Intotemak

FALL 2015 VOL. 44 NO.3

Indigenized Settlers • 2
Every Year Eagles • 5
Drop Another Season's Promise in the Ground • 8
Homo Energeticus • 13
Following the Road to Oz • 16

editorial

Indigenized Settlers

Steve Heinrichs
is Director, Indigenous Relations with Mennonite Church Canada

—

"You need to indigenize yourselves."

These were the words from gkisedtanamoogk, a Wabanaki teacher speaking to colleagues in a social justice circle. "Indigenize yourselves." It was an imperative that made people anxious. Indigenize ourselves? The fear of appropriation – we once ignored and despised their knowledge, now we embrace and take – runs deep. Yet this elder knew what he was saying. To live well with host peoples and lands, Settler society needs to engage the gifts and knowledges of Indigenous peoples. We need to open hearts and hands... and indigenize ourselves.

"For centuries," write Emma Lowman and Adam Barker, "Indigenous people have had to learn to understand how Settler people think and know the world as a matter of survival."[1] And now the time has come for the guests to do what we always should have done: respect, reciprocate, and rejoice as we "take up the responsibility of learning about... the worldviews of the specific peoples on whose lands Settlers live."

It's not an easy task. Yet we aren't alone. We have so many brilliant elders in our Judeo-Christian tradition who have walked this good path. They are ready to help; from the poets of Proverbs – who matched Egyptian knowledge with Israel's lady wisdom – to the missionary Matteo Ricci – who dressed, ate, and talked Confucian; from the apostle Paul – who revelled in Greek cosmological categories – to the Green Sisters – Catholic women who reimagine Christ through the ecology of the land.

Indigenizing ourselves does not mean that we Settlers give up our identity. It does not mean that we cease being Christian. It means curious wrestling with and celebration of knowledges that have been in these lands for thousands of years. Imagine if many of us took up the challenge?

A few months ago, I sat by a fire. For eighteen days, a couple hours each day, I sat by that fire, pondering what the gospel might look like if it was "Indigenized." I played with the gospel of Mark (see page 3), and in the tradition of Clarence Jordan (see his Cottonpatch Gospels), tried to unsettle the Scriptures. I wrote pages (I don't know if any of it's good). "But I'm trying, and I share my 'beginnings' (see opposite page) as I invite you to share yours. Blessings friends, as we continue this walk. I am so grateful that we are in this together.

Clarence Jordan in the cottonpatch.
IMAGE: KOINONIA FARM

1 Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada (Fernwood, Winnipeg: 2015), 20.

The Gospel in Muddy Waters

Mark 1: 1-15

2015.
Winnipeg, Manitoba.
Treaty 1 Territory.

*This is the life-giving word of a Cree woman named **Amanda**, gift of the Creator.*

Interpretation by Steve Heinrichs.

—

It began just as the elders foretold: "A time is coming, and has always been; voices cry out,

'Honour the waters; revere the soil!

Tear up pavement; and make way for the wild.'"

Sandeep was an uncivilized voice in the heart of the city. An uncredentialed, 77 year old urban farmer, he wore nothing but hand-me-downs. Like his grandparents and great-grandparents, Sandeep lived in the North End, not far from the River Red, eating local foods and speaking his hope of a better way - an old way of human being. Sandeep called people to share all they had, to live simply, to care for the land and follow her ways. And he lived it. Most people in the neighbourhood loved the old man and loved to be with him. He was strange and eccentric, sincere and selfless. Many from the 'burbs came to see and hear him. Sandeep welcomed them like everyone else. Yet if they were well-heeled or looking for the latest craze, his welcome was tough. Sandeep didn't tolerate pretense. Folks needed to get serious about walking this different path, and they needed to show it, even now, or it would be too late.

One day, Sandeep was planting garlic in the neighbourhood garden when he said to his friends, "Some may be tempted to celebrate me, making me a hero. But I'm just a regular guy like you, trying to do what's right. Bend your ears to the earth and set your eyes on Creator. That's all we need. Put your feet and heart right there," he said, pointing to the dark soil in a cupped, wrinkled hand, "and that'll lead everyone in a good way."

Not long later, a young woman came from a mining town in the far north-east, and moved into a basement suite in the North End. Her name was Amanda. She visited Sandeep often. Every day, for weeks on end, they got together. They would tend the garden and Sandeep would talk about things that needed changing in their community. They would sit by the chicken barn, drink rose-hip tea, and pray. One time, when Amanda was weeding, Sandeep said, "How we keep the land tells us everything about God and each other." Looking up, Amanda saw ravens circling not far above. And she immediately felt a voice, coming from below, up through toes dug into dirt. The voice moved her and said, "I am you and you are mine; live this and invite others to my joy."

The Spirit then compelled Amanda to take some time alone. She went out to Treaty 2 Territory, to Riding National Park, and camped there for a good while. She didn't take any food with her. She just wanted to see God. And the animals and spirits tended to her.

Intotemak
my friends

PUBLICATION # 40012495
FALL 2015 | VOL. 44 NO. 3

EDITOR
Steve Heinrichs
sheinrichs@mennonitechurch.ca

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Ingrid Miller
imiller@mennonitechurch.ca

ART DIRECTOR / DESIGNER
Ryan Roth Bartel
& Matt Veith

Printed by CP Print Solutions

Intotemak
MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA
C/O INDIGENOUS RELATIONS
600 SHAFTESBURY BLVD
WINNIPEG MB
TREATY 1 TERRITORY
R3P 0M4

204.888.6781
TOLL FREE 1.866.888.6785
FAX 204.831.5675

mennonitechurch.ca

COST OF PUBLICATION $20/yr

Donations above the cost of publication will receive a tax-deductible receipt. Please send payment by cheque, VISA or MasterCard.

Cheques are payable to Mennonite Church Canada/Intotemak.

"Intotemak"
translates as "my clan" and are people who walk in solidarity.
Intotemak is a quarterly magazine, published by Mennonite Church Canada.

ON THE COVER

COVER IMAGE: FREEIMAGES.COM /ALEXANDER KOKINIDIS

ᑳᓛᐁᓯᔭᓇᐠ 3:26-29

26 ᐁᑌᐧᐯᔦᓂᒉᐠ ᐅᓵ ᙭ ᒋᓴᔅ, ᑲᑭᓇ ᑲᐅᒋᐅᑯᓯᓯᒥᓅᐠ ᒥᘐᒪᓂᑐ᙮ 27 ᑲᑭᓇ ᓴ ᑲᑕᔑᔦᐠ, ᑲᑭᓯᑲᐊᑕᔑᔦᐠ ᒋᐧᐃᒋᐧᐁᐠ ᙭, ᒥᑕᐢ ᐁᔑᓇᑯᓯᔦᐠ ᐁᑭᑭᐢᑲᒧᐧᐁᐠ ᐧᐃᐣ ᐃᑯ ᙭ ᐅᐱᒪᑎᓯᐧᐃᐣ᙮ 28 ᐊᐊ ᑕᐢ ᒍ, ᐊᐊ ᑲᔦ ᑲᒍᐧᐃᐧᐃᓯᐠ, ᐊᐊ ᑲᔦ ᐅᐸᒥᑕᑫ, ᐊᐊ ᑲᔦ ᑲᑎᐯᓂᑎᓯᐣ, ᐊᐊ ᐃᓂᓂ, ᐊᐊ ᐃᐧᑫ, ᑳᐧᐃᐣ ᐯᐸᑳᐣ ᐃᓅᑕᑯᓯᓯᐧᐊᐠ᙮ ᑲᑭᓇ ᓴ ᑭᓇᐧᐊ ᑭᐯᔑᐧᑫᑕᑯᓯᐣ ᐃᐃᒪ ᙭ᐃᐢ᙮ 29 ᑭᐢᐱᐣ ᑕᐢ ᙭ᐃᐢ ᐃᔑᑎᐯᑕᑯᓯᔦᐠ ᑭᓇᐧᐊ ᐃᓴᐣ ᐁᐸᕓᐊᐊᒥᐢ ᑭᑐ ᑕᑲᓄᓯᐣ, ᑭᑲᑌᐱᓇᒧᐧᐊᐣ ᑲᔦ ᑭᘐᒪᓂᑐ ᑲᑭᐊᓭᑕᒪᑫᐣ᙮

