸. On its “Traditional Aboriginal Knowledge Trail” placard, the Toronto Zoo explains that the ATKKT is a trail *that offers a glimpse into the social practices and the natural living conditions of Canada’s First Nations People...the trail features interpretive signs explaining how Aboriginal people used plants and animals while conserving a delicate balance with nature*. The placard goes on to explain who was involved with the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail Committee (public servants, anthropologists, teachers, zoo staff and elders), all of whom are *experienced in the field of traditional knowledge*. What this familiarity in Traditional Knowledge is, and how it has been defined according to the Zoo remains unclear. Perhaps this could be related to the idea that providing a definition of Indigenous Knowledge is ethnocentric, but the placard does not go into much detail. Someone can infer based on the provided text that Traditional Knowledge involves social practices, *natural living conditions* (whatever those may be), and the use of animals and plants which contributes to conserving nature. By using “natural living conditions”, the Zoo is inferring the stereotype of the Noble Savage. This archetype, based on accounts from Enlightenment period writers, presents a romanticized view of First Nations as living “close to nature, usually naked, in simplistic romantic harmony with nature” (Cornelius 1999, p. 3). As a whole, the explanation that the Toronto Zoo provides for Traditional Knowledge could be more informative. Zoo visitors may not want to be inundated with text, but a simple sentence explaining what Traditional Knowledge is would be helpful. As a result of their poor description of Traditional Knowledge, the zoo visitor is left with an uninformed and inadequate

⁸ The Toronto Zoo favours the term Traditional Knowledge rather than Indigenous Knowledge, so when referring to the information being presented by the Toronto Zoo, the term Traditional Knowledge (TK) will be used rather than Indigenous Knowledge (IK).

background of Traditional Knowledge and its importance to Indigenous peoples. This overall lack of clarification becomes clear when analyzing the placards in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

*

The previous discussion of what Indigenous Knowledge consists of, its criticisms and why it should be seen as a viable source of knowledge, illustrates its complexity as well as its importance to Indigenous peoples. Because IK was significant to Indigenous communities long before the arrival of settler-invaders and has remained a vital tenet of Indigenous cultures today, it should be seen as an acceptable form of knowledge acquisition by the settler population. The description of Indigenous Knowledge provided by the Toronto Zoo in its Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail is significant because its lack of clarity emphasizes the complexity of Indigenous Knowledge. In turn, this illustrates the importance of using clear terms and terminology in written texts. As the following analysis of the Traditional Knowledge placard indicates, using language appropriately prevents the reader from misinterpreting the information being presented.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE: THE (RE)PRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

warm this trail
my nose picks you to follow

your tracks quiver my whisker
my nostrils fill

you are a chunky one
your tail dragged a leaf
overturned bark

you too are hungry
fat
depressed
I know all this news

I see your weight in microns of earth pressed
down
you won't be an easy meal

like last week I sssllunk into town

I mean slunk not what I usually do

QUICK PAWS QUICK PAWS GOTCHA

YOU DONT HEAR MY CLAWS UNLESS YOU PAUSE

[...]
I was a writer once
know how to keep track of things
how interdependence works for me
– Annharte, "Coyote Trail"

This chapter is a close investigation of the Toronto Zoo's Canadian Domain, with a particular focus on the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail (ATKT). The trail will be examined in various ways using a few different methods. First, primary sources will be detailed. Second, a description of the Canadian Domain will be provided based on my own observations conducted over two visits to the Toronto Zoo, once in June, 2011 and

again in December, 2011. Third, the Canadian Domain will be assessed in terms of spatiality. Finally, it will be evaluated by looking at terminology found on the individual placards. These steps will allow for a detailed inspection of the language used to describe Indigenous peoples, providing the fourth and final area of analysis.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Within the Canadian Domain, there is a variety of different signs and placards that provide zoogoers with information about the animals on display, local fauna, and how Indigenous peoples use and interact with their environment. This project focuses on how the placards found primarily in the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail, but also in the Canadian Domain relate to Indigenous Knowledge. In total, there are forty-one different placards that can be identified by five different groups. 1) eight small placards that contain information on plants that do not have illustrations; 2) twelve illustrated plant placards; 3) eight placards about clans, of which six are characteristics of the clans in regards to a specific animal, and the other two give background information on what a clan is; 4) nine of the placards provide information on animals and how these animals teach a lesson of some kind to Indigenous peoples; and 5) is a conglomerate of placards that could not otherwise be classified. There are two identical placards at the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail entrances that demarcate what the trail is and who was involved in its creation; one placard about Aboriginal Teachings, and the other is about wigwams. These forty-one placards act as the primary sources of investigation for this thesis. Limiting the project to only one kind of placard would prevent a detailed examination of the information presented by the Toronto Zoo, thus all of the placards are looked at in relation to one another to create a rich and detailed analysis. In order to

determine that no data from the placards was missed, close-up photographs of each of the placards were taken, in addition to one that showed the placard's position within the Canadian Domain. One of the photographs of each placard is included in the Appendix of this thesis.

In addition to this corpus, I conducted one interview with Toronto Zoo staff to learn more about the the Canadian Domain. The interview was conducted on December 14, 2011, with Bob Johnson, the curator of reptiles and amphibians, director of the First Nations Turtle Island Ways of Knowing program and the director of the Wetland Conservation Program. Also interviewed at this time was Andrea Harquail, the First Nations Conservation Assistant. This interview lasted approximately one hour, and was conducted in one of the meeting rooms at the Toronto Zoo⁹. The interview was arranged so I could learn more about the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail aside from what is presented in the placards, because there are no other sources of public information about the trail available.

Providing information about terminology and key terms, my social location, Indigenous stereotypes, the history of zoos, how to conceptualize Indigenous Knowledge as well as an explanation of the corpus, will allow for an in-depth and thorough case study on how the placards in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail of the Toronto Zoo (re)present Indigenous Knowledge. The impetus for this project stems from taking an undergraduate class at McMaster University about Indigenous Knowledge from January to April 2009, and seeing the placards in the

⁹ Permission to conduct the interview was granted by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board.

Canadian Domain during a visit to the Toronto Zoo in April, 2009. The combination of the class and the zoo trip made me question if what I was seeing was accurate, if it was stereotyping Indigenous peoples or locating Indigenous peoples as relics of the past.

ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRAIL BACKGROUND

The Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail at the Toronto Zoo was first developed as a concept about ten years ago, with the exhibit itself coming to fruition around 2005 (Johnson, December 14, 2011, interview). Bob Johnson says that ATKKT

was developed through a First Nations Advisory Committee... There were quite a few First Nations communities and community leaders involved, some academics, two or three academics from the University of Toronto and George Brown College, so it was a diverse committee that actually worked on that. So I think its goal was to try and provide some cultural perspectives on wildlife that we had in the valley (Johnson, December 14 2011, interview).

The longstanding planning and implementation of this project means that the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail Committee put a lot of effort into this project and had good intentions for what they wanted to see from the exhibit.¹⁰

Conceptions of Space

Since Traditional Knowledge placards are found in ATKKT as well as throughout the Canadian Domain, both areas will be described in this analysis. To better understand the particular layout of ATKKT, a description of the Canadian Domain in general will be provided with the Toronto Zoo's map included to give context.

¹⁰ It is my belief that the diversity of the committee is partly to blame for discrepancies and problematic incongruities found in the exhibit. The makeup of the committee and its input will be examined later in this chapter.

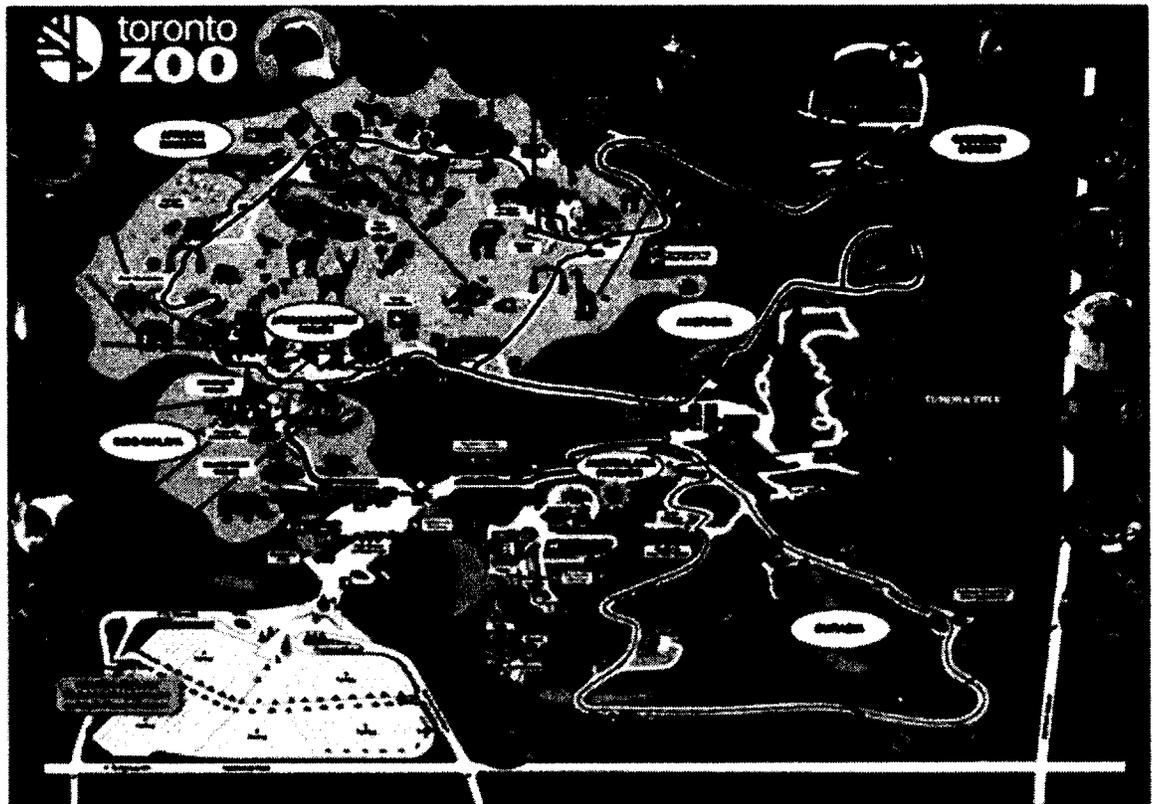


Figure One: Toronto Zoo Map

Unlike most of the other zoogeographic regions, travelling into the Canadian Domain is challenging. There is only one way into and out of the Canadian Domain, and this is through the zoogeographic region called the African Savannah. For reasons unknown, the zoo planners did not construct a path to the Canadian Domain from the zoogeographic region of the Americas. A path connecting the two domains would be more logical in terms of distance according to the zoo map, where the Canadian Domain is located above the Americas (Toronto Zoo, 2011). This would have reflected the real geographic proximity of Canada to the rest of the Americas. However, because animal enclosures in zoos are simulated versions of natural environments, one cannot be overly picky that the Toronto Zoo's zoogeographic regions are not the same layout as the continents on Earth.

Description of the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail

Walking into the trail, it seems as though a new place has been entered. Compared to the rest of the Canadian Domain, the ATKKT is even less travelled. When I visited in June, with a friend, I did not see anyone else on the trail; in December I was the only one there, even though in both instances there were other people in the Canadian Domain. The trail is manufactured by humans, and is covered in very fine gray gravel. The trail twists and turns slightly around natural landforms like trees and around the Weston Pond. There is a large amount of tree cover surrounding the trail; the trees are primarily deciduous, so when I visited in December most of them had lost their leaves. There are several signs along the length of the trail warning zoo guests not to stray because of the possibility of encountering poison ivy. Every few feet there is a placard along the trail, mostly about plants, animals or clans. During my visit in June, it was midday, and so it was warm and the air was humid. I went through ATKKT rather quickly as I was falling prey to ravenous mosquitoes who had presumably hatched from the water in Weston Pond. In December by comparison the pond was beginning to freeze and I was no longer considered lunch. The entire walk along the trail in December was peaceful; the only things I could hear were the local species of birds flying around and making their calls, including blue jays, chickadees, and hairy woodpeckers.

The two times I visited the Toronto Zoo to do my field work the Canadian Domain was the least-travelled part of all of the zoogeographic regions. During my visit on a Saturday in June, there were approximately ten families with children. On a Wednesday in mid-December I was one of only two visitors in the Canadian Domain, excluding zoo staff. Having visited the zoo in previous years during the spring and

summer months, I can report that the pattern has been similar: the Canadian Domain is an under-traveled, and I would argue an underappreciated section of the zoo. The lack of zoogoers' exploration of the Canadian Domain can be attributed to two different things. The first is that animals like moose and cougars do not have the same appeal as giraffes and lions because the latter pair of animals are not found on this continent. As well, it is possible that some people may have seen cougars and moose in the wild, which would decrease their appeal even further.

The second reason why the Canadian Domain has low levels of traffic is related to the difficulty of the walk required to reach it, as mentioned previously. To get to the Canadian Domain, one must travel through the African zoogeographic region. Once you "leave Africa" the terrain to get into the Canadian Domain changes dramatically. There is a fork in the road welcoming zoo guests to the Canadian Domain and giving the option to go right or left. If visitors go left, they go to an outdoor picnic area, which is then followed by animal husbandry areas. If visitors go right, they walk down a very steep hill that leads into the Canadian Domain proper. Because the trip is so challenging, the Toronto Zoo Map states that the hill is steep and "return is along the same pathway" (Toronto Zoo, 2011). Descending down the hill, the raccoon, lynx, bald eagle and cougar cages are passed, before finally reaching flat ground next to the grizzly enclosure. Beside the animal exhibits are placards that give biological information about the animal, including its scientific name, size, habitat and so on; these placard were not examined for the analysis. Another kind of placard is found by most but not all of the exhibits, and it presents the name of the animal in a First Nations language along with a story or fact about the animal and how it relating to First Nations' spirituality. These placards are

brown with white text and found beside the raccoon, grizzly bear, bald eagle and wood bison enclosures. The last kind of placard that links animals and First Nations is found next to the cougar, grizzly bear, moose and bald eagle enclosures, and supplies a description of a clan that is related to the animal. What a clan is, along with its relevance to the particular animal, is not clear based on these placards alone. Design-wise, these placards have brown backgrounds and white text, and feature an image of an animal that corresponds to the clan that is named. The background and shape of the placards have been designed so they resemble the underside of the bark from a birch tree. Beside the grizzly enclosure is the entrance to the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

When approaching the entrance to the ATKKT, two things can be seen. The first is a large white placard with dark brown writing that has been designed to look like birch bark. It describes what the ATKKT is, the persons responsible for its creation, and what the trail can teach zoo visitors if they travel through it. A notable issue with the information presented on this placard is that the terms Aboriginal and First Nations are used correspondently. First Nations are one of the three federally recognized groups that comprise the term Aboriginal, but First Nations are not the same as Métis or Inuit, so using the terms interchangeably can confuse the visitor. In this case, the use of Aboriginal would have been acceptable if there was Traditional Knowledge from the Métis and the Inuit as well. Since ATKKT focuses only on First Nations knowledges, the Toronto Zoo is helping to promote and maintain the Generic Indian stereotype, where there is one Indigenous monoculture in Canada, rather than hundreds of unique ones. If the Toronto Zoo had intended to only refer to First Nations cultures and ways of knowing, ATKKT would be better titled as the First Nations Traditional Knowledge Trail, since it does not

refer to Métis or Inuit Traditional Knowledges. The importance of word choice, as demonstrated in earlier discussions about ATKKT, is imperative to the overall analysis of the placards in the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

To the right of the explanatory placard at the beginning of the exhibit is the entrance to ATKKT itself. The entrance is flanked by four large wooden poles positioned over the path that are joined together at the top to resemble the shape of a tepee. Where the four poles meet, there are branches forming a circle with a material that resembles animal hide stretched across it. The words Aboriginal TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRAIL¹¹ accompanied by two white and brown painted feathers have been printed on the hide, to indicate the passage into ATKKT. The entryway for ATKKT is reinforcing not only one but two stereotypes of the Generic Indian based on the imagery that is created. First, by using a structure that looks like a tepee and a sign that looks like a dream catcher on the ingress to the trail, there is an insinuation based on the trail's name that all Aboriginal people live in tepees and use dream catchers. It can be assumed that in creating the entrance in that way, the zoo was using it as an iconized representation to refer to Indigenous peoples. Combining this imagery with the use of the general term Aboriginal, which I outlined as being problematic, infers that there is only one kind of Indigenous person being represented rather than several different groups. This is an example of synecdochal representation, since these two cultural symbols are being used to epitomize all Indigenous peoples even though they are not emblematic of all groups. Furthermore, I surmise that the combination of the imagery and the monoculture blanket term of

¹¹ The reason for the uppercase text in the words traditional, knowledge and trail and not Aboriginal are not clear. The words have been included as they are to be as representative as possible of the exhibit.

“Aboriginal” being used to stand in for all Indigenous peoples in Canada strengthens the Generic Indian stereotype in ATKT.

The majority of the placards in the trail are about animals in the Anishinaabe clan system, animals generally, or plants. There are also two larger placards in the same style as the entry placard about wigwams and “Aboriginal Teachings”. Towards the end of ATKT there is a large placard that uses the same design schemes as the placards about the clans; one it titled “Clans of the Ojibway Nation,” while the other is called “The Clan System”. In the Canadian Domain as a whole, there are twenty placards about plants and their relationship to Indigenous peoples in ATKT; five placards on animals in ATKT plus four in other areas of the Canadian Domain; two placards about clan animals and two large placards explaining clans in ATKT plus four placards about clan animals elsewhere; one placard each on both wigwams and Aboriginal teachings, and finally two identical placards explaining what the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail is, who it was developed by and its importance.