Galatians 3:26-29

26 For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. 28 There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

First Nations individuals and communities are seeking a way out of the hegemony of American colonial Christianity in the hopes of finding a place longed for – for a long time. What [Indigenous Christians] are seeking is a place where the gospel brings freedom and spiritual power to follow Jesus with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength, while still fully embracing our tribal identity, traditional customs, cultural forms, worldview and rituals. We seek a place where we are no longer seen as the perpetual mission field of the dominant culture church, but rather a place where we are honestly embraced as coequal participants in the life, work and community of Christ's followers – as Indigenous people.

-RICHARD TWISS (LAKOTA)
from *Rescuing Theology from the Cowboys* (2015)

Every Year Eagles

Teresa Diewert
is a 57 year old gramma of 5, living as a guest on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish People, struggling to make sense of her relationship to this land and its people. Teresa is a member of Grandview Calvary Baptist Church in Vancouver.

While Streams of Justice prepared itself for the annual Murdered and Missing Women's Memorial March, I crafted a lament.

We participate in the march and we have tried to bring our experience of it, and our response to it, to the Christian practice of lament.

The tradition of lament is a millennia-old discipline taken on by those who find themselves in situations of intense pain, horrific loss, or a profound sense of abandonment. This tradition has been largely lost in the practice of the church, maybe because we generally do not find ourselves in these places, given our privilege and commitment to the status quo. I was struck this year by the appropriative nature of what we were doing – as if our lament could be seen as legitimate or "enough" in terms of a response to this issue.

I have been involved on a personal journey of decolonizing for many years, have been influenced by many different people but have found little encouragement from the Christian community I am a part of. For the most part I feel like I am failing, that I am on the wrong path, that I am doing this all wrong. But, it is the only path I have and so I keep going...

---

every year the eagles come
everyone gets a blessing – a sign of hope

but I feel there is such darkness in this blessing – so little light
in my own heart…

this lamenting even
leaving me with a feeling that I am not doing it right

I am an outsider in so much of the "work" I do these days
I am outside of the pain
I am outside of the suffering.

It is not mine.

My children are here with me
they all walk with me on the march
we walk together,
smiling at one another
I walk with such feelings of pride in my children,
bringing their children
to bear witness
to honour those who have known inexplicable pain

and why…

Why does this happen; continue to happen?

land

From the very beginning of the Colonial project
people with powerful visions came up against
people with powerful ways of living
on the land
and the people with the powerful visions
destroyed
those living on the land
put them on tiny pieces
of land
when they had only known how to live on the whole of the land
they had only wanted to live on the land they had known

Holistically, Respectfully, Simply

land

the patriarchal colonial project – its gendered
violence - with its vision of a country
coast to coast, sea to sea
took the very soul of the first peoples.

When you take the soul, the pain is great, the suffering is immeasurable.
When you take the land and what is living on it and extract what is living in it,
the displacing impact
is a suffering and pain that cannot be relieved
through agreements made

IN BAD FAITH
agreements for the use of land for the betterment of white people.

When you take the children, the pain is great, the suffering is immeasurable.
When you take the women, the pain is great, the suffering is immeasurable.

Just think about it for a moment….
It is gendered violence.
It is too much …

The consequences were searing pain - still are searing pain.
expressed in so many ways in so many communities all over Turtle Island.

but this, this pain – the disappeared, the murdered, grammas, mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, friends

It is a symptom of
patriarchal state
sanctioned
gendered
violence
and it is too much, too long, too deep.

But still it is not my pain.

So where is my place in lament – a tradition that gives space for those who suffer
to cry out.

I can only make space
for pain to be heard
to be held
here, now.

We must make space in our hearts and in our lives so that pain
can enter into that space in our hearts as fully as possible
so fully that there is no room for complacency
no room for acceptance
of a system that is continuing to
produce
Murdered and Missing Women.

Their bodies still pile up…

and

every year the eagles come…

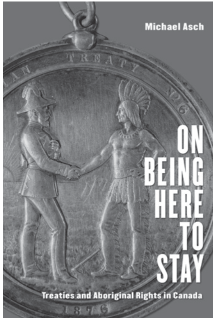
and everyone gets a blessing

And they are filled with joy

in that moment.

Welcomed into Treaty

A Canadian Story



A review of Michael Asch's, *On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada*. (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2014

Ryan Siemens
is pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He is a settler and member of Treaty 6.

Last December, I visited Ottawa for the first time, and like many pilgrims to the nation's capital, I toured Parliament Hill, the heart of our democratic and national identity. As the young historian toured us through these majestic halls of power, we were told an origin story familiar to us all. Canada is the coming together of two primary peoples, the British and the French, and as one enters into the Holy of Holies (the Commons), the story of these peoples are told in the Archways of the two entrances.

Canada – it's the French and British coming together at Confederation. There was no dramatic revolutionary war; no signing of a declaration of independence; simply a love story of two peoples coming together and giving birth to a nation. And the rest, they say, is history.

Our young tour guide, faithful to the traditional telling of Canada, did not mention that the Dominion of Canada was established on someone else's land.

As I have journeyed deeper into the origins of Canada and have listened to the voices of those whose history here is much longer than mine, questions arise. What gave the Crown, and later the Dominion Government, the legitimacy and authority to claim these lands? Divine right? Rule of law? Might? Michael Asch, in his book, *On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada,* suggests that all the traditional reasons used to justify Canada's requisition of land basically amount to the myth of European superiority. Consider Tom Flanagan's justification for European takeover (Flanagan is a professor at the University of Calgary, an influential writer on Indigenous issues who used to advise Stephen Harper). According to Asch, "Flanagan's argument is that the superiority of our way of life, our offer to share it, and the benefits that have accrued to Indigenous peoples through our presence here justifies the position that the principle of temporal priority does not apply when it comes to taking their lands" (53). European takeover was to the Indigenous' benefit. It was good we came here, Flanagan and others argue, because we have made their lives better.

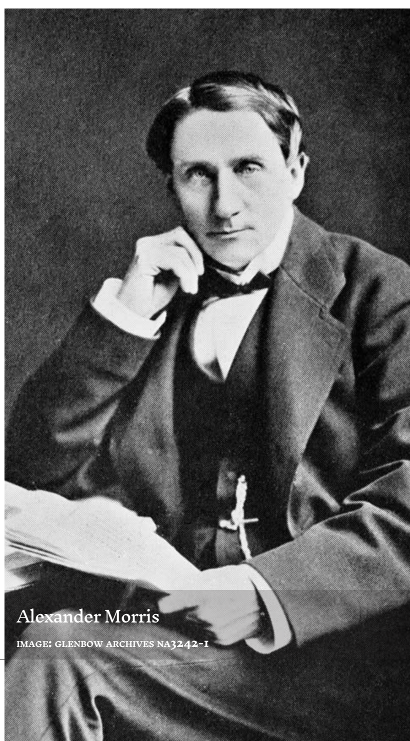
IMAGE: PUBLIC DOMAIN

Yet this rationale from the 19th century no longer holds up (as if it ever did). Asch writes: "With the passing of the era of European colonization, the world community has come to understand that the notion of the West's 'Civilizing Mission' is a presumption born of arrogance that constituted nothing more than a self-serving rationalization designed to justify European powers' subjugation of peoples with a legitimate right to self-determination"

We are here to stay. Yet the same must be said of the Indigenous peoples in these lands, and their rights and self-determination.

(54). There was no justification for Europeans to take over the land and subjugate Indigenous peoples and land to their will. So what do we do now? As Asch points out, there are too many of us to "go back." We are here to stay. Yet the same must be said of the Indigenous peoples in these lands, and their rights and self-determination. So how can we move forward?

The answer is in Treaty. Without re-writing all of Asch's good arguments,



Alexander Morris

IMAGE: GLENBOW ARCHIVES NA3242-1

Treaty is the redeeming factor in Canada's relationship with First Nations. While many Canadians view treaties and treaty making as "a momentary event in our history, merely one small step in the story of our development as a civic nation," the Chiefs and the Crown's representative, particularly Alexander Morris (1826-1889), understood this process to be something much more.

By signing Treaty, Morris understood that we Settlers were being welcomed to live in this land. Treaty gave us the right to move in and cultivate the land. When Canadians talk about Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, the argument is usually backwards. The tone is often, "Why should they have special rights," when in actuality we should be asking, "What gave us the right?" Again, the answer is Treaty. Without Treaty, Canada's claim to the land is null and void. As long as we live into the Covenant (Treaty) signed by the Crown and the Chiefs, and abide by that Covenant, we have legitimacy. We have something to hold, too, and claim.

Canada has continually failed to live into the spirit and intent of the Treaties as expressed by her own representatives. Yet if we seek to honour those promises our governments made nearly 150 years ago, perhaps we can incarnate that initial vision. Perhaps 150 years from now, when someone tours the halls of Parliament, it will not simply be a story about two peoples coming together to forge a new country, but a story of Treaty, of how host peoples welcomed foreigners into their land, to live and work beside them, as long as the sun shines and the river flows.

Drop Another Season's Promise in the Ground:

or, A Long Forgotten Lonely Cairn of Words

Fran Kaye

Fran Kaye lives in Nebraska and Calgary. She teaches in the English department at the University of Nebraska (Lincoln). For many years, Fran has been involved in prison education and healing circles. She's also an activist who has worked for decades against the death penalty. In this piece, she reflects on the impact of colonialism on a close friend and relative, the ways that colonialism continues to fracture communities, and the ways individuals and communities are resisting it.

—

For Ta Sunka Opi
(my brother),

December 21, 1952
—September 20, 2014

IMAGE PROVIDED

My title comes from a Stan Rogers song, "The Field behind the Plow," a tribute to prairie farmers, but it could as well be for academics, going industriously to conferences, hoping to teach and to learn. I'm an academic. I go to conferences and write books and articles. I wrote this for a 2014 conference about music and literature in western North America. And so this essay will be about conferences and stories and songs and some of the seeds that, sometimes to my surprise and delight, have grown in the "straight dark rows" of academia. Though sometimes I wonder if papers are left ineffectually, like the explorers' "long forgotten lonely cairns of stones," in the great Stan Rogers song *Northwest Passage*. So--it is 1983, in Rockport, Maine, at the cusp of September and October, when the ocean is still phosphorescent and the maples have not yet turned to scarlet. I am at a conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in the US. I am giving a paper for which I now have only the title. What I do remember is that there I met Canadian Singer-Songwriter Connie Kaldor, who gave me two extraordinary gifts. First, she sang Stan Rogers' "Northwest Passage." Second, Connie told me to read Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*. I did, and it has been ever since one of the books I turn to, both in memory and in teaching. And of course we talked of Canadian Author Margaret Laurence, one of the original champions of *Halfbreed*, whose books I had first read in the 1970s. Any country that can produce a Margaret Laurence and a Stan Rogers is a world class culture.

Yet as much as I love *Northwest Passage*, it is a song of hegemony, of imperialism, of the great post-Columbian land grab, about "seeking gold and glory" and not acknowledging, as Laurence and Campbell so pointedly do, that the "land so wild and savage" through which the explorers travel is a homeland that was known and loved and thoroughly inhabited long before colonizers "McKenzie, David

Thompson, and the rest." Decolonization is the "roaring Fraser" river I have been racing to the sea through my career, both in my writing and teaching and in my life, yet I wonder if I have been more or less effectual than the drinking and drugging that Maria describes in *Halfbreed* or that characterizes Lazarus Tonnerre in Laurence's *Diviners*, or the Native men and women in my own life who cry out their pain and resistance from the streets, the prisons, the rehab centers, and my living room.

Northwest Passage definitely acknowledges that the imperialistic greed that drove the explorers is still admired. Franklin, like Columbus and many Europeans in between, was seeking "the sea route to the Orient for which so many died./ Seeking gold and glory, leaving weathered broken bones/ And a long forgotten lonely cairn of stones." The singer presents himself, or herself, seeking a personal Northwest Passage, "through the night behind the wheel, the mileage clicking West." There is an explicit comparison to the earlier explorers: "like them I left a settled life, I threw it all away." Only to find, at the end of the journey "the road back home again." Even the chorus is explicit: "Tracing one warm line through a land so wild and savage." *One Warm Line* is the title of a documentary on Stan Rogers. Before I looked up the lyrics, I was unsure if the word was "warm" or "more." "More" would acknowledge that there were thousands of lines across the land, from the caribou migrations to the individual paths of families who moved across the land carefully anticipating the resources of fruit and game and fish that made it home. "Warm" is eerily prescient of the seismic lines, the highway surveys, the black snakes, as the Oglala people call them, full of oil and gas, that are contributors to the climate change that is warming the seas and have thus made a Northwest Passage navigable and open to further energy exploration and exploitation. Rogers recognized the venal nature of the explorers as much as he admired them. What he doesn't recognize in *Northwest Passage* is that there was a highly satisfactory "settled life," at least in the sense of purpose and comfort, in established routines, in both the arctic and the "mountain ramparts." Certainly it was difficult, and want and even starvation were not strangers, but it worked.