HOW THE ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRAIL IS CONTINUING STEREOTYPES

The ways the placards in ATKT are written as well as the content they contain are contributing more to stereotypes about First Nations than helping to debunk them. A close-text analysis of the placards will be done by exploring four specific themes. First, I will consider how ATKT represents First Nations as the Indigenous Other. Second, the wording of the placards will be examined for correlations with archetypes of the Vanishing Race and Living Fossil. Third, I assess how ATKT’s focus on plants and animals infers that First Nations are seen as guardians of the land, referencing and

reinforcing stereotypes of the Noble Savage and Ecological Indian. Finally, I will discuss how the generalizations in ATKKT continue the archetype of the Generic Indian. Although it may not have been the zoo's intention to use colonial language and paradigms in the exhibit, they can be found even before entering the trail. For instance, the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail entrance placard states, *We believe that everyone can learn from the practices of our indigenous people.* By using the pronoun "our" in the sentence, the Toronto Zoo is inferring that Indigenous peoples belong to the zoo and by extension all of Canada, when they, like any other people, are not owned by anyone. Although the Native Warrior and Savage stereotypes are prevalent characterizations of Indigenous peoples, they are not present in ATKKT or the Canadian Domain, and thus do not feature in my analysis.

Exotification of Indigenous Peoples

When one considers the history of zoos, including information about Indigenous peoples can be seen as an exotifying existence. Human zoos were built and arranged on the assumption that non-Western peoples were exotic, thoroughly different and usually inferior to people from Europe and the settler population in North America. Thus, non-white peoples, including Indigenous peoples, were put on display for the viewing pleasure of those who could pay to see them. By creating an exhibit that showcases Indigenous peoples and ways of knowing in a similar way, despite not having actual Indigenous people there, the Toronto Zoo comes dangerously close to perpetuating the assumptions and logic of a human zoo.

The exotification of the Indigenous Other through ATKTK can be examined by looking at the use of capitalization in the text of the placards. Many words that should not have been emphasized—notably the names of animals—are capitalized in the placards. Although it is true in traditional storytelling and contemporary works of Indigenous fiction that animal names are sometimes capitalized, they always refer to a particular character in the story. The way the animal placards are written in the Canadian Domain does not refer to a specific animal, but rather animals in a more general sense. By capitalizing the animal species—Raccoon, Robin, Turtle Blue Jay, Crow, Eagles, Bison, Woodpecker—on the placards, the Toronto Zoo is promoting the animals to the equivalent of named characters when the text on the placard does not refer to specific animals at all. Thus, by capitalizing the animal in their description, the zoo is turning the animal into an exotic figure that correlates with Indigenous peoples because of how the animals are viewed as teachers.

Through their description of the Anishinaabe clan system, ATKTK serves to further exoticize First Nations. For instance, the clan placard titled “The Clan System” reads: *When reading the Clan System signs, imagine to which group you might belong.* Anishinaabe people—and all Indigenous peoples—do not get to choose their clan, as they are born into them based on the descent of one of their parents, depending on whether their nation’s clans are matrilineal or patrilineal. The clan system of the Anishinaabe is decided through the father’s lineage, and people from the same clan are not permitted to marry each other (Warrem, 1984 qtd in Peacock and Wisuri, 2008, p.75). The other clan placard echoes this, with the following text: *kinship groups are made up of families that share certain values, beliefs and personal characteristics.* By suggesting that a zoo guest

can imagine what clan they would be in patronizes an important part of Anishinaabe culture, while simultaneously objectifying that part of their spirituality. Indigenous clan systems are not something that can be consumed at will by a casual visitor. Indigenous cultural appropriation is a legitimate concern perpetuated by settler individuals, and the wording of this placard not only exotifies Indigenous spiritualities, but also makes the appropriation of Indigenous cultures acceptable and comparable to standardized Canadian values.

Locating Indigenous Peoples in the Past

By continually mentioning First Nations cultures, methods and Indigenous Knowledge in the past tense, the Toronto Zoo is inferring that First Nations are a Vanishing Race, and those that are left are Living Fossils. Of all the placards in the Canadian Domain, eleven have the word “was”, ten have the word “used”, six have the word “were”, three have the word “made”, and one has the word “ancient”. Nearly all of the placards have the past tense of a verb or verbs, which I identify by an “-ed” ending. The common narrative in history books and newspaper articles is to locate Indigenous peoples in the past, again using the past tense of a verb, usually indicated by “-ed”. In the Canadian Domain, the activities of the First Nations that are mentioned are primarily located in the past tense, suggesting two things. First, that Indigenous Knowledge practices only occurred in the past and therefore have no continuity with current cultural practices. Second, by virtue of the first, these epistemologies are practiced by peoples who are part of a Vanishing Race, and those who are left are Living Fossils of those vanishing cultures and traditions. In reality, Indigenous Knowledge practices have had a resurgence in recent decades, due in part to more Indigenous peoples turning to

Indigenous Knowledge as a key tenet of their traditional spiritualities (Lee, 2010, p.236). Because contemporary media and textbooks establish Western culture and Canadian culture in the present, one can assume that these cultures are alive, thriving, and will continue for generations. By locating First Nations cultures in the past, there is an inference that they are in the process of dying out, and those that are left are the only survivors of a once majestic people as reflected by Indigenous stereotypes. The same sort of language is used when describing previous civilizations or the ice age, where words like “lived”, “used”, “were”, “made” and “ancient” are common. Therefore, because the placards in the Canadian Domain have language that is primarily in the past tense, it reinforces the Vanishing Race and Living Fossil stereotypes of First Nations. Additional examples from specific placards will be provided below to further illustrate these claims.

The “Aboriginal Teachings” placard mentions that *birch bark scrolls were used historically to record stories*. Like the ancient Egyptians who used papyrus scrolls, stating that Indigenous peoples used scrolls infers that their cultures, like that of ancient Egypt, are relics of the past. At the same time however, most Indigenous peoples did not have a written form of language prior to contact and well into the colonization process, as their languages are rooted in an oral tradition. The information on this placard seems to resonate with the idea of a romanticized, primitive First Nation that is considered to be *pre-historic*, living in the Garden of Eden. This Noble Savage clings to his/her old technologies, because modernizing and utilizing newer ones means that they have to leave the utopia of Eden. The idea that First Nations still adhere to outdated and impractical ideas from the past is not only evident when writing and language are taken into account.

The placard for the wigwam is located fairly early on in the trail, but since I did not see a wigwam during my visits it is possible that the structure has been removed for repair or it is no longer considered an important part of the exhibit. The placard states that wigwams are *An ancient shelter made by some First Nations peoples living in the Eastern Woodlands*. By calling it ancient—inferring a belonging to a time period that has long since passed (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011a)—the Toronto Zoo is asserting that whichever nations used a wigwam are ancient as well. The wigwam placard will be examined further in a later section of this paper.

On its placard, the Cougar Clan is described as *Constantly on the watch for enemies, they look after the safety of the village and its people*. This presumes that members of the Cougar Clan only live in villages, which brings to mind stereotypical images of First Nations communities from films. In actuality, approximately fifty percent of the Indigenous population within Canada live in urban spaces rather than in rural ones, which would include many First Nations reserves. Although this placard is written in the present tense, it is asserting that all Anishinaabe live in small, rural communities consisting of only a handful of people from their nation, when this is no longer the case.

Indigenous Peoples' Relationship with Nature

Perhaps one of the most prominent stereotypes about Indigenous people is their connection to the land. Although some First Nations may have maintained their relationship with the land, others may not have for reasons including colonialism or moving to urban areas. The placards about First Nations in the Canadian Domain are guilty of reinforcing the Noble Savage and Ecological Indian stereotypes. The very

nature of the placards in the Canadian Domain and ATKT focus on the relationship between First Nations, plants and animals: how First Nations learned from the animals, how animals are a prominent part of their spirituality, or how First Nations use various plants. Although Indigenous Knowledge is based on a localized, generational connection to a specific location, the relationship that First Nations who practice IK have to the earth shares little in common with the romanticized Noble Savage archetype. Despite it being a historical narrative, the Noble Savage stereotype continues to impact First Nations in the present, because of the presupposed idea of a harmonious connection with nature.

These inferences can be examined more thoroughly when two specific textual examples from the placards are considered. The first tells readers to *Please step in to the Wigwam and feel the dynamic forces in the poles and binding creating their own perfect harmony. Form and function are in perfect balance.* Here, the wigwam placard is describing the structure as being congruous and in balance because of its structure, which comes from nature. This wording alludes to the pre-contact assumptions about Indigenous peoples that created the Noble Savage stereotype. The second quotation states that *the trail features interpretive signs explaining how Aboriginal people used plants and animals while conserving a delicate balance with nature.* This is from the introductory placard of ATKT, and suggests that all Indigenous peoples lived in a peaceful relationship with nature, but because of the use of the past tense, this is something that they can no longer do. Although this stereotype does not have as long a past as the Noble Savage, it is rooted in historical “fact” that continues to cloud the minds of the settler population in the present. Thus, these stereotypes remain in places like the

Toronto Zoo, even when the zoo is making a concerted effort to educate its guests by incorporating Indigenous forms of knowledge. Therefore one can see how

historical narratives are very tricky myths: they do not *erase* cultural difference, rather they *include* and highlight Native people and Aboriginal imagery, and yet at the same time they draw on 'buried epistemologies' that reinforce the very Western views of nature and human/nature relations that justified the destruction of Native people (Willems-Braun qtd in Mackey, 2012, p.313).

This mythology is not only applicable to the supposed idea that Indigenous peoples lived symphoniously with nature, but also that there is an Indigenous monoculture.

Indigenous Peoples as the Generic Indian

In the introductory placard for ATKT, the trail is described as an Aboriginal trail, when there is only First Nations knowledge present. In order for the trail to be considered an Aboriginal Trail, knowledge from the Métis and Inuit would need to be included as well. The rationale for this is because Aboriginal is considered an umbrella term that refers to two or more of the three Indigenous groups in the Canadian constitution, and not one. This propensity to generalize First Nations within ATKT and the Canadian Domain is noticeable when looking at other examples in depth.

The wigwam placard describes wigwams as an ancient form of shelter that some First Nations in the Eastern Woodlands constructed. There is no mention of which First Nations actually use wigwams, especially since many people will not be familiar with the term, "Eastern Woodlands". As a term common in cultural anthropology, the Eastern Woodlands are comprised of two cultural groups, the Algonquians, composed of the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Abenaki, Anishinaabe (Mississauga, Potawatomi, Odawa,

Algonquin), and the Iroquoians, comprised of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Huron (Steckley and Cummins, 2008, p.50). The First Nations that comprise the Eastern Woodlands are very diverse even within the two cultural groups, thus employing the anthropological term suggests generalizing First Nations is permissible. By using the term “some”, the Toronto Zoo is equating that all First Nations are the same and not only the Algonquians and the Iroquoians. Statements such as these are not so much as inaccurate as they are incomplete in what is being presented.

In the Canadian Domain, the Toronto Zoo’s use of language equates all First Nations together as one cohesive group. For example, *the aboriginal peoples* used eastern white cedar in building canoes. The eastern white cedar is not located throughout Canada, so saying that Aboriginal peoples—not only all First Nations but also all Métis and all Inuit—is dubious. Providing information as to which nations used the eastern white cedar would be beneficial to zoo visitors. This homogenization of language is not unique and can be observed in other placards.

The description of the animal on the racoon placard states that *The wily racoon is believed by Native North Americans to be an example of the consequences of stealing.* Although racoons are found in most climate regions in North America, they are not well-suited to extreme climate conditions such as the Arctic. For the Toronto Zoo to state that every Indigenous group in North America has racoons as part of their Indigenous Knowledge practices is untrue. Furthermore, by using “Native North Americans” the Toronto Zoo is including the Indigenous Knowledge of peoples from outside Canada, when ATKT is specifically supposed to focus on First Nations within Canada. Thus, the Toronto Zoo is not providing its guests with an accurate representation of First Nations.

A similar sort of wording is found on the eastern white pine placard: *Aboriginal North Americans believe the five needles in the eastern white pine cluster represent the five nations*. Like in the racoon example, here the Toronto Zoo is insinuating that all Indigenous peoples in North America believe the same thing about the eastern white pine. Even though it is possible that one or even many Indigenous North American groups do believe that the five needles in a pine cluster represent the Haudenosaunee, it is in the Toronto Zoo's interest to name specifically which nations do think this in order to avoid generalizations.

Similarly, the Toronto Zoo homogenizes Indigenous Knowledge within ATKT. In one instance, colt's foot was described as being used in *traditional Aboriginal healing* to get rid of cough. Which First Nation or First Nations used colt's foot as a cough suppressant is important because Indigenous Knowledge is localized, culturally-specific, multi-generational knowledge, and not every Indigenous group would have used the plant since it does not grow everywhere in Canada. Additionally, the white birch is described as being *utilized in every aspect of traditional Aboriginal life*. Although the white birch has a greater geographic range than colts foot, it too does not grow in every single climactic region in the country, and just like the colts foot example, not every Indigenous group would use the plant as part of their IK practices. Comparable concerns are observed in one of the clan placards. Here, the phrase *Clans in Aboriginal North American society* is used, when Aboriginal is a Canadian-specific term, and not one used in the United States or Mexico. Although many Native American nations have clans, they are not considered Aboriginals, which makes the wording of the sentence confusing.

Therefore, since ATKT focuses only on First Nations knowledges, the Toronto Zoo is helping to maintain the idea that there is one Indigenous monoculture in Canada, rather than hundreds of unique cultures. The Toronto Zoo should have called ATKT the First Nations Traditional Knowledge Trail, since it does not refer to Métis or Inuit Traditional Knowledge in any form. The importance of word choice, as demonstrated by this previous discussion on ATKT, is imperative to the previous analysis of the placards in the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail. Similarly, The overall language and terminology used by the Toronto Zoo makes it difficult for zoo visitors to learn.

HOW THE ZOO MAKES LEARNING DIFFICULT

In addition to perpetuating stereotypes, the Toronto Zoo makes it challenging to learn about First Nations due to the confusing terminology that is used in the Canadian Domain and ATKT, specifically the term Otchipwe. Otchipwe is a late nineteenth century (c.f. Frederic Baraga (1853) and A.F. Chamberlain (1891)) spelling of Ojibwe. It is possible that Otchipwe is a specific dialect of Anishinaabemowin, or could refer to a specific Anishinaabe community or communities; however, there is inadequate research into the origin of the word. There is also the potential that the individuals who were consulted as part of the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail Committee believed that using an older terminology is more “authentic” than a contemporary or more well-known term like Ojibwe. Regardless of the rationale behind their choice, it is rather peculiar that the Toronto Zoo opted to use this word on three of the placards when four of the other placards have Anishinaabemowin words. Because there is no indication of why this word was selected for the placards in the Canadian Domain, the meaning of the word and why it was used remains unclear. The Toronto Zoo’s inclusion of the Otchipwe language is

confusing for visitors for two reasons. If a zoo visitor is not well-versed in Indigenous cultures, and if they wish to learn more about the “Otchipwes” when they return home, they would have a hard time doing so since they may not understand the correlation between that word and Ojibway, Ojibwe, Anishinaabe, Algonquin or Pottawami. The use of the word Otchipwe is puzzling, since the term is no longer in use, thereby reinforcing once again the idea that Indigenous peoples are Living Fossils—relics from an existing people that have gone extinct (Cornelius, 1999, p. 5). Because the Anishinaabe are very much still alive, and overall a large First Nation in terms of their current population size, zoo visitors are getting the wrong impression based on the word Otchipwe.

One of the key concepts misrepresented in the placards in ATKKT and the Canadian Domain is the link between the land in terms of Indigenous Knowledge and specific First Nations. Throughout ATKKT there are examples of IK from First Nations who are found in different traditional territories, among them the Slavey, Cree, Mi’kmaq, Abenaki, Navajo and Kwaiisu. This is especially perplexing when considering the Kwaiisu and Navajo in particular. The ATKKT entrance placard states that the trail is about *Canada’s Aboriginal people*. However, there are examples from two Native American nations included. These two nations are not located in close proximity to the US-Canada border, and nor are they nations that are split by the border. The Navajo—the largest Native American nation by population in the United States—live in the southwestern section of the country, occupying part of Utah, New Mexico and Arizona (Navajo Nation, 2011). The Kwaiisu on the other hand, are a band of approximately 250 people that live in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountains in California (Kwaiisu Language and Cultural Center, 2012). Confusing First Nations from within Canada and

two Native American nations with no oral history of living in the Toronto area or Canada for that matter, illustrates a profound level of ignorance regarding Indigenous peoples of Canada, and North America more generally. By virtue of this, the mis-identification of First Nations and Native Americans highlights a troubling lack of proper respect, care, attention and research when planning and constructing the exhibits of ATKT.

These errors suggest that the Toronto Zoo neglected to affirm that Traditional Knowledge is based on knowledge derived from generations of learning through specific interaction with certain species and locations (Battise, 2008, 499). By using Anishinaabe, First Nations and Native Americans interchangeably, the zoo presents an ambiguous account of Indigenous cultures. This disjointedness is correlated with the homogenization of Indigenous cultures within ATKT, since the First Nations included are not differentiated in terms of locations, languages, histories and cultures and thus are seen as being indistinguishable. Even though the Toronto Zoo has demonstrated a desire to incorporate information regarding Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing, they have not represented First Nations people adequately in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail.

*

This analysis of the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail and the Canadian Domain's (re)presentation of Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous peoples brings to light numerous problems. The previous examples illustrate how the Toronto Zoo is guilty of generalizing First Nations cultures in many of their placards. By locating First Nations in the past, through presenting them as exotic Others, by means of cultivating a false idea

of a harmonious relationship with nature, and portraying all Indigenous peoples as being the same, the Toronto Zoo's Indigenous content is deficient. The placards reinforce stereotypes of First Nations peoples while simultaneously turning them into exotic figures and not allowing the public to learn to their full potential.