McClelland and Stewart published Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* in 1973, the second book by a Native Canadian woman to appear in Canada since the death of Pauline Johnson in 1913. (Anahareo published *Devil in Deerskins*, about her life with Grey Owl in 1970, and an earlier version in 1940.) Later, working with the white improviser Linda Griffiths and others, Campbell would develop her story into the play *Jessica*, successfully produced in Saskatoon at the end of 1982. Linda subsequently rewrote the play and it was produced in Toronto in 1986, winning theatre awards. A project to publish the text of the 1986 play ended up as *The Book of Jessica*, a dialogue between Maria and Linda. How can you overthrow the bitter fruit of class and race and gender oppression unless you demand reconciliation between all parties, just as restorative justice circles do for the crimes of every day? More than *Halfbreed*, then, *Jessica* is a work of restoration for all the community of Canada and North America. Linda, like Laurence's protagonist Morag in *Diviners*, claims as her

IMAGE: FREEIMAGES.COM/SIMONSTRATFORD

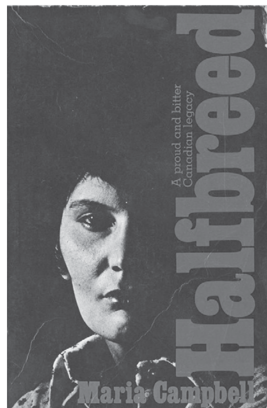


IMAGE PROVIDED

own Canada and her solidarity with Riel's Métis. There is a song that Linda pounds out, a rhythm through which she sees "dark drunk faces, . . . [that] could have been mixed bloods of the New World, or dispossessed Scots, Irish, and Welsh of the Old." "*We're drinking tonight for a change, for a change, we're drinking tonight for a change. We're drinking the tears of a thousand years, we're drinking tonight for a change*" (42, italics in original).

Margaret Laurence published *Diviners* just a year after *Halfbreed.* Long before "cultural appropriation" entered the language or consciousness of most North Americans, Laurence was writing what she could see publicly of the Indigenous people she knew and thus of her Indigenous characters. An exception is the songs her Métis hero creates. Skinner ends his song for his father, "But Lazarus, oh man, you didn't die." Both Skinner and Laurence resist the rhetoric of defeat that still hovers around names like Bartoche and Wounded Knee. Skinner's song for his father begins, "Lazarus, he was the king of Nothing/ Lazarus, he never had a dime/ He was sometimes on relief, he was permanent on grief/ And Nowhere was the place he spent his time," which sounds as if the song will be another elegy. But Lazarus got married. Lazarus had children, and one of them is telling his father's story. Lazarus's generation, that of Maria Campbell's father, managed to keep the people alive in a time without rational hope but in the belief that the people would go on. "Lazarus, he never cut his throat there/ Lazarus, he never met his knife/You think that isn't news, just try living in his shoes/ Oh, Lazarus, he kept his life for life." Laurence avoids the elegy, though she acknowledges it. Laurence does not allow Lazarus and Piquette to become victims only. Yes, they, like Maria Campbells' family, are dispossessed: "He shot rabbits there for meat where his ancestors had shot the buffalo." Yes, they are wounded. Yes, they articulate their pain through alcohol and a self-destructive refusal to follow the rules of the town. But, like Skinner, the folk singer, they are not voiceless. The drunk in the gutter may be "revolting" in more ways than you know, his inability or unwillingness to assimilate, get with the program, clean up his act, get a job, for KEE-RYST's sake, a way of fighting back against The Man, of bearing witness that everything is *not* alright, that all is not solid prosperity and Presbyterianism as the town fathers want to believe.

Working in the prisons has changed my life in profound and extraordinarily positive ways. I can never repay the guys for all they have taught me of being human and especially of being Native in North America.

When I came to the University of Nebraska in 1977, my primary responsibility was for Great Plains literature and Great Plains studies, so Native American issues were

clearly part of my beat. By the early 1990s, my career secure and my son in school, I began to volunteer with NASCA, the Native American Spiritual and Cultural Awareness group in the Nebraska State prison system. I began slowly, going to powwows at the penitentiary once a term, just as an outsider. It was a way to put my white privilege to use—let the prison administration know that there was another white person with the right to sign letters as "Dr." who was paying attention to Oyate Wanji, one people, born out of the Red Power movement that had turned NASCA from a simple "Indian club" to an organization guaranteed by the federal court and Judge Warren Urbom as a serious human right. I notice, looking back over my cv, that this is about the time my conference papers began changing from their general Great Plains focus to a more specific concern with Native issues, and particularly to the interface between white-stream and Native societies and cultures. Working in the prisons has changed my life in profound and extraordinarily positive ways. I can never repay the guys for all they have taught me of being human and especially of being Native in North America.

I've learned the most, though, from those who have been released and those who are on the street, the men like Lazarus and the women like Maria who shout and have shouted their pain and disfranchisement through drugs and alcohol. Always be polite to the drunk Indian on the corner—he may be my brother. And ultimately, your brother, too. And just a moment to say, here, lest we start talking about stereotypes, not all Indians are drunks. While alcohol and substance abuse are greater killers among Native people than among North Americans in general, Native people are the most likely demographic to be total abstainers, also. That's not surprising—if everyone knows that you don't drink, then no one is offended that you will not drink with him or her. Which brings me to the story of my brother. As Dakota ethnologist Ella Deloria has pointed out many times, in Lakota and Dakota society, we *are* all related. That is not a metaphor. Fictive kin relationships are based on function. Am I acting like an insufferable appropriating anthropologist here? Of course. Do I know a better way to explain how I have been asked to assume responsibilities to the Native community and to people in it? No, I do not. Would people be better off if I shut up and got out of their lives? No, I really don't think so. I don't want to be so scrupulous about avoiding cultural appropriation that I just sit there and let people die. And yes, they do die, anyway. And sometimes just sitting there is better than doing something. When the former president of NASCA jammed out of prison, he moved in with a girlfriend and tried to relate to society on the outside. He has always been good at scamming white professional women (and they have a history of abusing him), so he sought me out—for money and sex, as he admitted. Instead, I claimed a sister relationship, one he freely embraced. Sometimes it helps to tell the judge "My sister is a professor at the University." My brother intended to sell me his services as a shaman, as an akitcita, as a lover, as a conman. And I experienced his services as a homeless, alcoholic, ex-con, conman.

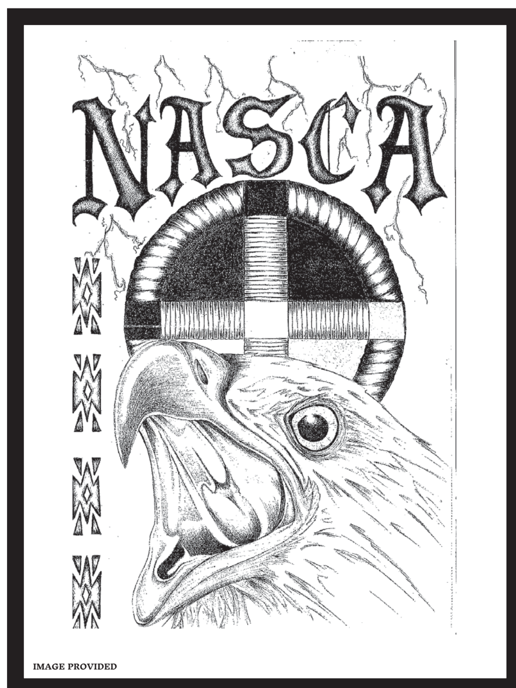


IMAGE PROVIDED

One pays for knowledge in many ways. When my brother is angry, he calls me an anthropologist, inaccurate, and both fair and not fair. At least that's what he calls me when he is sober. If he is drunk, I am a f**king white bitch. I see the synonomy. For several years, I managed to put my brother up in a series of apartments, but landlords generally do not appreciate "friends" who