Bob Johnson's own words offer eloquent if not ironic commentary. Because ATKTK was not developed by the Toronto Zoo but rather the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail Committee, the result is that "there is a variety of First Nations perspectives, a variety of First Nations participants, and a variety of time frames that they tried to put into signs" (Johnson, December 14 2011, interview). The ATKTK Committee were very clearly trying to represent so many different First Nations they have made their exhibit confusing to their guests. Similarly, Johnson states that it is "an interesting cultural interpretive trail, but I think it probably would have been better to take a perspective—one perspective—and stick with that..." (Johnson, December 14, 2011, interview). If the First Nations content in the Canadian Domain and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail focused on the Indigenous Knowledge of only the Anishinaabe, it would have been easier to follow and it would have been related to the First Nation whose traditional territory includes the land where the Toronto Zoo is established. Because there are so many opinions, nations, and terminologies used in the Canadian Domain and ATKTK, I believe that the exhibit ultimately fails in teaching the public about First Nations cultures, let alone about Indigenous Knowledge. My goal in this analysis however is not to accuse the Toronto Zoo of being purposefully negligent, but merely to point out the errors in the exhibit in an effort to make it better for all people, Anishinaabe, Indigenous, settler or international visitor.

At the same time, I am looking forward to the new ideas that the zoo is developing with their First Nation community partnerships. One, as Andrea Harquail explains, involves the Mississaugas of New Credit, who are cultivating a project where a moccasin protected from the elements “would be placed along or where there were First Nations people originally” and the moccasin would be “representative of the traditional people of that territory” (Harquail, December 14, 2011, interview). This program would provide not only a visual representation of an individual First Nations culture through the style and design of the moccasin, but it would also be a symbol of how First Nations are connected to specific geographic locales that the settler population is generally unaware of. Undertakings such as these clearly illustrate the Toronto Zoo’s support of Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous peoples, as well as why the Canadian settler population needs to be educated about the history of their nation that includes, rather than excludes, Indigenous voices.

CONCLUSION: FUTURE ON HOLD

Real respect takes longer than official respect. – Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*

On June 11th 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized on behalf of the Canadian government for the atrocities committed to Indigenous children during the residential school era. In his very calculated and rehearsed speech, he said that

The treatment of children in Indian residential schools is a sad chapter in our history. Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country...The government recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on aboriginal culture, heritage and language (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008)¹².

The settler population did not have to reject or agree with the government's words, since it was some of their ancestors who were directly responsible for the treatment of children in residential schools. Canada is now in a post-residential school apology era, but what that means, and why this is important requires further explanation.

One of the goals following the residential school apology was to set up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2008-present), whose purpose is to determine the wrongdoings caused to children in residential schools in an effort to eradicate the tensions that exist between the Indigenous and settler populations. In order for true reconciliation to occur the settler population must accept that the colonial project has impacted the lives of Indigenous peoples, regardless of whether or not their settler ancestors were involved in the assimilationist policies developed by the Canadian

¹²Stephen Harper (2006-Present) is guilty of describing all Indigenous peoples in Canada as part of the same cultural group, by using the singular forms of the words culture, heritage and languages, rather than the plural. This illustrates that whoever was responsible for writing this speech and/or Harper are content to describe Indigenous peoples as a monoculture.

government. Settlers need to be informed of the history of this continent that includes and relied upon Indigenous peoples, and an adequate forum must exist for this to happen. Indeed, former Prime Minister Paul Martin (2003-2006) believes the Canadian education system as a whole needs to be overhauled so Canadian children have a better understanding of Indigenous history and issues (Baluja, 2012). Similarly, the Ontario Ministry of Education would argue that by providing information about Indigenous cultures, histories and languages in its curricula, this would not only benefit Indigenous students, but children from the settler population as well. Regan (2010) believes that “Canadians are still on a misguided, obsessive, and mythical quest to assuage colonizer guilt by solving the Indian problem. In this way, we avoid looking too closely at ourselves and the collective responsibility we bear for the colonial status quo” (p. 11). The “Indian Problem” that Regan mentions is not the desire to assimilate First Nations into Canadian society akin to nineteenth century policies, but rather the fact that Indigenous peoples continue to be ignored and subordinated by Canada’s settler population. Since many Canadians continue to generalize and homogenize Indigenous peoples—the media does it, the government does it, schoolchildren do it, university students do it, educated professionals do it, uneducated people do it, and cultural institutions do it—the stereotypes that are seen as representing Indigeneity continue to be perpetuated.

The analysis for this thesis comes from a semiotic theoretical background, wherein words and their display impact how they are interpreted by their audience. Being from the settler population and knowing that there has been a history of misinformation and poor scholarship in relation to Indigenous peoples, cultures, histories and knowledges

taught to the non-Indigenous population, I could not simply accept the content in the Canadian Domain at face value. Indeed, upon a close reading of the placards, most present First Nations as exotic Other figures who are part of an archaic and homogeneous monoculture that lives in a peaceful, tranquil existence with nature. This transcendental stereotype of Indigeneity is based on stereotypes of the past, which are exhibited and re-appropriated in national institutions such as museums and art galleries. Although human zoos as exhibitions no longer exist in the present as society recognizes that putting people on display is dehumanizing, the generalization of First Nations cultures, histories and knowledges within the Toronto Zoo's Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail positions them as animalized beings.

While there was no malicious intent in the creation of the content, the Toronto Zoo's Canadian Domain and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail preserves archetypes of Indigenous peoples that are offensive, locating them in the past, describing them as inferior, or portraying them as dying out. Although this is a multifaceted issue, I feel the root of the issue most prominent one is that the individuals involved in the creation of the exhibits have used questionable sources. Ultimately this suggests that much of the information about Indigenous peoples that exists comes from an intellectual tradition, and negates the place of Indigenous individuals as being equivalent to the settler population. Fundamentally, this means that the Ontario Ministry of Education's goal of incorporating Indigenous cultures and perspectives in curricula is essential for the well-being of Indigenous children. Furthermore, by providing information that includes Indigenous points of view in mainstream curriculum, more people in the settler

population will understand how damaging the current colonial system is for Indigenous peoples living within Canada.

Because they are the fastest growing demographic in the country, Indigenous peoples are important to the overall success of the Canadian civic nation for the future. Although it is the desire of many Indigenous peoples to go back to their own autonomous governments, if this is ever granted, the settler population cannot interfere in these affairs. For too long, and in too many negative ways, the settler-colonials intervened in business that they had no understanding of. In order to restore the nation-to-nation relationships between Indigenous peoples and the settler population, the truth of the matter is that Canadians must abandon the paternal sense of authority they have over Indigenous peoples. Both groups must choose the path that is best for them and their people in order to guarantee their livelihood for future generations. As the settler and Indigenous populations decide which trail to take—potentially one of mutual understanding and teamwork, running parallel but never colliding—they will be able to determine their future as peoples living within Canada's borders. Once this has happened, then and only then can reparation actually begin to occur.

APPENDIX

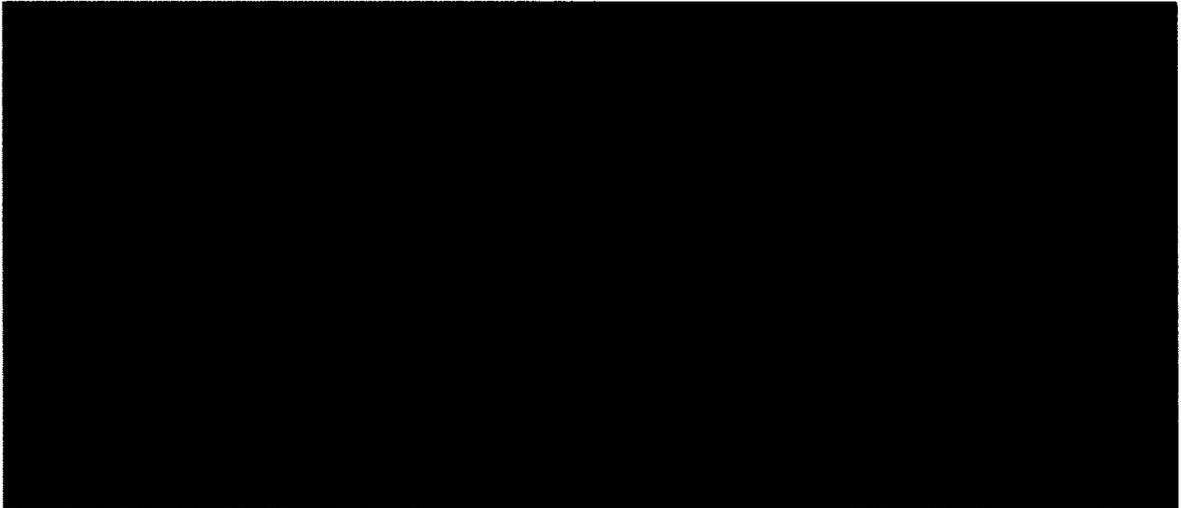
PHOTOGRAPHS

Note:

- All pictures are from December 14 2011 unless otherwise noted.
- Pictures have been taken in order as they appear in the Canadian Domain.
- All pictures are titled in English for consistency



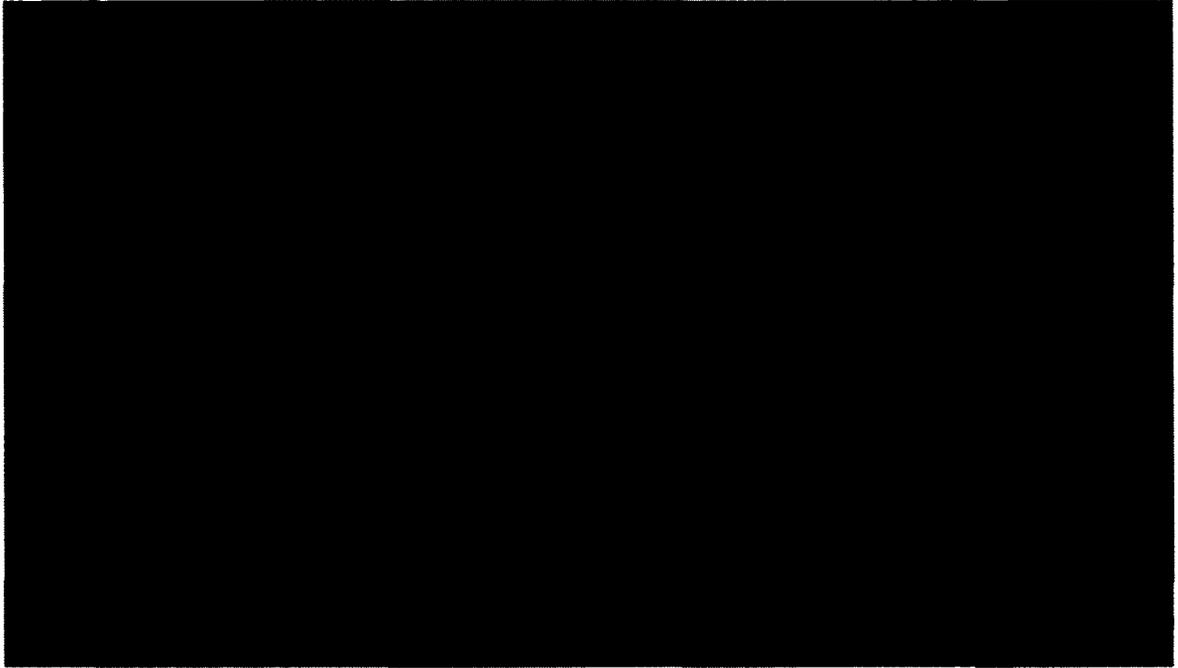
Sign Entering the Canadian Domain



Racoon Placard



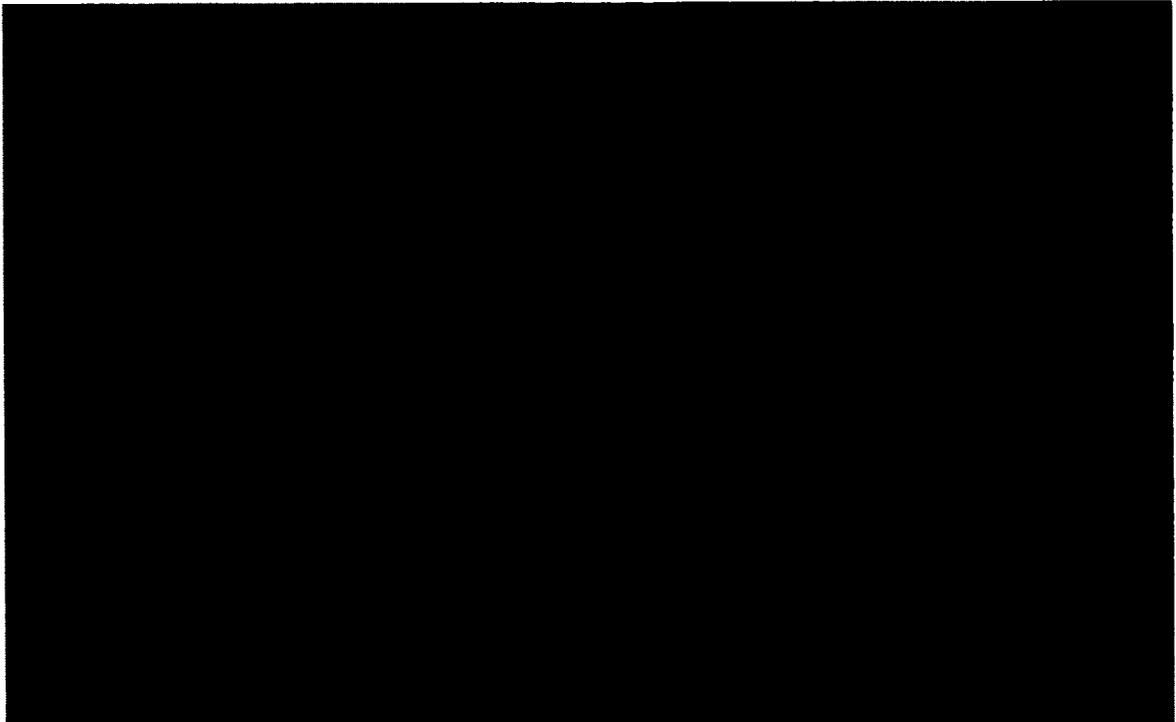
Cougar Clan Placard



Grizzly Bear Placard (June 2011)
Note: Covered text reads Chi-Mukwa



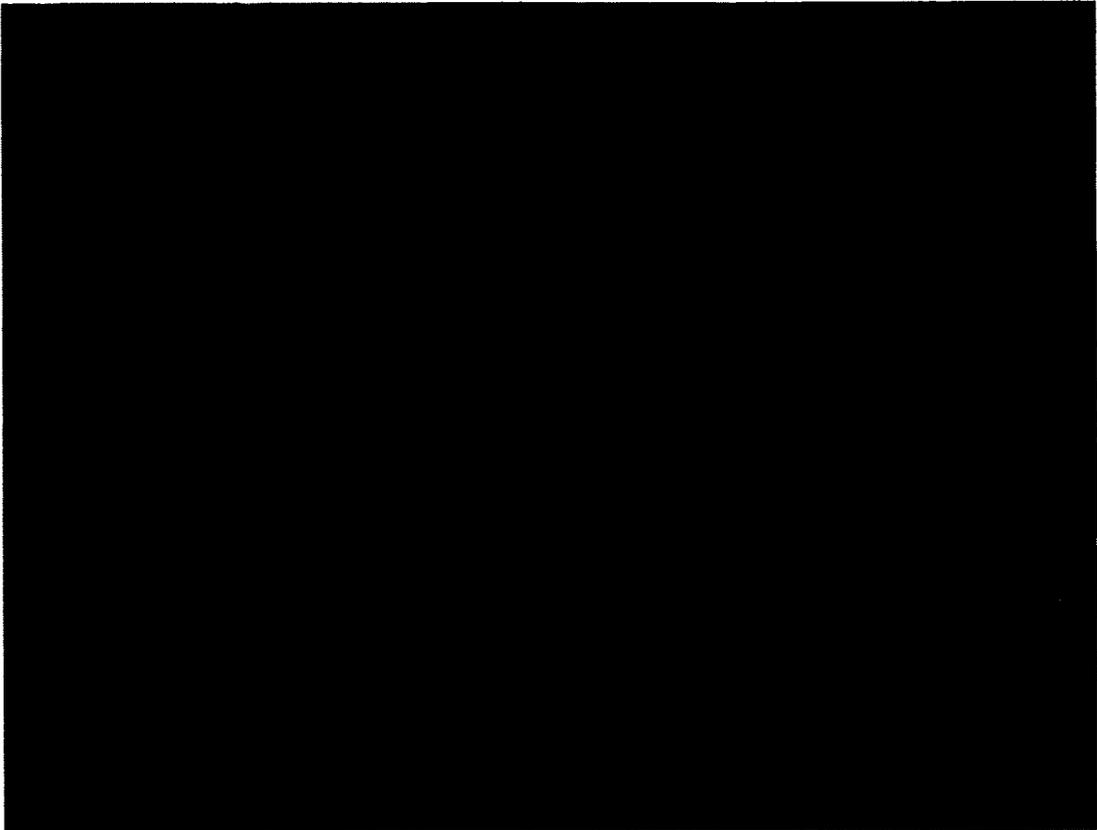
Bear Clan Placard (June 2011)



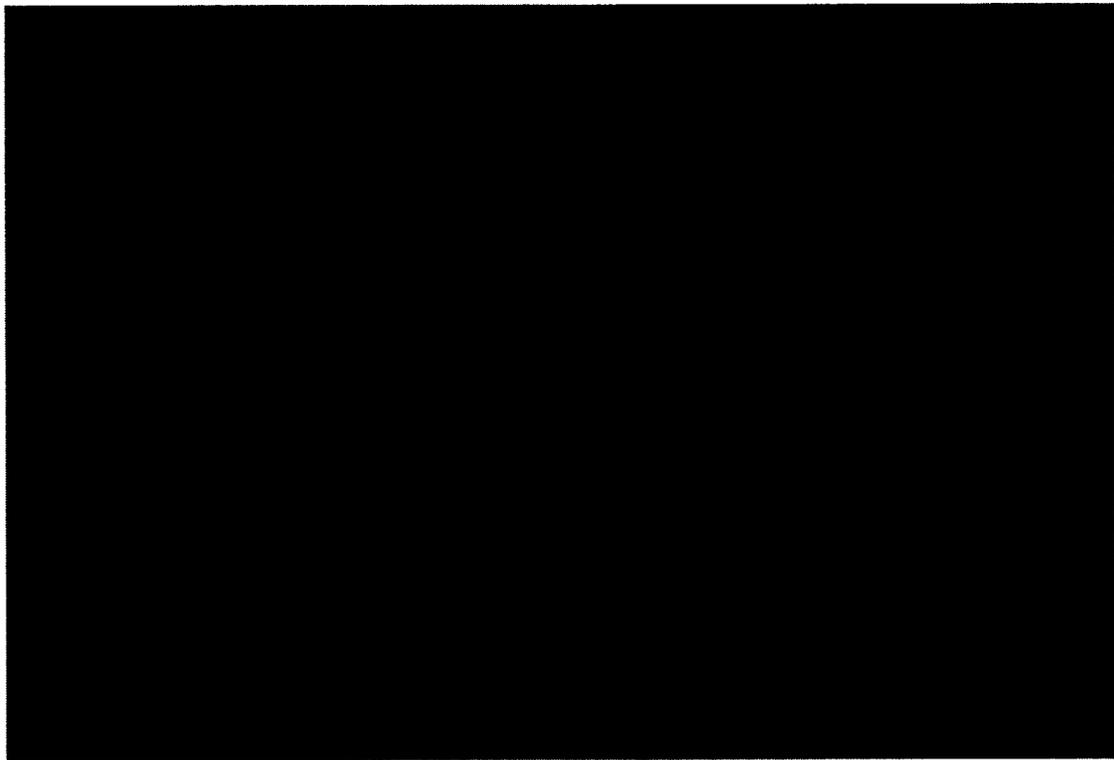
Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail Entryway Placard



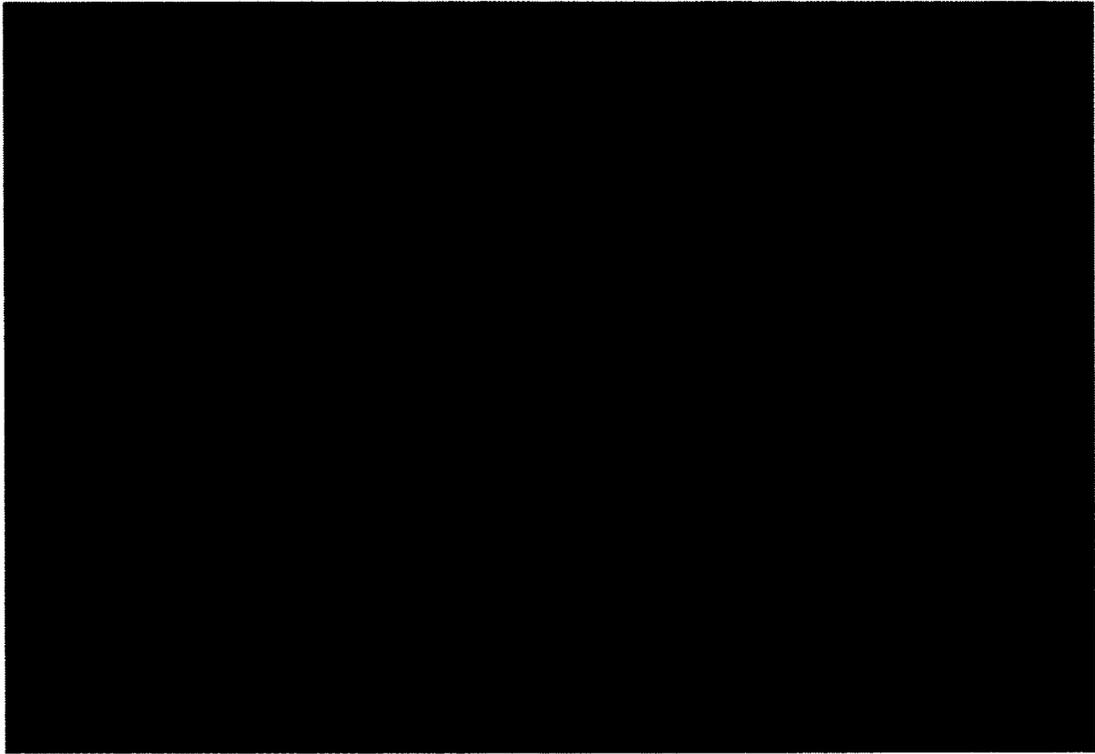
Colt's Foot Placard (June 2011)



Eastern White Cedar Placard



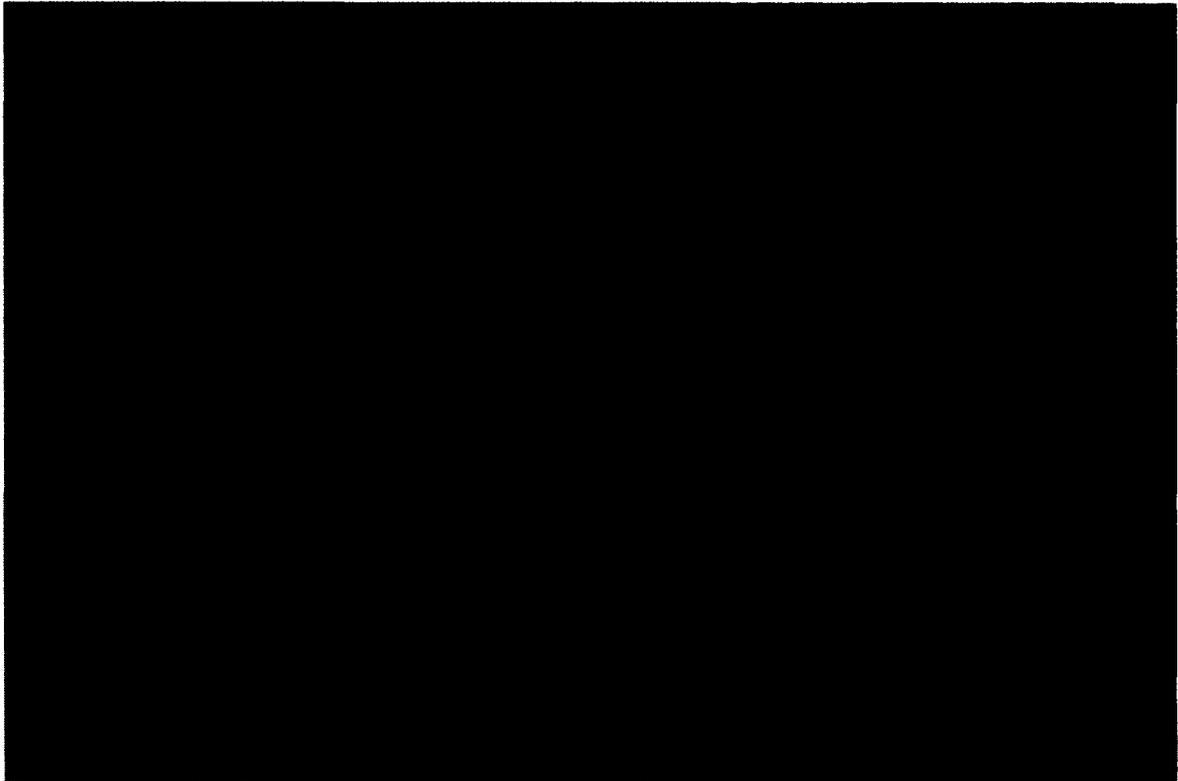
Ostrich Fern Placard (June 2011)



Dandelion Placard



Wigwam Placard



Fish Clan Placard (June 2011)



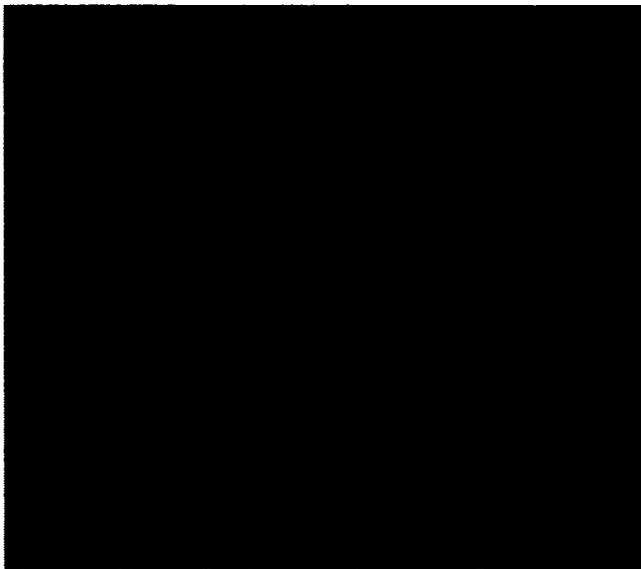
Thimbleweed Placard

Text reads: Similar to Canada anemone but growing in dry open woods, the flower is long and thimble-like with petals less showy and the divided leaflets are stalked



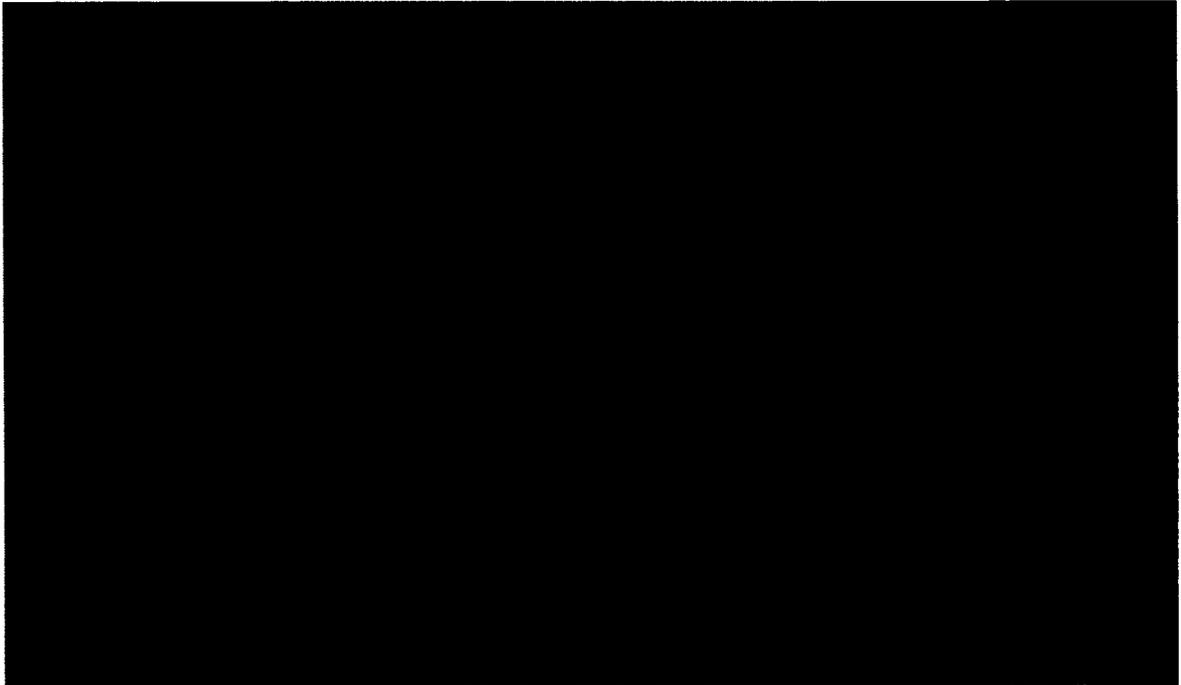
American Robin Placard (June 2011)

<No Image due to poor quality>
Red Osler Dogwood Placard



Scouring Rush Placard

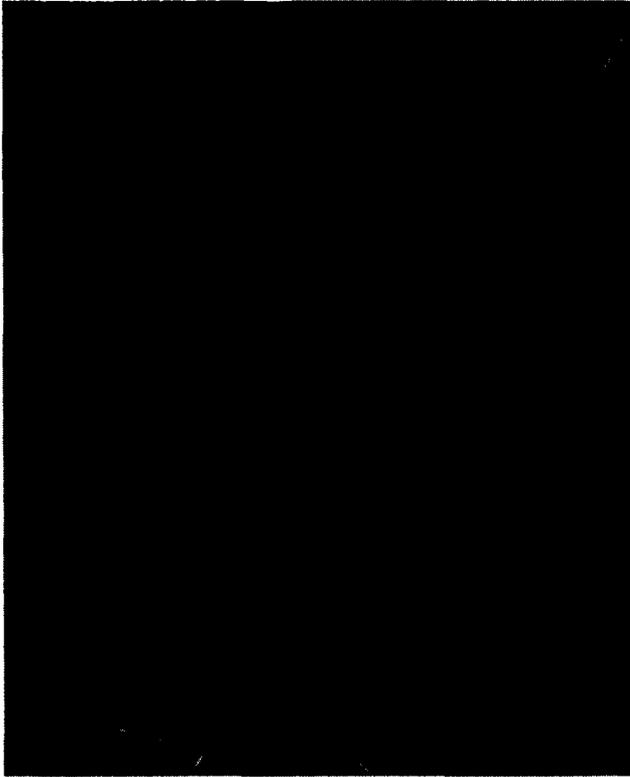
Text reads: Chippewa men carried a piece of scouring rush in their pockets to prevent good luck from befalling their rivals. Its rough and tough stems were used to smooth arrow shafts and could also be used to fashion whistles for children



Wild Grape Placard

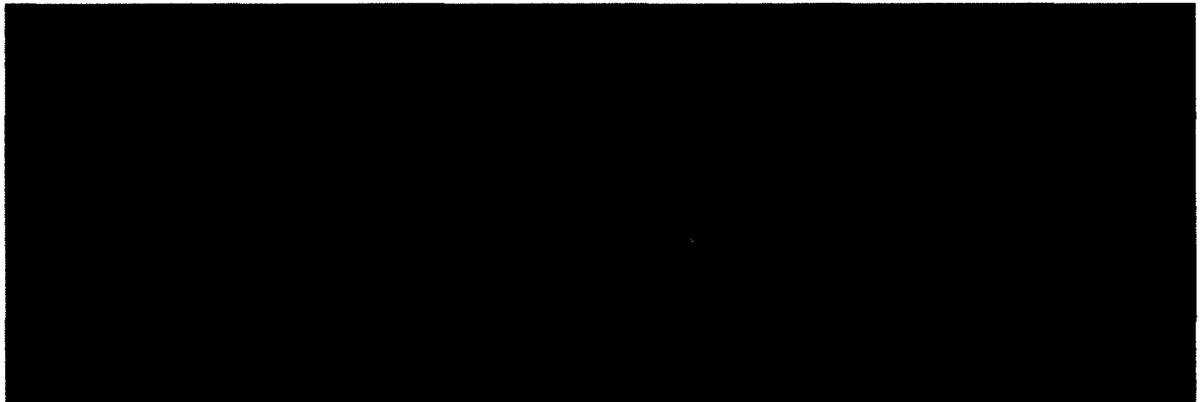


Eastern White Pine Placard

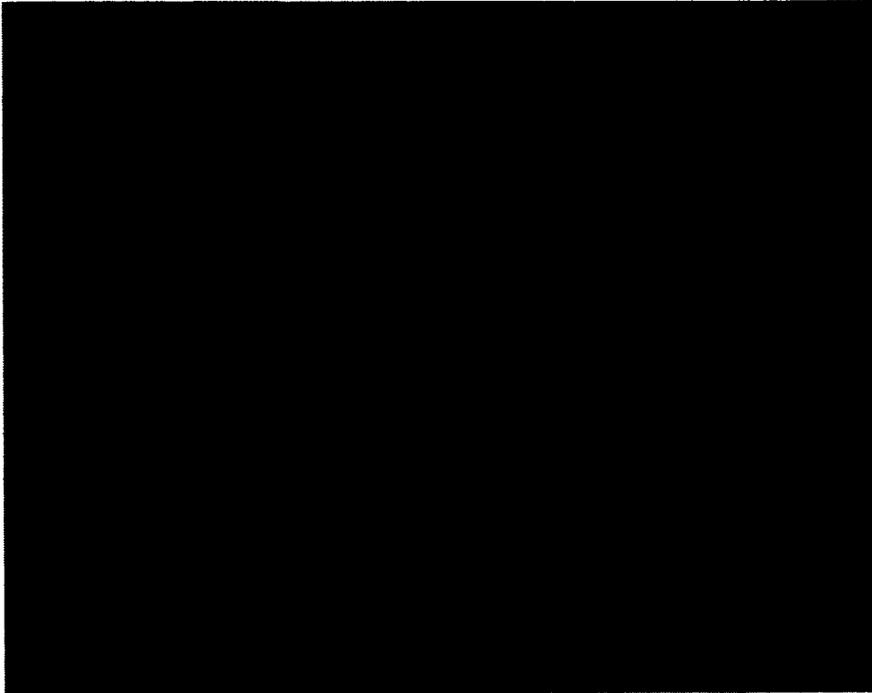


Silver Rod Placard

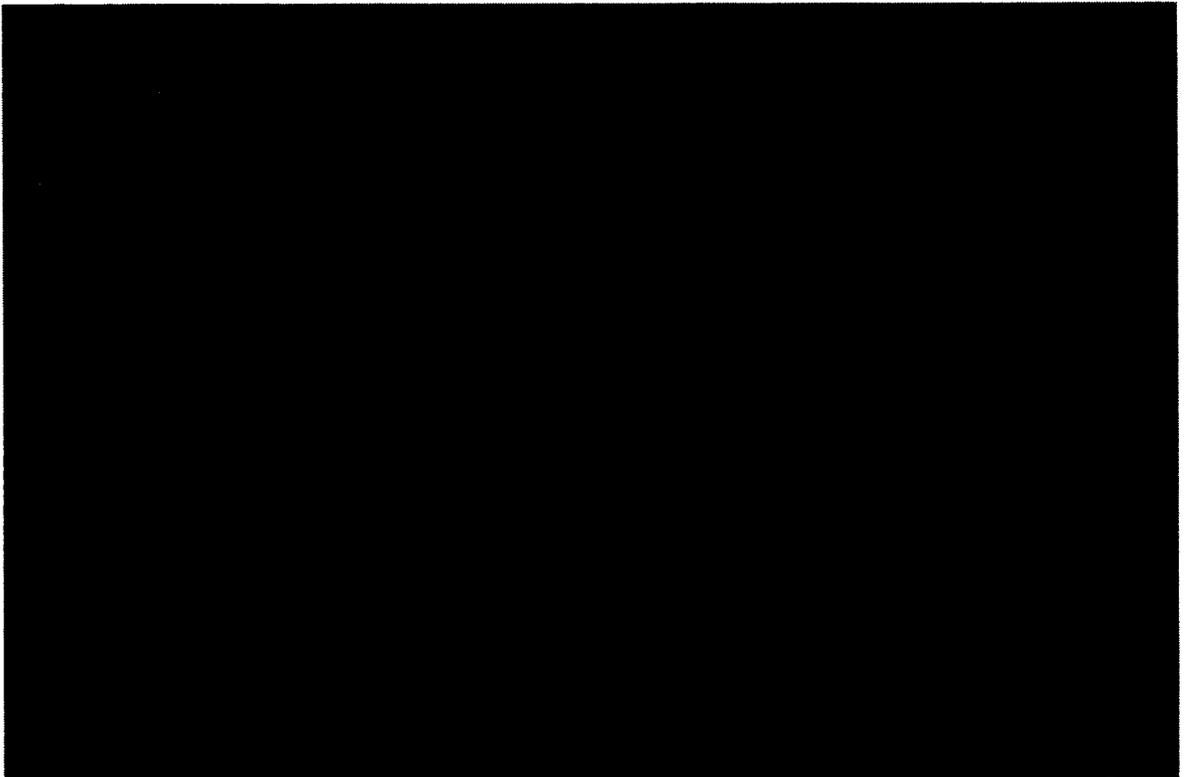
Text reads: This is Ontario's only white goldenrod and grows in the dry open woods and rocky outcrops of Southern Ontario, preferring acidic soil. A native member of the Asher family, it grows in dry open woods in the Rouge Valley