break the doors and windows and each other and result in numerous police calls. Now, by default, my brother has come to live with us—or at least to spend the nights under our roof. My brother was taken away from his family when he was 8, to be incarcerated in boarding school, juvie, and a succession of prisons. Our sisters were put in foster and adoptive care, but they did stay on the reservation, in the community. Virtually every Native person I know in my generation was affected by the Sixties Scoop[1], either as a child in foster or adoptive care, as the sibling or cousin of a child in foster care, sometimes as a family that took in foster children, or, eventually, as a parent of a child in foster care. Now it is the grandchildren who are being taken away. Haunted now by stolen children, that sense of loss affects how I read and teach books like *Diviners* and *Halfbreed*. Morag, the protagonist of *Diviners*, is herself adopted, after the deaths of her parents, by Christie Logan, a WWI comrade of her father's, and his wife. They are not "rescuing" her from being an Indian—like them, she is a Scot—but making sure that she has a home and a heritage and, most of all, a story of who she is. The whole point of the Scoop was to erase the story and to inscribe a new one—to trace "one warm line through a land so wild and savage"—or through a child. Christie makes up heroic ancestor stories for Morag, and Lazarus tells Skinner and Piquette and the other Tonnerre children the tales and songs of Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel, the same ones that Maria's great grandmother tells to her.

In December of 2006, I made the commitment to be sister to my brother and in the space of a week passed through the looking glass into his world, where I have ever since lived as much as in my own safe, middle-class academic world. Like all the most valuable things in life, it wasn't easy. In June of 2008, I left my brother in the nicest apartment he had ever had and drove with my husband and our dogs up to Calgary, where we have owned a house since before my brother got out of prison. He ran away from his apartment in July and moved up to live with our other sister in Sioux Falls. I drove down to take him to a dentist appointment back in Lincoln. Soon after we got back to Sioux Falls, he left our sister's house. Brother sent me back to Calgary. He didn't need either of us, he said. He'd keep in touch if he wanted to. "Through the night behind the wheel, the mileage clicking west" I thought about colonization and the messed up lives it left behind. What was thrown away was not explorers' settled lives, but the settled, satisfying patterns of life on this land, the lives of my brother and our sister and her deeply troubled children and grandchildren. And they were thrown away so carelessly and self-righteously, with no consideration of their meaning. By North Dakota Connie Kaldor came on the CBC singing *Little Wood River*, with its healing refrain that I have ever since, slightly inaccurately, sung to myself when I needed it.

And the heart is
bigger than trouble

And the heart is
bigger than doubt.

But the heart needs
just a little while

To figure it out.

I'm still figuring it out. Lazarus was revolting in hard, self-destructive ways that contributed to the deaths of his daughters and grandsons. His alcoholism gave Manawaka permission to look down upon him, but he never let them forget him, he never let himself or his family be erased, he held on until Skinner could find his voice. Lazarus maintains his defiance. My brother maintains his defiance. And like Margaret Laurence (who smoked more cigarettes in a single afternoon than anyone I have ever met before or since), my brother has lung cancer. Like her, he smoked and drank to excess, crying, like Lazarus, his messy song of dispossession. Is that more effective than leaving long-forgotten lonely cairns of words at scholarly conferences? The heart takes just a little while to figure it out. And my brother died on September 20th of 2014.

Mitakuye oyasin (Lakota).

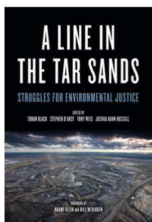
All my relations.

1. The term Sixties Scoop was coined by Patrick Johnston. His report *Native Children and the Child Welfare System* (1983) describes the mass removal of Aboriginal children from their communities in the United States. These children would be placed into the Child Welfare System, usually without the permission of families or their communities.

HOMO ENERGETICUS

Reimagining Relations with Indigenous Land and Lives in Alberta

IMAGE: FREEIMAGES.COM/ALEXANDER KOKINIDIS



A review of Tobin Black, et al., *A Line in The Tar Sands: Struggles for Environmental Justice*. (Toronto: ON: Between the Lines, 2014.

Ryan Dueck
is a husband, father of two amazing kids, and pastor of Lethbridge Mennonite Church in southern Alberta.

With the exception of six years studying and working in British Columbia, I have lived my entire life in the province of Alberta. I have grown to love this province with the wide-open prairies to the east and the majestic Rocky Mountains to the west, with the rich farmland in the south and the rugged, sparsely populated, forested north. Alberta is a big and a beautiful place to call home.

Like many Albertans, I grew up with a very particular narrative of our place within Canada and beyond. For most of my life, Alberta has been

among the wealthiest provinces in Canada, with the lowest taxes, an abundance of natural resources, and an understanding of ourselves as the envy of many other parts of the nation.

This entire package of who we are and where we fit as Albertans owes a great deal to one particular commodity. Oil. The northern part of our province contains vast reserves of bitumen, a tar-like substance that must be heavily refined to separate oil from sand and clay. The exploitation of these reserves has positioned Alberta (and Canada) as a global energy leader. Oil means jobs for our residents, fuel for our vehicles and homes and farms. An Alberta without oil would be, well, not very Albertan.

> ***[This book] asks us to critically evaluate and reimagine the narratives that we embrace, the stories we tell to ourselves and about ourselves as human beings, as nations, as consumers, as stewards of creation.***

IMAGE: FREEIMAGES.COM/SEANCARPENTER

But oil also means other things. Less desirable and acceptable things. Less *moral* things. And it is *these* things that are the focus of *A Line in the Tar Sands*, a collection of essays by academics and activists, Indigenous people and students, bloggers and community group leaders, all animated by the central conviction that mining the tar sands has not meant good news for all Albertans or for the planet.

The book documents the devastation wrought by virtually unimpeded exploitation of the tar sands, and primarily along three axes.

Environmental Degradation.

Whether it is strip mining or "*in situ* extraction," there is no avoiding the conclusion that the tar sands are bad news for the environment. The process of separating oil from clay and sand requires enormous amounts of water, involves significant deforestation, and leaks a stew of chemical pollutants into rivers and streams. Essay after essay makes painfully clear just how destructive tar sands mining is to local ecologies.

Climate change.

Climate scientists are clear that emissions must be "dramatically reduced" if there is any hope of mitigating the worst effects of climate change. Insofar as the tar sands represent the apparently insatiable human demand for energy, it is clear that the habits, expectations and assumptions that drive the tar sands industry must change.

Indigenous relations.

'Perhaps most significantly, the "development" of the tar sands has very often proceeded without the consent of the Indigenous peoples whose land the bitumen sits under. Massive pipelines often run right through Indigenous lands. These represent not only an affront to the sovereignty and self-determination of Indigenous people, but significant health risks (mainly from the runoff of toxins from tailings ponds that contaminate drinking water) and disruption of cultural traditions (hunting, fishing, etc.). Again and again, the story is told: the negative effects of decisions made by wealthy trans-national oil executives and government officials are borne most heavily by Indigenous peoples whose land the oil must be extracted from.