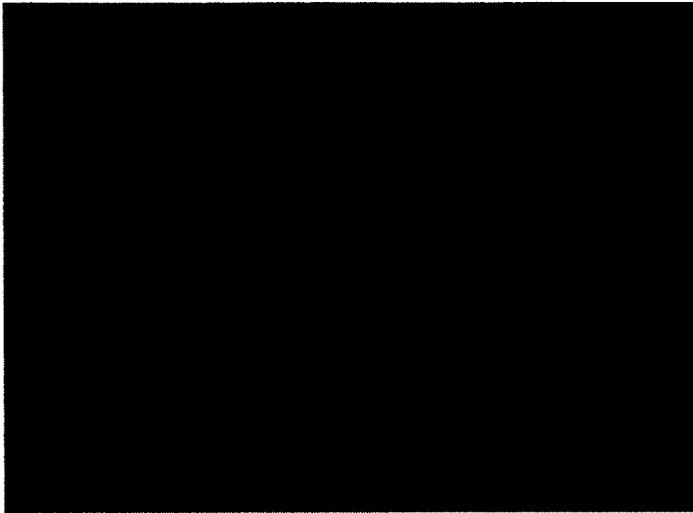
Downey Woodpecker Placard



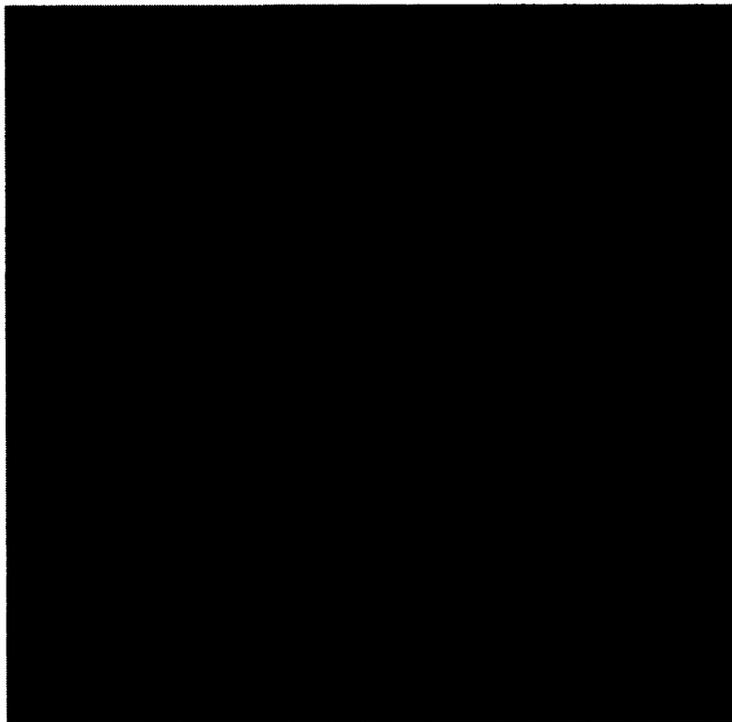
Eastern Flowering Dogwood Placard



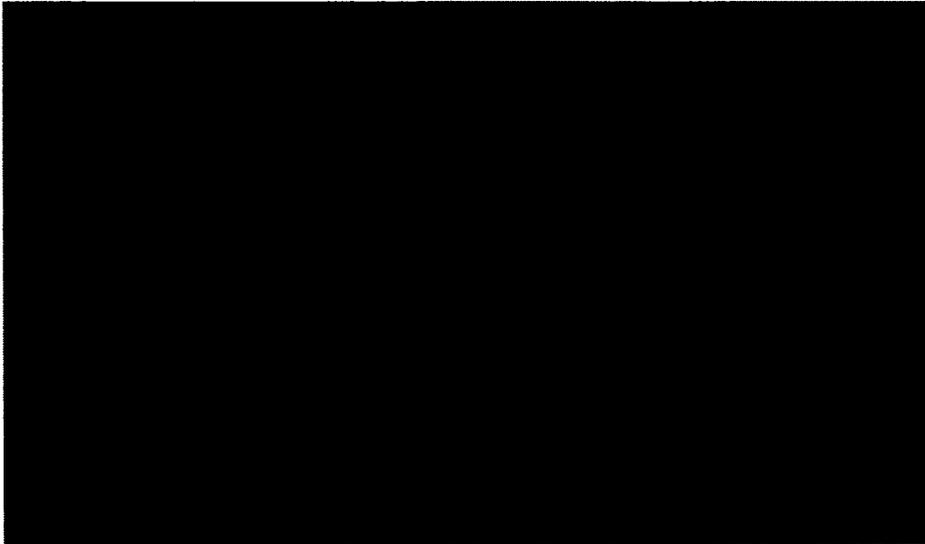
Beaver Clan Placard



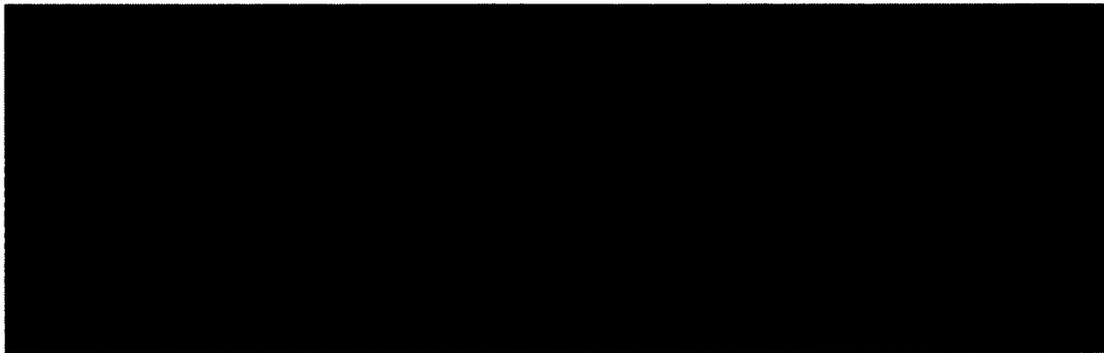
Alternate-leaf Dogwood Placard



Nannyberry Placard



Poison Ivy Placard



Blue Jay Placard

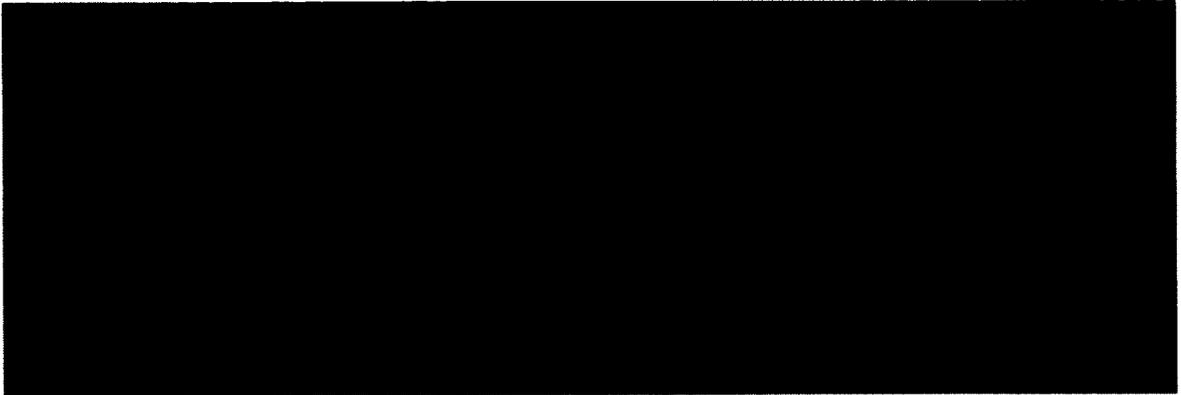


Canada Goldenrod Placard

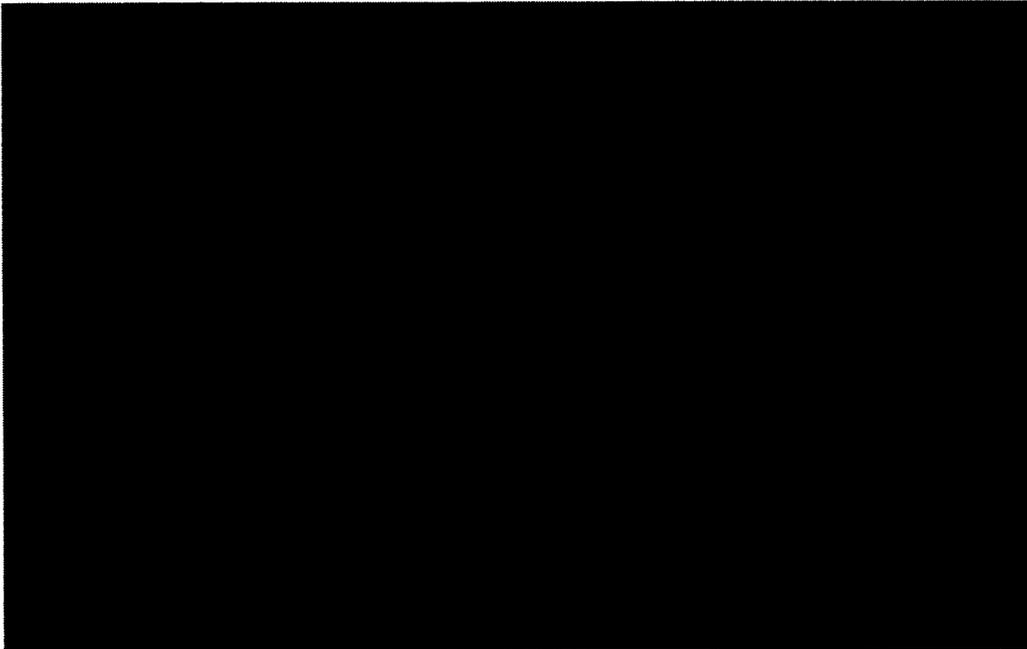
Text reads: This common goldenrod was introduced into Europe for cultivation because of its graceful yellow plumes growing in August and September



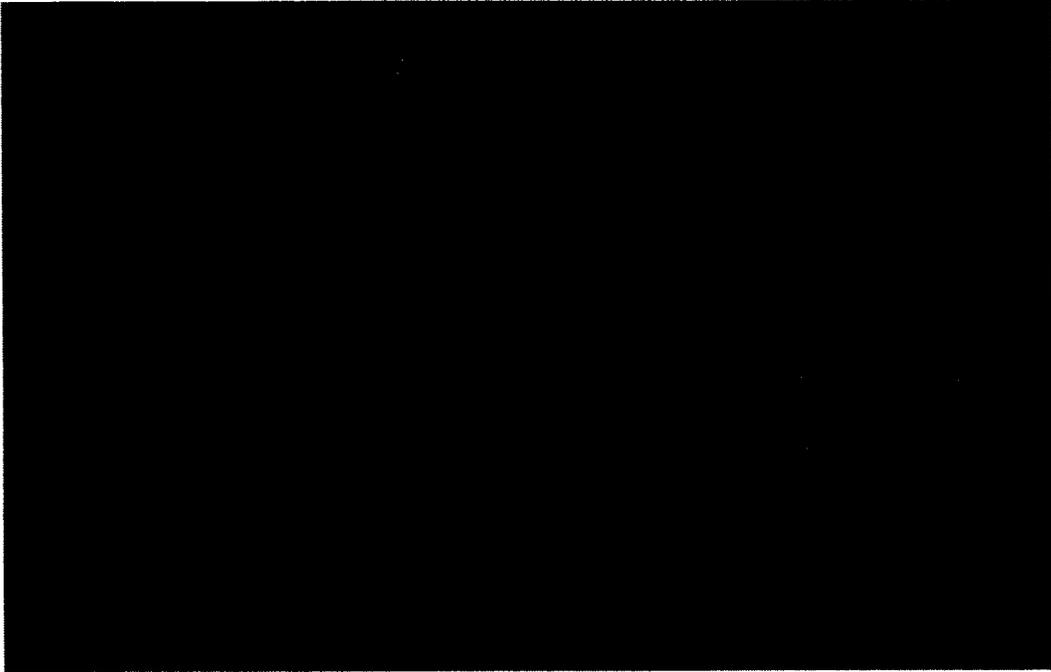
Queen Anne's Lace Placard



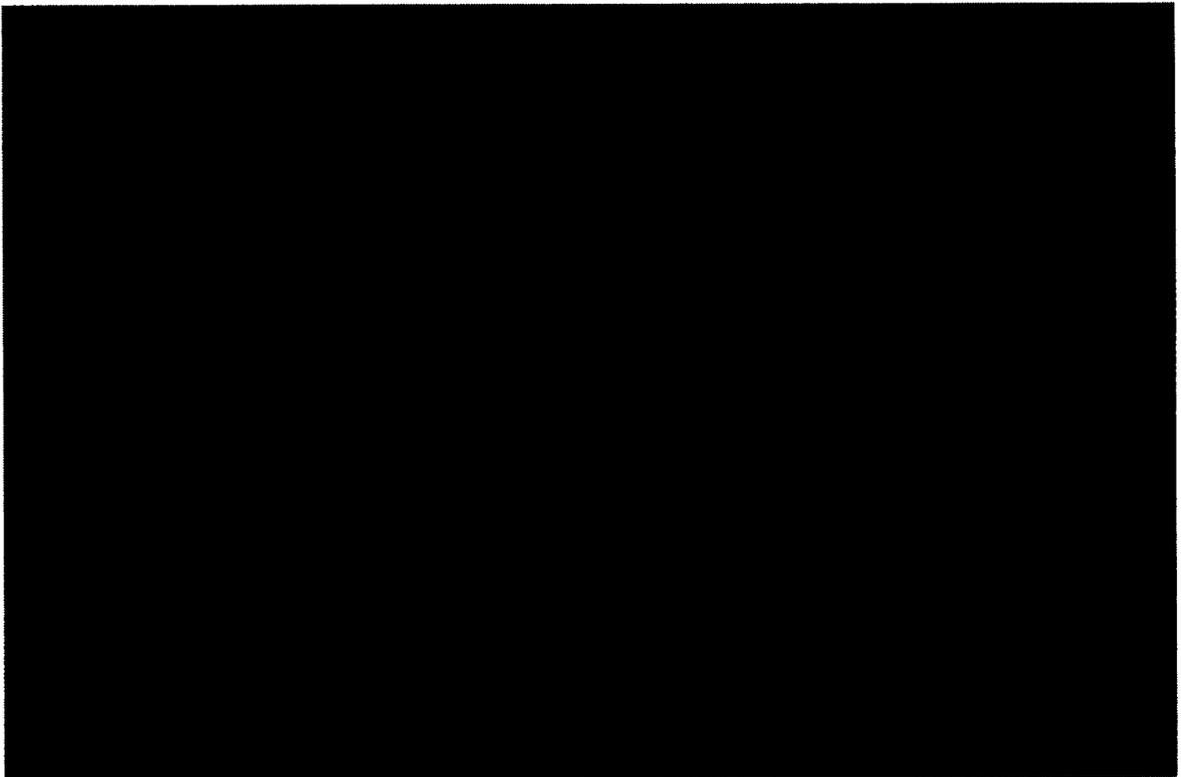
Painted Turtle Placard



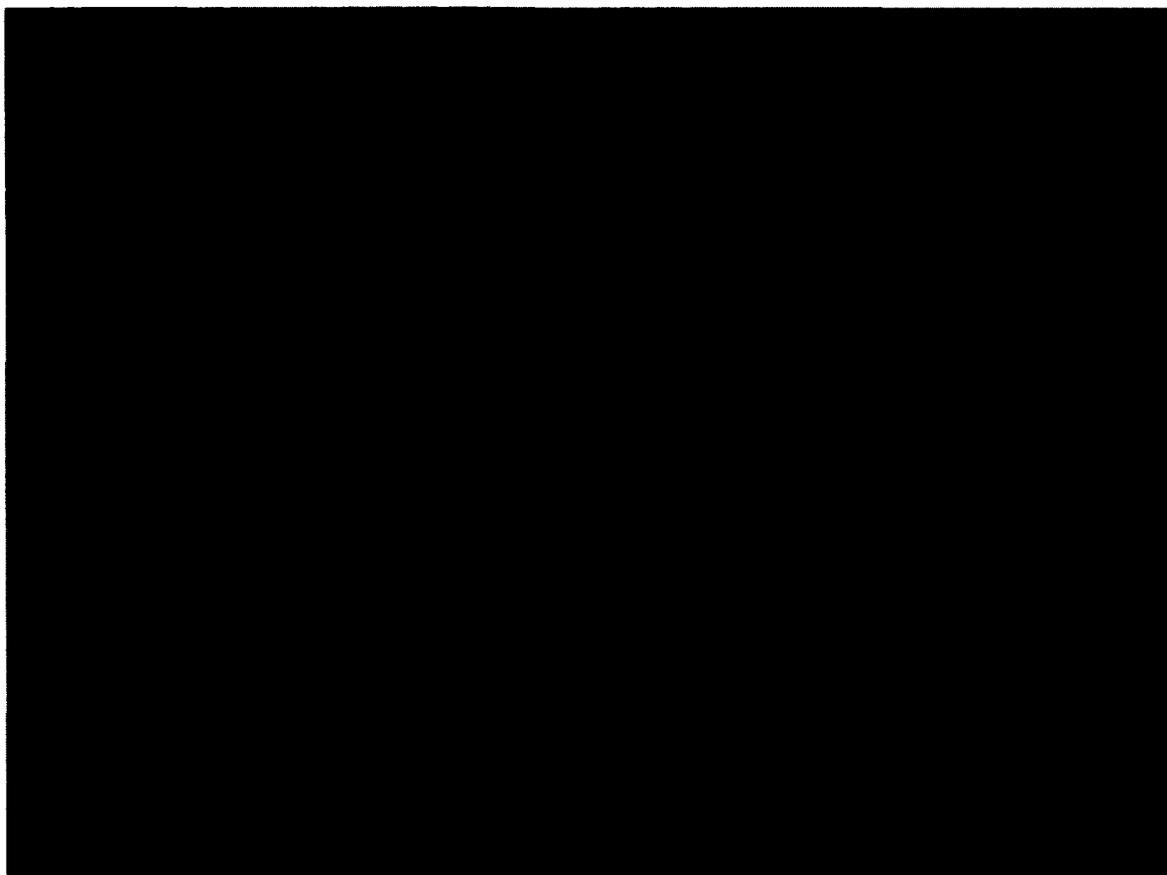
Cattail Placard (June 2011)



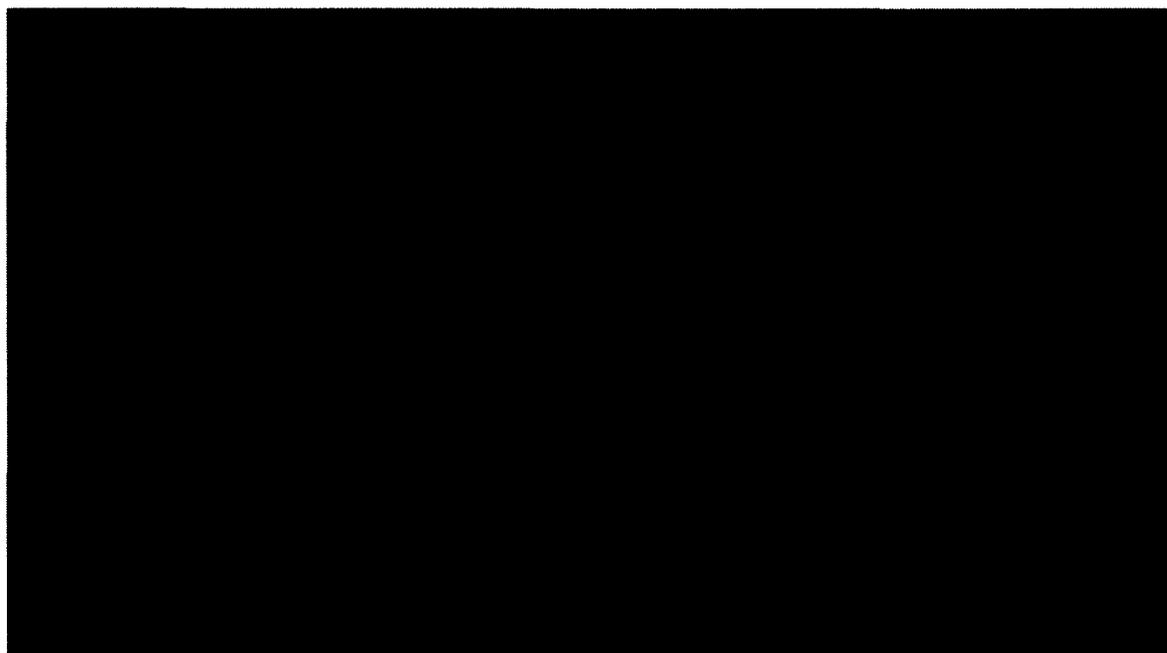
White Ash Placard



Trembling Aspen Placard



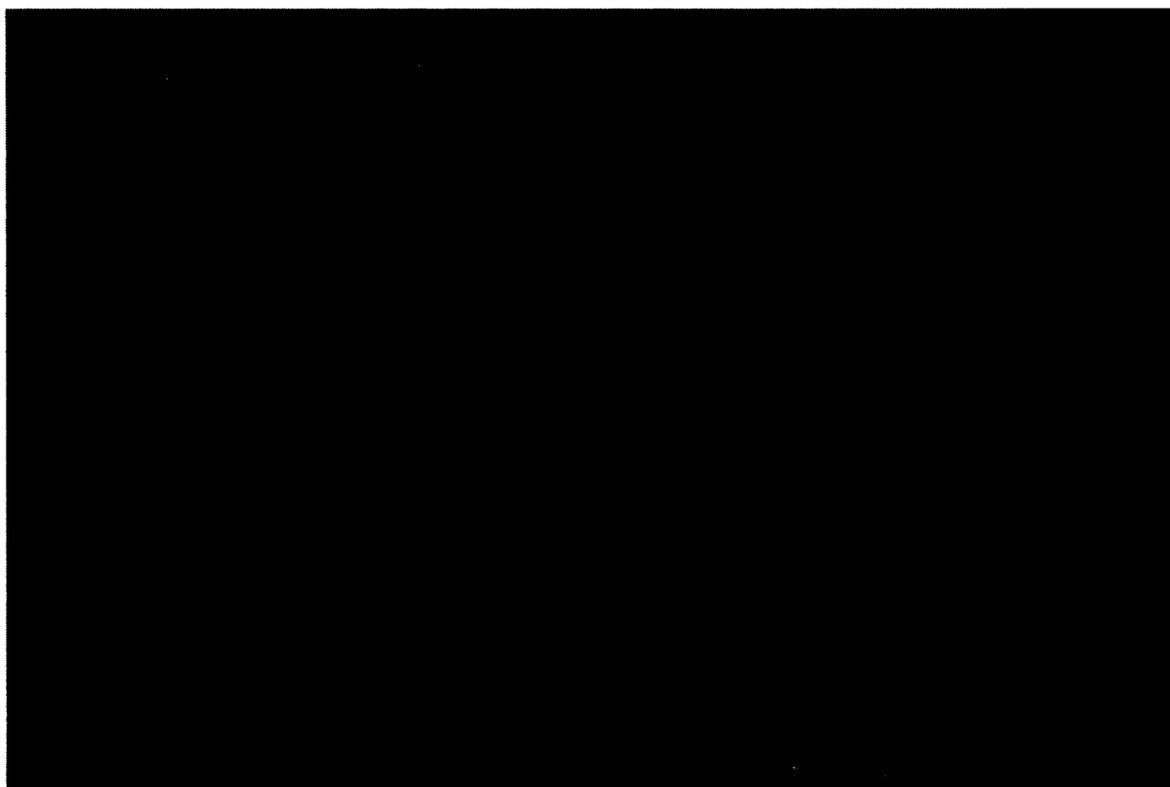
Aboriginal Teachings Placard



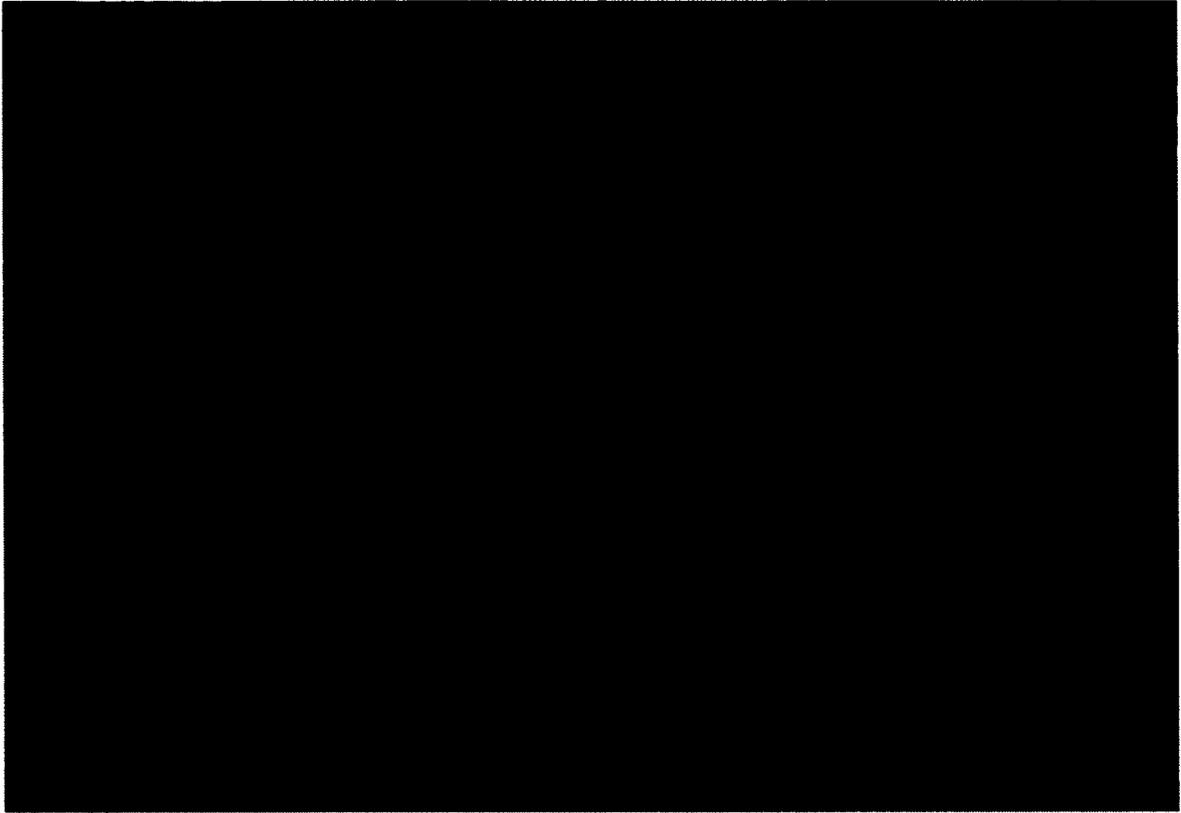
Common Crow Placard



Clans of the Ojibway Nation Placard



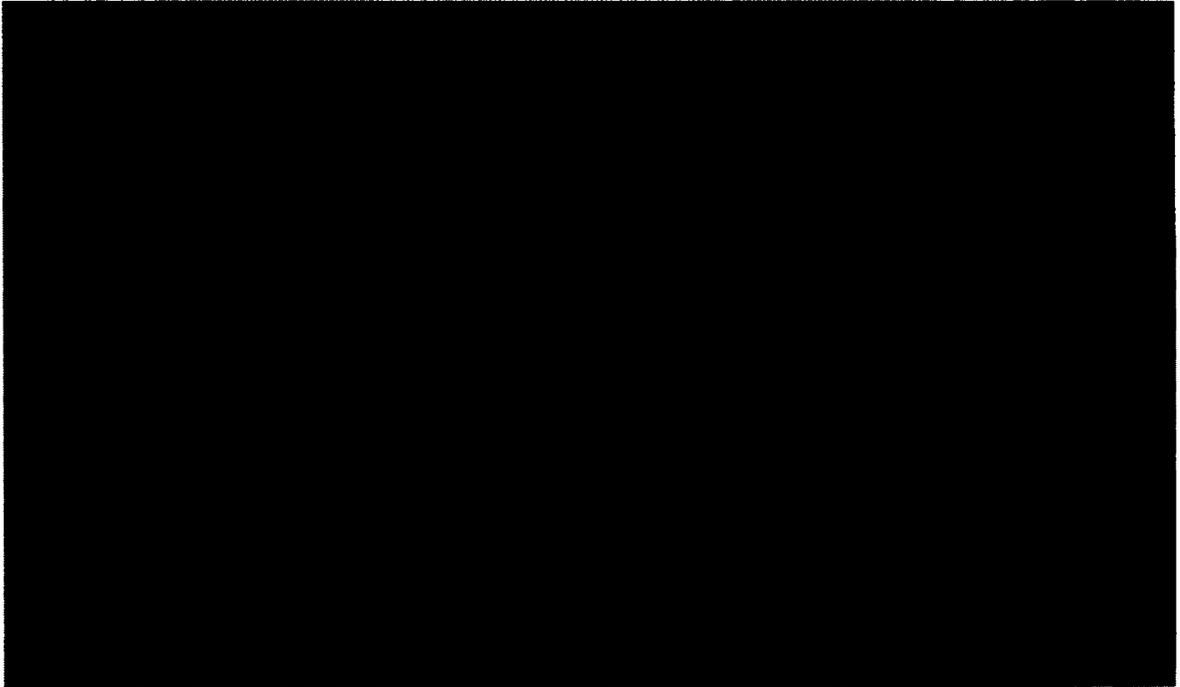
The Clan System Placard (June 2011)



White Birch Placard



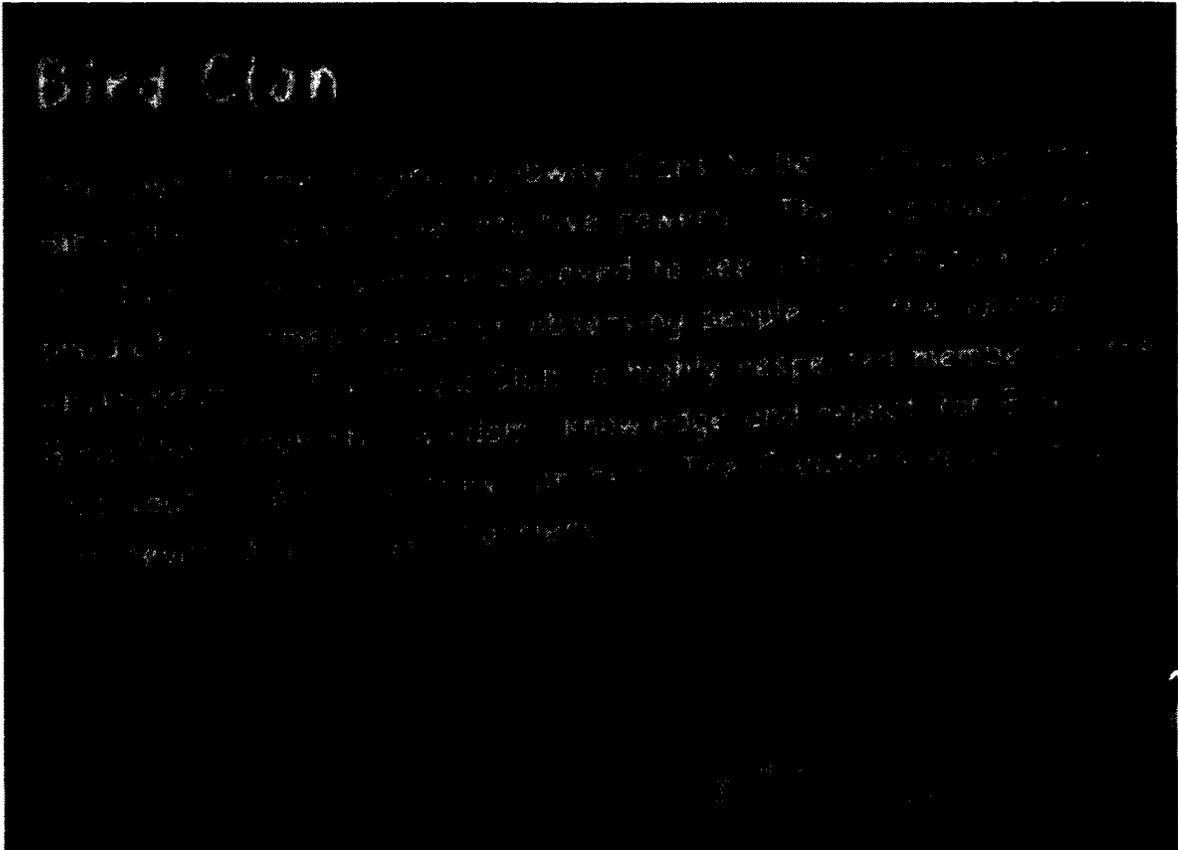
Aboriginal TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRAIL (June 2011)



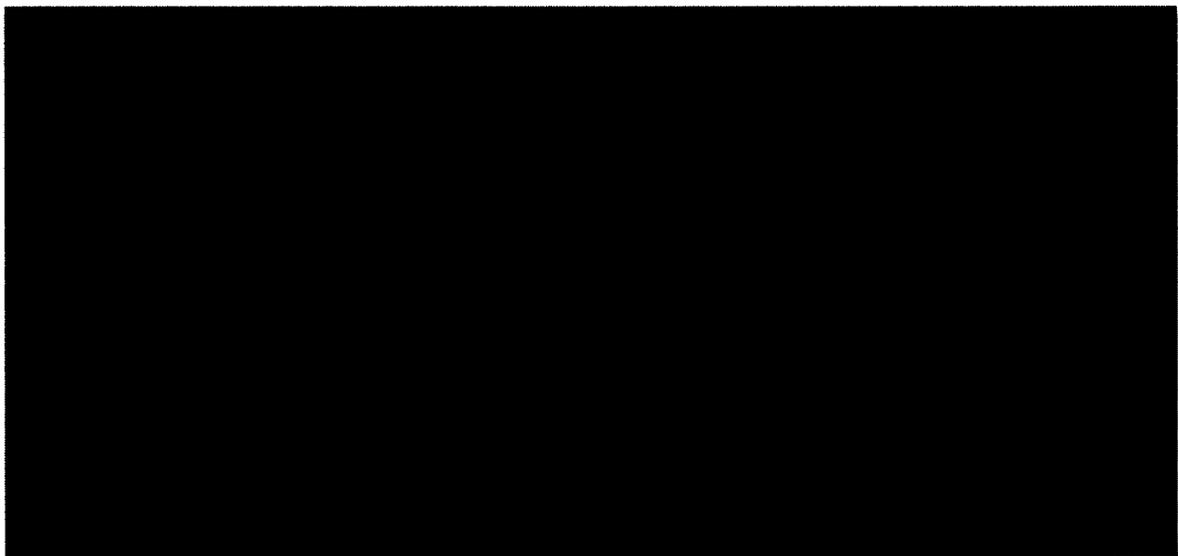
Hoof Clan Placard



Bald Eagle Placard



Bird Clan Placard



Wood Bison Placard

TORONTO ZOO INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

AH = Andrea Harquail

BJ = Bob Johnson

DL = Danielle Lorenz

DL: Okay, so I guess the first sort of general question is I wanted to know what you both do at the zoo in terms of your job descriptions, and then how you're involved with the Indigenous content at the zoo.