Canadian Artist Franke James displayed this work in posters in Washington, DC:
"Rather than the friendly neighbor to the north, Canada has become the dirty old man."
IMAGE: FRANKE JAMES

There are questions that the book leaves unanswered, of course. Many essays in *A Line in the Tar Sands* advocate "leaving the bitumen in the ground." Is this possible? What would it mean for the tar sands to be abandoned, full stop? What would this mean for a nation like Canada that will always require energy? We are a cold-weather country with communities spread out over enormous distances. Our vast tracts of farmland feed the world, but seeding and harvesting these crops involves the use of heavy-duty machinery. All of this requires fuel. Is there a room in the counter-narrative of *A Line in the Tar Sands* for reduced and more responsible extraction and consumption of this resource?

However these questions are resolved, we need to hear the critiques this book provides. *A Line in the Tar Sands* approaches the problems posed by the tar sands from a number of angles and marshals a significant amount of data in the attempt to mobilize resistance to the Alberta tar sands. And yet, the big picture of what this book is about is actually strikingly simple. It asks us to critically evaluate and reimagine the narratives that we embrace, the stories we tell *to* ourselves and *about* ourselves as human beings, as nations, as consumers, as stewards of creation.

Are we *homo energeticus*? Are we, as the advertisers and politicians and oil executives who stand to make a great deal of money from continued unimpeded exploitation of the Alberta tar sands tell us, defined by energy production (and the consumption this requires)? Or do we have the capacity to reimagine ourselves and the stories we inhabit along more just lines? Can we imagine a future—for Alberta and beyond—where justice trumps profit, were curbing consumption represents not a threat to our identity but a pragmatic necessity, where care for creation is not a fringe initiative but a human mandate?

Even more particularly, as Christians, can we deliberately tell a better story—one in which our consumptive habits are chastened and disciplined, where our relationship to our Indigenous neighbours take precedence over "business as usual," and where we stubbornly and insistently point to the most basic of biblical truths: we have a duty to live humbly and justly with our fellow humans in and for God's good creation.

I commend this book to all who are interested in more hopeful narratives than the ones that we so often uncritically adopt, the ones that are manufactured for our consumption by those who stand to profit most from them. I commend this book to all who are committed to pursuing just and right relationships with one another, with creation, and with our God.

1. In what ways have we consciously or unconsciously subscribed to the values of the dominant socio/economic system?

2. How does the gospel speak into situations where Indigenous Peoples are affected negatively by resource extraction?

3. Our western theological traditions emphasize the redemption side of the Jesus/salvation story. In doing so, has it neglected or forgotten our relationship with the earth?

4. We are all to varying degrees enmeshed in the modern industrial system. Is it time again to seriously revisit that traditional Mennonite emphasis on simplicity? What would that actually look like, especially if it is to address the concerns that Ryan names?

Discussion offered up by Jim Shantz, MCC Alberta Indigenous Neighbours Coordinator

IMAGE: FREEIMAGES.COM/SEANCARPENTER

series

FOLLOWING THE ROAD TO OZ

Deanna Zantingh
is Camp Director in Mishkeegogamang First Nation and a staff member of iEmergence Canada, an NGO focused on holistic community and youth leadership development in Indigenous communities. In this piece, Deanna continues to reflect on how her mission work has been challenged and shaped by Indigenous communities – Christian and traditional – and a sober reading of Canadian Church history.

—

Note – when Deanna refers to "Missionary Christianity" she is speaking about the dominant forms of Western Christian engagement with Indigenous communities in North America… forms that are still prevalent. As one who follows Jesus and wants to share the gifts that she has received, Deanna believes that mission is necessary. Yet it must be radically revisioned and practiced.

When Tornadoes Shake Your World Up

It was not actually a tornado as it was for Dorothy, but a wildfire that shook my world up as it ripped through Northern Ontario my first summer in Oz. While handing out relief supplies, I met Elmer, a Traditionalist, who told me that for all the good medicine his people know, there is also bad medicine that one should be careful of. As we discussed tensions on the reserve between Christianity and Traditionalism,

Christian mission in Mishkeegogamang First Nation

(Part 2 of a 3-part series)

he shared with me that his mother was a Christian who also practiced Indigenous traditions. By the end of the conversation, I lamented the harm done to his people in the name of Jesus and expressed that Jesus had nothing to do with it. Elmer paused and spoke words I promised myself I would never forget: “So you’re saying that just as my people have good medicine and bad medicine, Christianity might have good medicine and bad medicine too?”

Missionary Christianity is like the Scarecrow, the Lion, and the Tin Man - they all lacked something they needed to reach Oz. Dorothy’s friends eventually find what they need. But has the church? The church participated both actively and as a quiet accomplice of the state in problematizing Indigenous identity and oppressing Indigenous communities in ways that still reverberate. Colonialism is not only a problem for the Canadian church, but it is a problem that remains entangled in our Western Christian narrative and worldview.

At least five main factors have contributed to the formation of a colonial Christian mission paradigm here in North America.

1. Marriage of church and state

The marriage of church and state created and encouraged the assumption, unquestioned by many, that Christian political leaders and their programs were above criticism. Even more dangerous, it allowed churches to suppose that its values and commitments were consistent with government social engineering programs and therefore worthy of

IMAGE: DEANNA ZANTINGH

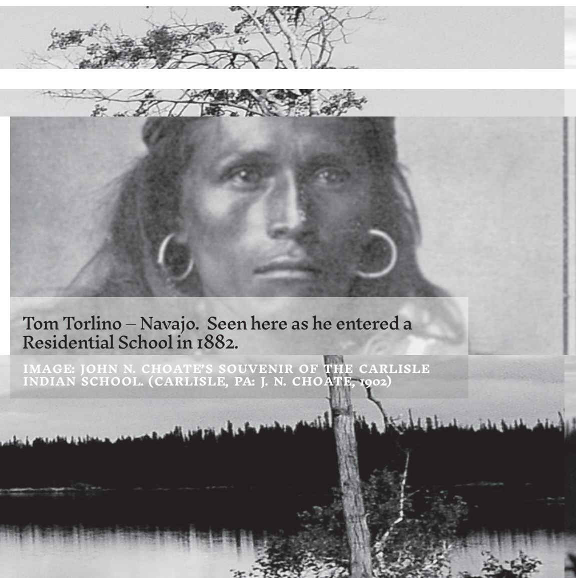
their support. Thus, "the Canadian government saw in the churches a fit and willing partner in this colonial project of assimilation," precisely because they shared general European cultural norms, were religiously zealous, and sought to proselytize.[1] Catholic, Protestant, and even Anabaptist denominations enthusiastically set out to save Indigenous people—and then helped build the oppressive structures, perspectives, and programs that have crushed the spirit and cultures of Indigenous peoples.[2]

But this collaboration also affects all of us who have settled on First Nations lands. Colonial missionary Christianity played a prominent role in "the legitimization of oppressive colonial power, and [holds an] ongoing capacity to blind Settlers to the violence and injustice that grounds their present state-sanctioned privileges."[3] Many Settler peoples live in prosperity today because the church forgot the true meaning of the gospel and atrociously declared, "Make the savage a Christian and he will settle peacefully on reserves. Teach him the scriptures and he will give up his claim to the land that we require."[4] This is a "gospel" that is bad news, a "Christianity" that is non-Christian, a "medicine" that causes plagues.

2. Sin and Salvation

What does it mean to experience salvation? The Ojibway had no directly corresponding word in their language, but they had a concept of "good life," which they closely connected with being in harmony with the life force that flowed through all things. If they had had a concept of sin, it would likely have been narrated as the brokenness that occurs when one doesn't live with respect toward all of creation, toward all things animated by the life force. The Christian missionaries who came to save the Ojibway, on the other hand, required them to accept a distinctively Western Christian understanding of sin: all humans (perhaps especially Native peoples) are inherently sinful, bound for hell, and thus in need of saving.[5] And because missionaries typically expected Indigenous peoples to give up many of their traditional ways and accept Western ways when they became Christian, Indigenous identity became associated with a fallen and sinful nature. Salvation from sin meant, among other things, becoming more like the missionary carrying the message and less Indigenous. Such an understanding of salvation effectively defined personal worth and community by what one chose to do, believe, or follow.[6] The Christian emphasis on prac-

Salvation from sin meant, among other things, becoming more like the missionary carrying the message and less Indigenous.



Tom Torlino – Navajo. Seen here as he entered a Residential School in 1882.

IMAGE: JOHN N. CHOATE'S SOUVENIR OF THE CARLISLE INDIAN SCHOOL. (CARLISLE, PA: J. N. CHOATE, 1902)

1 Dave Diewert, "White Christian Settlers, the Bible, and (De)colonization," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry,* ed. Steve Heinrichs (Waterloo, ON: Herald, 2013), 128–29.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Alexander Sutherland, Superintendent of the Methodist Church, August 1889 (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, RG 10 Series R 7733). Quoted in Diewert, 129.
5. Melanie Kampen, "Unsettling Theology: Decolonizing Western Interpretations of Original Sin," MA thesis, Conrad Grebel University College and the University of Waterloo, 2014.
6. See Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 115.

tice (namely, Western cultural practice), meant that who belongs to the church and who belongs outside of it is easily determined, quite apart from the life force people in both camps share. The sharp distinction between insiders and outsiders led to the new concept in Indigenous communities of "the secular other," thus dividing individual communities sharply along religious and newly introduced cultural lines.

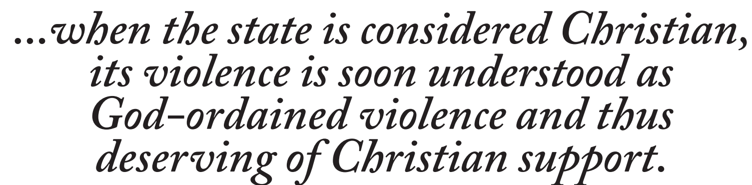
3. Christ and Culture

Our inherited understanding of colonial mission efforts employs a model of outreach that reflects our cultural values and imposes them on others with little, if any, regard for their culture. This came about because we Settlers viewed our culture (including our political culture) as Christian and therefore superior to all others. "Christian" came to mean "white"— clean, prosperous, civilized, well-mannered, hardworking, and patriotic. But when the state is considered Christian, its violence is soon understood as God-ordained violence and thus deserving of Christian support. The church begins to live by the same story as the empire and seeks to submerge all difference into sameness. Christianity becomes monocultural. The Apostle Paul critiqued exactly this phenomenon and offered an alternative vision: the peace of Christ is for "Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free" (Col. 3:11)—a stark alternative to the *Pax Romana* that absorbs difference into empire.

4. Alienation from the land

A prominent difference between Indigenous North Americans and those who emigrated from Europe was how they regarded the land. Many First Nations communities have stories of land covenants with the Creator which outline how they are to care for the earth,[7] but the notion of land ownership was unknown to them when explorers landed on the continent. By contrast, European countries had a Doctrine of Discovery from the fifteenth century on. It gave Christian explorers the right to lay claim to any land they "discovered" for their Christian monarchs,[8] and laid out the conditions under which land could be seized from inhabitants who were non-Christians. Robert Miller notes that the Native nations' "loss of property and sover-

As he appeared three years later.



7. See Woodley, *Shalom and the Community of Creation*, 123–24
8. Harley Eagle (Mennonite Central Committee: Anti-Racism & Indigenous Relations Director), personal communication, March 13, 2013.

eignty rights was justified . . . by 'the character and religion of its inhabitants . . . the superior genius of Europe . . . [and] ample compensation to the [Indians] by bestowing on them civilization and Christianity.'"[9] Similarly, the legal concept, *terra nullius,* further justified the taking of land by declaring it "empty land"—a commodity free for the taking "if it is not occupied by white Christians."[10] The misery visited upon Indigenous peoples forced to abandon lands that had long sustained them is well documented and continues substantially unchanged.

5. Christian superiority

Instead of subverting the concept of status as Jesus did when he said "the last shall be first," many missionaries assumed that to be Christian meant being superior to non-Christians. This is evident in the above-mentioned Doctrine of Discovery, but also in the idea of Manifest Destiny: the belief that America was a special nation, a "chosen people," blessed by God and destined to rule the world.[11] Similarly, the principle of *sola Scriptura* unintentionally suggested that those without the Holy

Scriptures were spiritually ignorant. The (non-biblical) dichotomy of special and general revelation further demotes knowledge of God learned through the created order to a subordinate rank. The truth is, while Indigenous cultures may not have known Jesus, they had a deep contextual knowledge of who God is. As Heinrichs and Hiebert point out, it is a "common theme of many stories and teachings that all knowledge and wisdom comes from the Creator. People learn[t] this knowledge in various ways . . . through visits to earth by spirit beings, fasting and vision quests."[12]

Sadly, Christian Settlers did not hesitate to treat the inhabitants of "their" promised land as Israel did the Canaanites and Amalekites.[13] This superiority both relegated Indigenous worldview, knowledge, spirituality, and ultimately life, to an inferior status and also created a form of Christian mission that did not acknowledge the giftedness of Indigenous peoples. For the Anishinaabe, the word for life is *Pimaatiziwin*, which is "innately tied to *Kizhemanito*, the Great Spirit, the maker of all things." And like the Creator, "life has no beginning and no end - everything that ever was continues to be and everything that will ever be already exists in spirit." *Pimaatiziwin*, then, is the "completeness and totality of creation itself imbued with the Spirit of the Creator."[14] We have never been in greater need of understanding how our modern view of mission still devalues Indigenous worldviews.[15]

9. Robert J. Miller, Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4. Miller's quotes are from the 1823 Supreme Court ruling, Johnson & Graham's Lessee v. McIntosh, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543, 573 (1823).
10. Vandana Shiva, *Fragile Freedoms: Lecture Series*, hosted by The Canadian Museum of Human Rights, interviewed by CBC Ideas. Winnipeg, MB, March 28, 2014.
11. Reginal Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 3, 75.
12. Marj Heinrichs and Dianne Hiebert, *Mishkeegogamang: The Land, the People and the Purpose* (Rosetta Project: Kelowna, 2003), 236.
13. There are historical records of Puritan preachers referring to Indigenous host nations as Amalekites and Canaanites. See Robert Allen Warrior, "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians," in *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge, 1996), 99.
14. Fred Kelly, "Confessions of a Born Again Pagan," in *From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*, ed. Marlene Brant Castellano et al., 33 (Ottawa, ON: The Indigenous Healing Foundation, 2008). Available online at http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/from-truth-to-reconciliation-transforming-the-legacy-of-residential-schools.pdf.
15. For a longer discussion, see Gene L. Greene, "The Death of Mission: Rethinking the Great Commission," NAIITS Conference, Portland, Oregon, June 7–9, 2014.