BJ: Alright, I'll start. I'm Bob Johnson, I'm the curator of reptiles and amphibians. I've been here for forty years, and I'm in charge of everything in the reptile and amphibian collection and undertaking conservation programs. I direct two conservation programs: the Wetland Conservation Program and I'm the Adopt a Pond Coordinator and also our First Nations Turtle Island Ways of Knowing program, and I'm also has a full-time coordinator. That's the program that Andrea works in, and she'll explain what her role is.

AH: I'm Andrea Harquail, and my title is the First Nations Conservation Assistant, so I work in Turtle Island Conservation as well. This is my third year with the program; I worked here during my summers in university and I recently graduated in April. So I've been working here full-time, and I assist in whatever the program is doing, whether it is outreach presentations or developing curriculum resources, or events on-site at the zoo, or events off-site; I kind of do a little bit of everything.

D. Ok, great. So what do you guys know in terms of demographics of visiting the zoo? I read in a report that it was about 80% of visitors were from the GTA. Do you have other demographic information other than that?

B: Yeah, but I don't know. You'll have to get that from the public relations department if you want that. But I can tell you that we have 1.2-1.5 million visitors, 80% is high proportion of GTA from anywhere from 50km away from downtown Toronto, so Oshawa, further north. We get a lot of tourists obviously coming in the summer. The majority of visitors come in the summer, primarily in June, July and August we'll get 85% of our visitorship, around that time, so it's busy in the summer and then it slows down. Our age demographics is primarily families and families with children, so that's the primary visitorship of the zoo. And we have a large number of memberships, and the majority of those memberships are families because it's a cost-effective way of visiting the zoo a several of times. Socioeconomic I don't think we collect that data.

Racial/ethnic... Toronto is a diverse city; we do draw in our ethnic communities that are representative of the GTA, but I would say we don't target racial or ethnic groups to come to the zoo, so I think a lot of our perspectives... a lot of our visitors don't actually reflect the demographic makeup of the city, and that's probably fair of all of the cultural attractions. The Royal Ontario Museum for example has the same issue with their

programming and taking a Western-European background. I know there are efforts to actually develop programming that will be relevant to the knowledge base and the cultural values of the diversity that is represented in Toronto. In fact -- we can get into it later -- but we're developing a program with the Adopt A Pond Program that targets those cultural groups in the city that we feel are underrepresented and bring diversity to our conservation programs. Do you have any comments (looking at AH)?

AH: No, I think you've covered them all.

DL: The first question about Indigenous content is about the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Trail, and you had to refer to some documents for. So really, in terms of when was the idea launched, what was the Toronto Zoo's goal in creating it, when was it developed, those sorts of things.

BJ: Right, we had another staff member here in our interpretive design department, and he did his doctorate on providing cultural interpretation in a zoo or in an institutional setting. That was Paul Harpley, he's now retired. Because the zoo sits on areas where First Nations communities dwelled historically, he thought it was relevant to have some interpretations here. The Rouge River was a primary transit route for trade and there was a large First Nations settlement along the Rouge not far from here. We have a Canadian Domain in that valley and we thought it was consistent in our goals of interpreting wildlife and wildlife values to include First Nations communities. The zoo at that time -- this was about 2005, and it may have gone on before that, certainly it was around 10 years ago that the concept was developed -- it was developed through a First Nations Advisory Committee and I looked at some of the documentation here [sound of papers rustling]. There were quite a few First Nations communities and community leaders involved, some academics, two or three academics from the University of Toronto and George Brown College, so it was a diverse committee that actually worked on that. So I think its goal was to try and provide some cultural perspectives on wildlife that we had in the valley.

DL: Okay -- I'm just reading off of my questions here -- have either of you really been in the Canadian Domain and seen the exhibits and the placards in ATKKT as I've shortened it to? As a zoo employee can you tell me what you think of the exhibit?

BJ: I think that I can respond to this and Andrea can respond as well. I'm pleased that we do have representation of other cultures on the zoo site here, other nations on the zoo site. I do understand -- because we're developing our own program -- we met with a cultural advisory committee and the issues that came out in the committee is that there wasn't a consensus in the committee about what information should be in the valley. It wasn't developed by the zoo it was by the First Nations Committee, and as a result there is a variety of First Nations perspectives, a variety of First Nations participants, and a variety

of time frames that they tried to put into signs. And I know as an interpreter that's fraught with danger you need have a voice and you can't represent all voices, and as a result I think as a staff member what I see reflected is because it's tried to meet the needs of many First Nations community members that have their own perspectives on what should be interpreted and how its interpreted and there was no consistent time frame for it – it cuts across centuries in terms of perspectives – that it becomes an interesting cultural interpretive trail, but I think it probably would have been better to take a perspective – one perspective – and stick with that because we want something that reflects the committee's perspective. But, having said that, as a Toronto Zoo member, it was a First Nations Committee that developed that, and they were happy with that, but we have our own program that you'll hear about that takes a different perspective, so I think that may be a better way of going.

AH: I will agree with Bob in saying that I respect what the committee put forward and that obviously as we have come to see working in this program, and working in the City of Toronto and such a large group of even First Nations its extremely difficult to come to one concise kind of point to put across. And I think being a zoo and such a large institution that attracts a wide group of people, I think that their only way was to pull from everywhere that they could to try and put forward a maybe more general approach. As an Aboriginal staff member, I would say it's extremely important to have our presence shown, and anywhere we can do that is important, and we will discuss more with you other ways our program has put forward having an Aboriginal presence on the zoo site as well as the conservation department.

DL: Great, thanks. So the next question I have is about Traditional Knowledge, and I wanted to know how could describe Traditional Knowledge to someone who has no idea what Traditional Knowledge is.

AH: Okay, I think that it is knowledge that is accumulated over time. I would explain that it is most-often translated orally. It is explanations and ways of knowing, ways of understanding a culture or a group or a religion or whatever it may be. A way of living. I think Traditional Knowledge is important not only for First Nations groups but in all cultural groups, and it's not always something that is written, but its something that is known, and as you grow and learn in your culture, that knowledge comes with you.

BJ: I would say, culturally, that every community culture has traditional knowledge, so it's not something we would assign to any one culture, it's representative of those cultures. In the case of First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Andrea and I work closely, and our minds are similar in our perspective in the knowledge and how it is oral. And it is our challenge because we have a program that has a lot of print resources and trying to do something that is oral is difficult. But from my perspective, Traditional Knowledge is something that is an accumulation of knowledge and allows communities to be cohesive

to pass on knowledge, to pass on traditions, ceremony, and that is not fixed in time: you don't go to a spot and say this is knowledge. It constantly evolves and changes as the culture changes and also not only does it make it sustainable but there are a lot ways to increase their chances of surviving perhaps inhospitable environments traditionally that is often places in time-specific but it does evolve so that the knowledge we may share today may be rooted in pre-history – certainly before our times – that has relevance today. It's not fixed it's not something that's traditional or archaic or quaint, it does evolve over time to represent the value of those communities. One of the subtitles of our program is Ways of Knowing, and I feel strongly about that, because there are different ways of knowing and from a cultural perspective I appreciate that because there is often...I'm a biologist, so I'm kind of a reductionist-traditionalist in terms of looking at the world, but there are different ways of seeing the world and knowing the world, and traditional knowledge to me is a really important source of interpreting our role and perhaps the relationship with people and the natural environment.

DL: Okay, that's great. Can you talk to me a little bit about why you would describe Traditional Knowledge in the particular way you described it? How did you learn to describe it in that way, perhaps is a better way of articulating my question.

AH: I think that as I work more with communities as I kind of grow in my understanding of my own culture of other cultures, the people of this territory I come to kind of understand everybody's understanding of Traditional Knowledge and therefore I can build my own understanding of what it is. I would say that when I first started this job my idea of Traditional Knowledge would be very different: three years later as I've worked with communities all across Ontario I've developed resources and had to figure it out for myself and I think I've really developed my own understanding. But, I think it's really come with working with people, working with community members and discussing Traditional Knowledge as an entity has really help me understand what it is. But in terms of my understanding previously, I'd say it lacked, for sure.

BJ: I agree, I was totally not informed at all about what Traditional Knowledge was; I had romantic views of it when I started. I can say fortunately I've learned from Kim – who coordinates the program – and Andrea that they are my sources of information. They've informed me a lot. Reading, that was my first response was to read, to go to literature, not from a Western perspective but the literature from First Nations, elders, and those First Nations communities. So it was reading, I guess was my primary source, but I struggled; I learned from speaking with communities, with elders – knowledge keepers – and I don't think I'll ever fully understand the power and the strength and the source of community that comes from that knowledge and living it, and not just talking about it. So I'm learning all the time.

DL: That's great. Do you think that – I should qualify in my statement, I mean other Canadians, I mean a regular Canadian, someone you could just pull off the street, basically someone who's not involved in the zoo in any way that would have exposure to this – they would describe Traditional Knowledge in the same way, or do you think it would be different, or kind of in the middle?

AH: Yeah, I would say it depends on which person you grab. Another First Nations person, maybe yes; a person who comes from a culture who also heavily based on Traditional Knowledge that has grown up with Traditional Knowledge – they can be First Nations or whatever – I think that they would give you its an understanding, but I think the average Canadian would not be able to give that answer. And I know even from my own personal experience and speaking with people who have not had their eyes open to Traditional Knowledge, I don't think the understanding is there, really.

BJ: I would agree, actually, I think there's a misunderstanding of the knowledge that First Nations bring in their discussions with their voice that is often overlooked because they present it in a different way and often it's done orally with a large story associated with it that people don't really understand that the knowledge is being transferred through story or orally and they want answers and they don't get answers. I think that the average Canadian doesn't understand the format that's used. I know the way you've got it here, the written it's small "tk" not capital "tk" [TK]. So I think small "tk", yes, intuitively they would understand it, but not necessarily formally as we have been discussing it here, and I think certainly that there are a lot of cultures here that are certainly traditional cultures, or less Westernized cultures that have knowledge and share it probably within Canada trying to hang on to that, and don't want their children to make the change. I think small "tk", I would say yes they would understand what that is, but I don't think it would be transferred to our First Nations communities in the same way; that's more hanging on to values and what brings community together and I think that's also oral and elders to youth. But I think capital "tk" [capital TK??] in terms of First Nations, that's a formalized process that's understood, and elders are valued and respected, and honoured, and I think that's the same "tk" – the small "tk" – that would occur in those other cultures, I think they would understand it if you pointed it out to them that there are similarities, but I don't think they'd understand the First Nations formal way of Traditional Knowledge unfortunately.

DL: I guess to add on to that as your answers sort of answered this question, but what do you think of people from outside of Canada? You had talked about cultures that might have Traditional Knowledge having a fairly decent understanding, but what about for those that don't or may not?

AH: I would say my answer's probably very similar. I think Toronto being as diverse of a city as it is, you really kind of get the most mixed bag of people. And I think Bob kind of

hit the nail on the head in saying that intuitively people would understand what traditional knowledge is. I mean every family has for whatever they may be discussing has traditions of things that are just carrying through generations that are specific to each family and I think that they have an understanding of that. But in terms of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge I would say that the understanding probably isn't there, no.

BJ: And I think that for me to look at this right away if you're outside of Canada there is an incredible, exciting diversity of Indigenous cultures outside Canada so I think from their perspective, yes, they would understand it. But if you're looking at other Western countries, then in fact the tendency is to try and Westernize and not value that diversity, so I would say no from that perspective. Although I think there are there are some countries, and I would say if you go to New Guinea or Indonesia and they don't have a clue about Canada but they would certainly value Traditional Knowledge within those traditional communities but unsure if Westernized Indonesians would value cultures. There's often reason economic or social there's reasons don't want those cultures there because it's holding up some economic development. For example, without being totally knowledgeable, I would *guess* at Australians may have a little more understanding of what that means, having recently recognized their own genocide with Aboriginal communities there, and having Aboriginals as a big part of their culture now and valuing their culture, so I think there are countries. I think Australians would probably understand and probably wonder why perhaps we are going so slow in our valuing of our Indigenous peoples. A couple of examples came to mind just while I was saying that was – I have two examples, one with the project in Puerto Rico I worked with an amphibian there – there was a Taino Indian from Puerto Rico and they were extirpated, and they recently found with all the gene mapping they found there are areas of Puerto Rico you can look at with gene frequencies and there are areas especially in the mountains that are isolated, and Puerto Rico is an island so it's obviously small, but there's high proportions of Taino bloodlines in the mountains, and all of a sudden nobody wanted to be Taino and all of a sudden that's being seen to an extent of something unique and Puerto Ricans think they're unique anyway so to be a unique Puerto Rican is a double bonus. And I've seen it recently in Mexico where they have Indian blood it was Spanish but mestizo was bad, but all of a sudden now there is a valuing of the Indian heritage in the culture. So I think in some places it's come full circle, but that's a minority.

DL. Yeah, that's great. I guess now on to your current sort of areas of work, and research. I was at the zoo proper I guess today and I walking around the Canadian Domain but also Tundra Trek and the First Nations Art Garden. So I wanted to know how the idea came along or came about to include Indigenous content in the First Nations Art Garden is fairly straight-forward, but in Tundra Trek, how the ideas came about and the same sort of question as with ATKKT.

BJ: I'll answer that because I don't think Andrea was part of that, but she can sort of comment about what she thinks about it. I haven't been out there that much myself. Again, Paul Harpley, who worked on the Aboriginal Trail in our valley, he was here at the time when that was developed. And he was further along in his doctorate, where he did focus on Far North for his doctorate, and he was looking at the relationship with people and landscapes, so when we developed that area – and you may have noticed there was as much landscape that is as much non-animal as it is animal, which is a bit unusual for a zoo – there are often cost factors involved with anything. We try to make our animal enclosures as big as they can be: we don't often look at the people side of it. But there was – and I give him credit – there was a recognition and a carving off of space that allowed us to try and demonstrate the relationship of people with the Far North as much as animals with the Far North, and that was always part from day one of the design process, but really that was Paul's so I can't really tell you that much about what went into that part of it.

In the First Nations Art Garden, I'm having a little bit of trouble...our program is called Turtle Island Conservation and the turtle is a big part of that. And one of the reasons we called it that, obviously I work in animal conservation, and now understanding the relationship between people to animals, the biodiversity of animals and the diversity of peoples as related. But the concept of Turtle Island in terms of an island that we're all on, and from a creation story, is the same as the Earth as being a blue sphere, an inhospitable void, so I see a lot of opportunities for understanding First Nations' Turtle Island concept as parallel to Earth as an island, and obviously trying to give First Nations...everything we do is at the bidding of communities. We don't go in and say we're going to do this: we get them to tell us what they want. We want to give a voice for First Nations peoples at the zoo and it wasn't our voice it was their voice, and we managed to gather together 30-40 and it turned out to be \$100 000.00 at the end of the day because of engineering issues more than anything else. We gathered together and we had a bidding on art that would illustrate the creation story and one little nice step off the path, and we had such great art concepts that it became an art garden that evolved because of the contributions that we got. It was hard to pick – in fact we picked two of the artists who were just amazing people and Andrea can tell you about them – and lastly the sign that we announced the area with that you saw was an artist that we didn't pick, but when we put it together his concept – you read the back of it – started from something, the Twin Towers he was painting, that was such an amazing interpretation, that was something that the whole world, and in fact to me it represented the tradition and gave it a modern context to something that impacted everybody including that artist, so we included a third piece of art at the time. It's organic we want it to grow, and we want it to be a place where First Nations voices are heard and not us speaking for them. And Andrea's been involved in it so...

AH: Yeah, I think that the First Nations Art Garden was a really exciting thing for our program and for the zoo as well; it gives an opportunity for First Nations visitors to come and see part of their culture reflected. For me it's interesting, it's been really exciting; as Bob said it's the community coming forward and we're facilitating everything coming together and there were people interested in putting their art in and there were people interested in having their story heard. Many of the plants in the garden were actually donated by people who wanted their medicines in the garden. All of our translations are done by community members who are supportive of our programs and are supportive of what the garden has to offer as a whole and I think that a big reason why the garden was implemented on the zoo is to show respect for the people of this territory, whether they be Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, whatever, it is their territory and they should be represented, so I think it's a great representation of First Nations people.

BJ: Why don't you talk a little bit with your relationship with Mississaugas of New Credit? This is their territory, so.