Decolonizing our Hearts

Part 2 of 5

Jennifer Henry

is the Executive Director of Kairos, an organization that unites eleven Christian churches and religious organizations in a faithful ecumenical response to the call to "do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

—

In seeking a faithful response to Indigenous rights struggles, Henry talks of decolonizing the heart, for in biblical witness it's the heart that is the place where definitive change can begin. Henry suggests that to decolonize our hearts, a series of faithful practices will need to be taken up: hearing truth, enabling contrition, opening to wisdom, acting with courage and reconciling towards right relation. In the last Intotemak, we looked at the 1st practice – Hearing the Truth. Now we turn to the 2nd.

Enabling Contrition – The Contrite Heart

The word contrite is a translation of the Hebrew word "dakka" which means "crushed." To have a "contrite heart" is to have a crushed or broken heart. In Psalm 51:17 we are told that the sacrifice acceptable to God is "a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart." Is this not the appropriate response to "heart listening" (i.e., hearing truth)? If, as a Settler and as a Christian, you listen with your whole heart—if you face truth and culpability—you risk having your heart "broken."

Genuine contrition, notes Christian Author Robert Roberts, can be distinguished from "such neighbor emotions as fear, regret, embarrassment, and guilt." Contrition's central feature is "the perception that one has offended against God." To have a contrite heart is to acknowledge that the dominant missionary project – that which became entangled with colonization – was not only the dehumanization of our neighbours but, in the truest sense, a violation of God's incarnate self. God was present in and affected by the suffering of Indigenous peoples, a presence which was and is both grace and judgement. Unlike guilt which impedes action, contrition encourages amendment and change.

Contrition must not only amend practice, but it must also challenge "broken" theologies of superiority and exclusion that enabled spiritual and cultural genocide. With respect to Christian exclusivism and theories of "election," Lakota intellectual George Tinker characterizes the brokenness frankly:

"It is curious that christians are led logically to believe that "God," until the birth of Jesus, cared only for one small people on the face of the earth, leaving all others to ignorance, "sin," idolatry, self destruction, and eternal damnation. For Indian peoples the message only becomes more difficult since it is conveyed through the clear inference that "God's" love (in the Jesus event) was denied Indian peoples until God, in God's graciousness, sent White people to kill us, lie to us, steal our land, and proclaim the saving gospel to us."

George Tinker
IMAGE PROVIDED

I would contend that true contrition definitively disrupts doctrines of exclusive revelation, foundational beliefs under colonizing mission projects. With contrite hearts, could we not venture our core belief as a truth among truths, where Christ is our truth and our light? Theologian Edward Schillebeeckx puts the questions as follows: "How can Christianity maintain its own identity and uniqueness and at the same time attach a positive value to the difference of religions in a non-discriminatory sense?" Or rephrased for this conversation, "How might my ancestors have maintained the strength of their Christian faith in a new land, while open to and gifted by the faiths of the Indigenous peoples they encountered?" Perhaps a focus on the imaginative and unrestrained Spirit at work in diverse communities is a key to a more inclusive theological future. Such seems in keeping with the profound hospitality and faith that Jesus both gifted and received from many strangers.

In the early 1900s, Chief Louis sought to keep the peace between the t'kemlups First Nation and the new settler town of Kamloops by putting on a passion play every April.

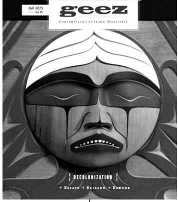
Leading his community for 60 years, one of Chief Louis' ongoing concerns was settler expansion and appropriation of native lands.

Chris Bose
is a multi-disciplinary artist and a member of the N'laka'pamux and Secwepemc Nations.

Kamloops

CHRIS BOSE
2009
DIGITAL PRINT

resources

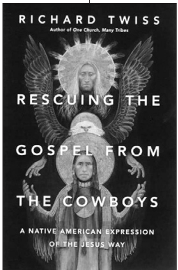


Decolonization: Relate, Relearn, Rework

ed. Aiden Enns; Leah Gazan; Steve Heinrichs, Geez Magazine, 2015.

An entire Geez magazine issue dedicated to the "one fundamental reality that remains unaddressed - the situation of indigenous peoples." John Ralston Saul acknowledges, "This is the single most important issue before us, whether we are recently arrived in Canada or have been here for centuries."

www.commonword.ca/go/291



Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way

by Richard Twiss ed. Ray Martell; Sue Martell, InterVarsity Press, 2015

Indigenous cultures were suppressed in the name of Christianity. As a result, many Native Americans are deeply suspicious of the church and its religion. However, despite the far-reaching effects of colonialism, some Natives have forged culturally authentic ways to follow the way of Jesus.

www.commonword.ca/go/292

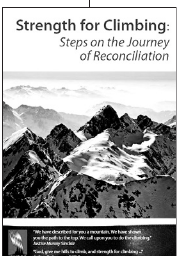
A Treaty Future for All of Us

by Niigaan Sinclair, Steinbach Mennonite Church, 2015.

ONLINE VIDEO.

Listen to Sinclair's presentation where he shares through creation stories what Treaty means to both Indigenous and settler peoples.

www.commonword.ca/go/293



Strength for Climbing: Steps on the Journey of Reconciliation

Cathy Vandergeest

ILLUSTRATED GUIDE.

Kairos took Mennonite Church Canada's Paths for Peacemaking booklet and fitted it for a broader ecumenical audience. More creative ideas and resources for settler communities to walk in solidarity with Indigenous peoples.

www.commonword.ca/go/294

events

OCTOBER 4, 2015

Sisters in Spirit Vigil took place – Each year, communities across Canada come together on this day to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Everyone is always welcome to walk in solidarity with families and friends.

OCTOBER 12, 2015

Indigenous Peoples Day – A day in the U.S. to counter the Columbus Day celebrations and commemorate the survivance of Native American peoples.

OCTOBER 17, 2015

Partnership Circle Gathering at Circle of Life Thunderbird House, Winnipeg, Manitoba – The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has called us to Action, offering up a series of recommendations. What might they mean to our Partnership Circle and the work of "summer missions" that many congregations are engaged in? Come join the conversation with special guests, Patricia Vickers (Ph.D) and Deanna Zantingh.

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2015

A Retreat at Six Nations of the Grand River – 2 ½ days of teaching and conversation with Rick Hill and Adrian Jacobs pondering steps that settler churches and Indigenous communities can take to build relationships that stretch towards reconciliation.

If you live in the "Haldimand Tract", you are welcome to join! For more info contact Josie Winterfeld:

josie@stirlingmennonite.ca

Intotemak

Publication Mail Agreement # 40012495
Return undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:

INTOTEMAK
MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA
C/O INDIGENOUS RELATIONS
600 SHAFTESBURY BLVD.
WINNIPEG MB R3P 0M4

TREATY 1 TERRITORY