AH: Yeah. We have a strong relationship with the Mississaugas of New Credit -- who are out by Brantford if you're aware -- and we have done a lot of work with them discussing the history of Toronto and how they came to be. They were initially in this territory and they left in 1847 I believe to go towards Brantford but we've had a lot of contact and communication with them, and ensuring they support what we do here at the zoo and we're actually hoping to erect some signage that will represent them as a community and ensure that their voices are heard as well and that people know that this is their land.

BJ: I think one of the neatest things for me there is that they have a sacred grove at their community centre, and it's an oak grove, and there's little seedlings there that weren't growing there but now they're protecting it, and they actually sell some of those plants to the community and we were actually able to bring four or five of those oak trees back here so in a sense we've reinstated part of their sacred grove offspring back to their traditional alliance here at the Toronto Zoo and I think that those oak trees to me are a really strong voice that represents that community, so I think it's kind of a nice part.

DL: Yeah, absolutely. So both Tundra Trek and the Art Garden opened in 2010, correct?

AH: Ah, yes.

DL: Or was Tundra Trek in 2009? /Overlapping with AH: Yeah, Tundra Trek was 2009 & BJ: Yeah, 2009.

DL: Okay, so they're recent, very recent. So you had said, just to sort of reiterate the reason that the Indigenous content was placed in both of those spots was wanting to have a First Nations and Indigenous voice at the zoo, correct?

BJ: Yeah, again, the Tundra Trek was Paul's so I have to try and visage what he... but given the latter part of his career and the fact that he spent his time in the North with those communities, I would have to say yes that he was trying to give a voice on the site, and he was trying to be as authentic as he can, with the artifacts there. The boats, the motors, all came from the North. I still because I wasn't involved with it I'm not sure about the integrity, if it's Paul's voice or their voice. In our case, it's our community's voice not ours, we're a facilitator. In the case of Paul I think he was being as authentic as he can be, but I'm not sure if he's interpreting or he's presenting. So I'm not sure about that.

DL: Yep, that's totally true, totally valid. Did you want to add anything, or? [talking to Andrea]

AH: Yeah, I'm not too aware – I'd just started when Tundra Trek opened – but I know for sure I was here through the creation of our Art Garden and I would have to say its completely community voice so that's one thing I can say for sure.

BJ: And one thing that Paul has designed is in Tundra Trek there are station that we have Innu artists or Dene artists, Cree who actually come here and sell their artwork and they actually do interpretations of their art for our visitors. It's not always the best forum for that because people are often – its hard to compete with a polar bear for example – but I give credit in that it was designed so there would be an opportunity for interactions with visitors and I think that's something we need to do more of, actually.

DL: And it seems that both of you as staff members are really happy with the results of both the Art Garden and Tundra Trek from what you've been saying – in terms of the content and the community voices and stuff. Is that generally correct?

AH: With the First Nations Art Garden I would say I am for sure. In terms of the Tundra Trek, I know people go to it, I know people enjoy it, they're interested in the culture that exists there. I'm not from northern Canada, so I don't have an opinion on whether or not that voice is authentic because I don't know either, but I haven't had conversations with northern Canadians and whether or not they feel its authentic so I don't really feel right answering that. But I do know the community members who have come to visit our garden do like it, and so for them to be pleased pleases me.

BJ: Again from the way I see it, Tundra Trek is an interpretive, so I wouldn't lump the two together. The Art Garden isn't interpretive; it's a place of peace and spirits that our First Nations community have designed. [talking to Andrea] Were you there the day that

David came? David General is the artist, he came, he looked, he walked around quiet, he walked around there was weeds and stuff in the location and he picked a direction and he said “okay, I want my turtle here, and that pine tree, that turtle and the pine tree are part of the art”. He picked the landscape. We didn’t just say “okay, we’re going to put something here because we have space”. It’s design and its interpretation was designed for the place and the person that did it did it with that in mind, and had a sense of spirit in them and I think that comes through when you’re in the garden. It’s a place of peace, and our visitors when they go there, generally I think they respect that, and certainly First Nations persons when they go there they just stand there. I mean it’s not just reading, they read – there is information about the artist – but they are involved by it, and that to me is a measure of their voice, not necessarily how I think it works and I think they’re telling us that they’re satisfied with it. The other thing is that there are requests – several of them -- to put more art there, we want to put more art there. Part of it [talking to Andrea] you can talk about the boots, the moccasins, art is one thing. Another is in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission committees that are going across Canada, we have a strong wish to have something there in terms of the pain that First Nations communities went through in residential schools. And it isn’t my concept of the creation story, but I can think another representation of that part of the cultural history that was imposed on them being there and the pain that it would represent, a place for people to come and reflect; that to me is strong and I think the garden has a life of its own now, it’s not ours but its going to represent First Nations communities are doing that for us. The other thing I wanted to say about that was the Tundra Trek is finished it was designed it was completed and it’s done, but the Art Garden is unfinished, I don’t know when it will be; it’s growing it will change, it will be bigger and there will be more of it so I can’t say it’s finished its growing as our community feels it needs to grow.

AH: I think that another great aspect of it being a garden is that it’s always renewed, it’s always living, it’s always growing so that in itself is a message and a representation of First Nations communities across Ontario. We have also had requests, the Mississaugas of New Credit are pulling together right now a project that basically the idea behind it is creating moccasins that would be placed along or where there were First Nations people originally. I guess it would be a metal sculpture or steel or something and it would be a moccasin representative of the traditional people of that territory and we have had a request to have one placed in our garden, when the initiative gets rolling. I know they’re in the process of going through things with the City and everything, so we’ve been given a number of requests to continue the representation in the garden and have it be a growing source.

DL: That’s really interesting. Really interesting conception and project. That’s really *really* interesting. I guess for my next question moves away from what we were talking about in the zoo...but do you think the amount of knowledge people have learned or been

exposed to about Indigenous people in the last 25 years or so has changed? In asking this question I'm thinking of what's happened since the *Indian Act* came into legislation and how the different versions of it changed the interactions. So in 1985 there was Bill C-31 changing status, in 1951 there was a lot of the cultural ceremonies and aspects that were illegal became accepted again and that sort of thing. I guess what do you think, again the "regular Canadians" would know now that they wouldn't necessarily have known 25 years ago, ten years ago, that sort of thing.

AH: Well, being only 22 [DL and BJ laughing] I can only comment on what I have seen, but I'd have to say that it's an interesting topic because I do find there are two sides to the coin. I think that in working with this program and working with First Nations communities and non-First Nations communities, I think the awareness in youth and in people has definitely changed. I think there is much more of an awareness and I think the implementation into schools is better – is it great, no, could it be better, yes – but I think that it's a steady walk up hill, and I think people are definitely more aware of First Nations cultures, of the respect for the culture. The other side of the coin is that I often catch myself thinking that people are ignorant and that people have *no* idea what's going on, and I find myself in too many conversations I can count where people are completely unaware, don't even know what the Indian Act is. Some people aren't aware of the residential school system in general, which is always shocking to me, but I also think it's a reality of today, and I do think that that needs to change. An awareness of a culture that is so big and the fastest growing population in Canada, it's always shocking to me that people don't know. So I mean yes, I think there is ignorance, but I also think that it's better than it was, and I know that schools and going and working in schools what is taught today I wasn't taught. I guess I was in elementary school – what, fifteen years ago? – but even still it's changed, so I have to say that's a positive aspect, but do I think it could be better? 100 percent, yes.

BJ: I can agree with Andrea in that the vast majority of people have not changed in 25 years however that's the vast majority however there has been change. In one level – and I can use Caledonia as an example – where there is probably the majority of people's responses is that a First Nations community had no right to block a road, they were wrong, but there was also a group of people that understood that the blockade of the road was not a First Nations issue but it was a Government of Canada issue for not recognizing treaty rights, so I think that is probably a formal response. It is a vast minority, but some people...it was an issue of government failing its obligations. Then there are some that understand the rights that First Nations communities were promised legally, so they had every right to represent themselves in defense of those lands. Again, yes, has it changed, because twenty-five years ago nobody would have understood that those rights existed. And I have to speak to myself in that regard, so I think that there's a book – and I can't remember the darn name of the book – everybody here was mandated

to read it, [talking to Andrea] do you remember the book by the governor general's husband that I got from the library?

AH: Oh, *A Fair Country*?

BJ: *A Fair Country*. [talking to DL] Have you read *A Fair Country*?

DL: Uh...no...but there are a lot of books that reference it, so I have a feeling I've read parts of it.

BJ: It had a tremendous...has it changed, I would still say no, but the fact that it was published and the fact that it has such immediate recognition and acceptance. And again, it's not written by an Aboriginal, but it certainly...I got it here for the zoo and everybody in our program was told they had to read that book because it does tell non-Aboriginals that what I am as a Canadian, what I thought I was based on First Nations support and worldviews and help and that nation made what our nation is. We're all aware of Quebec and Ontario, and I think the same amount of biases creep in, but we're aware that we have two cultures, but really we have three cultures. Do Canadians know that? No they don't, so I sense that's an absolute failure of people understanding that we have three founding nations here, and not two, and not one. But the answer to that is certainly no. But I think it is changing. There is understanding and I'll use the word sympathy in its broader context to the rights of First Nations people who are trying to redress. But unfortunately that is overwhelmed by the knee-jerk reaction.

AH: Another thing that I will add, is just things that I've noticed just working in the school board is even the idea of an Aboriginal liaison for schools to implement curriculums to push the Aboriginal education has only really come into play in I'd say the last 5 years. I've been speaking with a lot of educators liaisons, and their positions only started for this year, or maybe they've only been working there for three years. But I do think that the change starts with the young generation, and maybe fingers crossed in fifteen years somebody will be able to say yes. I do think that changed. Seeing that now we are just at the beginning of that implementation is sad to see, but it's happening.

DL: Yeah, it's actually...I find it interesting that depending on what province or territory you're in the implementations happened or are happening of have yet to happen. In the Prairies it was in the 80's and in Ontario it was 2006 or 2005, so it's very interesting how it's coming to be.

BJ: It's interesting that you brought up the areas again. Even in Ontario if you go to Six Nations or in Six Nations it's fine, but if you go to outside Six Nations there's a long historical conflict that's gone on. You go to Manitoulin Island and it's totally different. And I was shocked, to be honest that there was this total...it wasn't like there was this

“us” and “them”. So I guess it’s based on the tradition of the surrounding communities as well.

DL: [to AH] do you have something else you’d like to add?

BJ: I was going to say something but I forgot what it was, but we can come back.

DL: Okay, yeah, once you remember we’ll come back of course.

I guess to continue, sort of along that in terms of what people don’t know, or are unfamiliar with, do you think there are particular stereotypes that still exist about Indigenous peoples, and what they are, what the impacts of them are, if they’re positive or negative that sort of thing.

AH: Absolutely, 100%. Yes, I do think that stereotypes do still exist. On a number of levels, I think that stereotypes exist regarding clothing, reserves, education, almost every aspect of life. I think that there are stereotypes that exist; unfortunately for the most part I think they’re obviously negative or incorrect. Even the stereotypes where a child, thinking an Indigenous person always wears regalia. Or that they live in teepees or the romanticized idea of what an Indian is, but also youth on reserves, and even the media’s portrayal of Indigenous people in Canada in general is only fueling that fire so unfortunately they do exist and I would say for the most part that they are negative, and I think a lot more can be done to highlight the positive aspects of Indigenous culture in Canada.

BJ: I’m not going to add much more to what Andrea said. What I was going to say and it relates to this as well is that there are definitely stereotypes and the stereotypes exist because First Nations have not been given a voice, and still don’t have a voice, and a lot of the cultural perspectives that they would have been brought in that voice have been lost. Because there are so few speakers, these stereotypes actually overwhelm those that are trying to represent what their cultural and survival goals are. So I think the stereotypes exist because there is nobody to give that voice there is no voice because they’re disenfranchised because of the loss of culture the methods they would use to bring a voice to the table – and the Indian Act and the whole thing in Northern Ontario right now where there’s a crisis going on and someone else is being sent in to solve the problem when they’re quite capable of solving the problems they have a voice – so it’s unfortunate yes that there are stereotypes. And I think it’s one reason why we have our Turtle Island Conservation Programs because part of our goal is we definitely want to provide a voice, and in fact it’s one of the reasons why we’re creating a voice and our translations because the words have been lost and using elders and knowledge keepers to create words. But if the language is lost and without language there cannot be culture and part of the things we’re trying to work on is creating that youth-elder dialogue, so there is a voice that is being passed on from the elders to the youth, but there is such a

challenge because all of those relationships have been lost. But again I think part of our role here is to provide that voice but also provide a forum where non-Aboriginals get some sense of understanding of the depth of knowledge and tradition and the important role that First Nations communities can bring to the Canadian context. So we're trying to do that. We do less of it, and we spend more time giving a voice than helping the understanding of non-Aboriginals of Aboriginal culture, and we've been so consumed working with our First Nations partners that we've done that. But I think that's a role for an institution, and it would be a role for us it would be to try and provide a forum where those stereotypes are challenged and really ultimately corrected with the truth.

DL: Well, our hour is almost up, so I guess is there anything else that you wanted to talk about that we haven't covered in terms of current initiatives, the previous questions, anything really in particular that you wanted to mention?

Ah: Yeah, I think that discussing with you some of the things our program is doing currently to try and fight these negative stereotypes and everything that we've discussed. Our main focus, the past year I guess, or eight months, more than a year, has been the creation of a curriculum and story that was created by First Nations people and is built to educate youth on Traditional Knowledge but also issues of biology and conservation. And I think the curriculum and the story does a good job of bridging the gap between Traditional Knowledge and Western science. We have piloted it in two communities and taken the best aspects of it and scrapped the worst and I think made it a really great resource that has balance, and we are hoping to implement it in schools across Ontario; both First Nations schools and non-First Nations schools. And it is all authentic voice, which is step one. That has been successful thus far, and we're hoping that it really takes off within the next year. Another thing that we do is outreach presentations to First Nations schools and non-First Nations schools, which I think is a really important aspect of the program because we are – myself and my coordinator are First Nations people and are speaking on behalf of the communities – going into a school and educating youth on kind of both sides, the Western side and Traditional Knowledge provides an understanding that it's possible that that gap can be bridged. Another big aspect is language resources and as Bob said language is a really important aspect of culture, so we do do work with communities who translate as much as we can. Turtle identifier guides, we have a frog call CD that is translated into both Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe languages. Those are the communities we work with most, we are an Ontario-based program so we can only hit so many First Nations but, yeah, I would say there is a big focus on language, and in understanding that language is something first and foremost is something that needs to be preserved. So I think that's exciting, for us and for others. And the production of our resources is important obviously as well.

I don't know, I feel like I'm missing things.

BJ: Just mention the mapping exercise

AH: Yeah. Another thing we've put forward as a program last summer is a web database for First Nations who are interested. It's kind of a cultural mapping project. It was designed on Google Maps and the idea is you can culturally map your territory or you know anywhere you find significant, whether it be a story or a traditional powwow grounds or somewhere where the fish were plentiful 100 years ago. And it's an opportunity to provide a living resource for youth and for elders to preserve that information. So the website you can kind of plot your area and there's an opportunity to upload a video of maybe an elder speaking about it or a child speaking about it. And the web space is specifically for that community, so they hold the rights to it and nobody else can access it except them, so it's kind of a private, living resource for that community and provides another way for them to build on their traditional knowledge and the knowledge of their community and ensure that it's there for generations to come.

BJ: I think that to me is something that hasn't been all that successful I'll be honest, there are several issues. I think the primary one is that there are several communities that we work in are under-resourced and the one person who can organize getting the elders together to share knowledge that we take out...the big issue is that elders are dying, and the knowledge as they die is lost, it is a repository of information. But the person who does that is the economic development officer or the teacher of the school that has for kids so it's so hard for us to get them to sit down and organize...I mean it's a total lack of resources that held that program back, because it takes a lot of time to archive everything. Some communities want to use it just to scan photographs that go back as they can, while they have people living they know who they are and who they're related to and what they did in the community. Others have tremendous amounts of resources that are historic documents of their first land rights signed by King George and they're sitting in boxes in a basement rotting away that they can't just do anything with, there isn't a place to put it. We can scan them for them and get them archived. So I think because its owned by the community and nobody has rights to it but them, but it was our goal that First Nations communities share their resources and one community talk to another so we're an intermediary between First Nations themselves communicating across each other because they did share fishing rights and trading rights, and trading routes and family's names and a history that could be recreated so we still have that part, because – I'm the curator of reptiles and amphibians I run reptile and amphibian conservation programs – it's a sense of our wish to recognize that traditional way of doing conservation doesn't always work and that other cultures – First Nations and Asian and Tamil, whatever – have something to bring to the table if they have a chance to have a voice. And in that context we want to make sure that all of that knowledge is not lost, and again as a Canadian I feel strongly about my obligation to having a founding part of this country – I'm proud to be Canadian but I also want to be proud of the fact that what I

am is determined by a voice that has been silenced and that's a voice that's needed. And that's a sense of why. We're a small part of the Toronto Zoo, but I feel that it's our obligation as an institution – and our department and our staff – are playing that role within it, and I can only wish that this was common component of every industry and every cultural group in the country. Hopefully what you're doing is going to commit to that.

The mapping one, to me again, I've got to say that's such a powerful tool. I just sent another email yesterday to Georgina Island, we're trying to work with Andrea's group up there, but they're busy and they've got a project and the funds to do it, but they just can't get it done and we're saying "we'll do it for you", but that's a strong thing. But I think their program now is really a tremendous program. The biggest thing from our point of view is that people would ask "why is Toronto Zoo here"? There is no trust. We've managed, and because of the honest of the program, and the honesty of the staff that we have working for us that we have total trust with our First Nations partners and we have a tremendous sense of obligation now since we can disrupt that. And that's why we don't go in with our perspective and our values: it's their voice that we're reflecting and that's helped us get that trust. We have access now to people and information that took a long time to come because y'know it's been abused for centuries, so I think what we have is trying to develop a model for First Nations communities but also for non-First Nations organizations to take responsibility for what their role can be.

DL: Thank yous etc for the rest of the tape.

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