TEE PEEZ, TOTEM POLZ, AND THE SPECTRE OF INDIANNESS AS OTHER

by

Natalie Maxson

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Graduate Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Natalie Maxson 2012
TEE PEEZ, TOTEM POLZ, AND THE SPECTRE OF INDIANNESS AS OTHER

Master of Arts 2012
Natalie Maxson
Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to destabilize notions that representations of ‘Indians’ as they appear in contemporary Switzerland, Germany, and France are benign. Rather, Europeans in this region rely on ‘playing Indian’ and consuming Indianness to understand themselves as white modern subjects. I demonstrate how this operates through two case studies and argue that colonialism persists through symbolic dialectical processes between North America and Western Europe. Colonial discourse, and regimes of representation, concerning Indianness circulate across geographical locations. I link these symbolic representations to ongoing material struggles of Indigenous peoples for self-determination and land rights. Switzerland’s foreign investments and free trade with Canada for natural resources on unceded Indigenous territories implicates them in a neoliberal colonial paradigm that continues to dispossess peoples of their land. I turn to Indigenous artists and international solidarity networking as potential strategies that address both symbolic and material processes of colonization.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the Creator, source of all life and all that is good, I give thanks for the path you have set me on and recognize the privilege of being able to do this work—a privilege that comes with great responsibility. I have not reached this point as an individual but with support from community. I thank my family for showing interest and encouragement in this project and especially my sisters (Christie who helped proofread). I am grateful to Omar for the motivation he gave me when I needed it most. Thanks to Allison who piqued my interest in the area of mines. For Syd and Theo who housed and fed me when I came to the city. I am deeply thankful to my colleagues, especially Janet, who have been patient and supportive in giving me the time needed to complete this thesis. I am appreciative of the conversations with friends, former colleagues and most recently my EAPPI colleagues who have been great conversation partners along the way.

I am grateful to Martin Cannon who got me started with this thesis and provided me with helpful resources. I thank Roland Coloma for his comments and nurturing my interest in Foucault. Finally, it has been an honour to work with Sherene Razack without whom I simply would not have managed to finish this project. Her guidance, feedback and affirmation in this process have been invaluable and deepened my learning.

This is dedicated to Indigenous brothers and sisters in the struggle (especially Maria Chavez), to the memory of my grandmother Margaret Kirk and to my ancestors.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements .................................................................................................. iii
Table of Contents ...................................................................................................... iv
Introduction............................................................................................................... 1
  Rationale for the Study and Personal Location ....................................................... 1
  The Endurance of Indian Figures in Europe ............................................................. 5
  Use of Names and Language ................................................................................... 9
  Organization of the Thesis ...................................................................................... 10
  Methodology .......................................................................................................... 14

Chapter One: Analytical Framework and Literature Review .................................. 19
  Discourse and Power ............................................................................................. 20
  Subject Formation .................................................................................................. 28
  Exploring Subjectivity and Space .......................................................................... 32
  Haunted Histories of the Indian figure in North America ....................................... 34
  The Legibility of Indian Figures in Europe ............................................................. 40
  Playing Indian ........................................................................................................ 46

Chapter Two: Playing Indian, Buying Indian: Contemporary European Discourses of the Indigenous Other ...................................................... 56
  Becoming Without Becoming ................................................................................ 57
  Playing Indian: The Case of the Charmilles Shopping Centre Exhibit .................. 59
  Buying Indians: Embodying Otherness Through Merck Pharmaceuticals ............... 73
  Intertextuality of Indian Commodities ................................................................... 86

Chapter Three: Material Consequences of Colonialism ....................................... 94
  Self-Governance and the Burden of Proof .............................................................. 97
  Desirable Resources on Indigenous Lands ............................................................. 102
  Implications for Europe in Ongoing Land Struggles .............................................. 112

Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 118
  International Networking for Solidarity .................................................................. 120
  Art as Resistance .................................................................................................... 121
  Concluding Thoughts ............................................................................................ 124

References .............................................................................................................. 127
Introduction

This thesis examines the representation of Indigenous North Americans in Switzerland and neighbouring western European countries as people that are consumable and relegated to the past. Through two main case studies, I demonstrate that the endurance of the figurative Indian is not benign, neutral, or accidental, but is deeply embedded in processes of European identity formation and perpetuates colonial violence. I argue that this discourse on Indianness, which is pervasive in the contexts I examine, cannot be isolated from debates on decolonization. The cases that I highlight demonstrate a symbolic regime of representation of Indigenous people as disappearing and pre-modern. Such representations therefore cannot be separated from Indigenous self-determination struggles for political and land rights. The figure of the Indian in modern popular culture and the market economy remains a powerful symbol because of the ways in which it is informed by the discourse of land dispossession and racial violence.

Rationale for the Study and Personal Location

While not recognized by many political leaders, colonialism continues to be a reality in countries such as Canada. In 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper gave an apology on behalf of the Canadian government for its role in the residential school system, which he cited as a “sad chapter” in the country’s history (CBC 2008). The healing and justice required to address the damage caused to individuals and communities by residential schools is crucial to decolonization. While official apologies have been made and Truth and Reconciliation Commissions have been set up across the country, grave social disparities persist in many Indigenous communities and people continue to struggle for rights to their territories.
The country exists in a state of many contradictions. While the Canadian state is posited as democratic and multicultural, it appears that it can neither make sense of nor stop the perpetuation of a colonial legacy. As I will demonstrate, it is through the Othering of Indigenous people (which positions them outside the state and creates a perception of them as ‘peculiar’) that the state can comprehend, and articulate, its own claims to sovereignty (Rifkin 2009, 91). Such contradictions of colonialism are apparent through politics of denial and disavowal, as demonstrated by Stephen Harper’s pronouncement to his fellow political leaders at the G20 summit in 2009. At this summit, he claimed that, “We [Canada] also have no history of colonialism” (Ljunggren 2009). Previous to this, we witnessed Canada’s move to vote against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 which is a non-binding document that highlights individual and collective rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, and education (UN 2007). Despite having collaborated towards the creation of this declaration for twenty years, Canada proposed that the declaration should not apply to those states that voted against it. This marked the first time that Canada, a country reputed in the international arena as safeguarding human rights and promoting peace building, ever rejected a human rights standard accepted by the UN General Assembly (Amnesty International 2008). Canada eventually accepted the Declaration in 2010.

This political landscape provides a glimpse of the colonial context we are living in which is one that makes grand symbolic gestures for the appearances of democracy, while continuing to marginalize Indigenous people. I do not limit my analysis of colonialism to state policies and practice, nor do I claim that this should be the only site for efforts
towards decolonization. I focus on the ways that knowledge about Indigenous people that supports the material consequences of colonialism is produced. In this way, I argue that power operates through many sites and that discursive tactics work together to make possible realities such as racism, land theft, and the denial of human rights and justice.

I became interested in the connections between European discourses of indigeneity and decolonization after accepting a job in Geneva, Switzerland from 2004 to 2009. Having never spent any time in Europe before moving there, I was surprised by the ubiquitousness of imagery of Indigenous peoples from North America. At first this imagery seemed random; it appeared in shopping malls, on food packages, in restaurants, pharmacies, films, books, parks, and public buses. Yet, the frequency of what were often caricature images made me wonder if perhaps they weren’t random at all. While I have often seen such images in Canada, I wondered what purpose such representations were serving in the European public spaces in which I saw them. Similarly, I wondered what were the conditions that allowed for their legibility. One thing that appeared to be consistent was that these Indian figures were used to sell a product or experience.

These images struck me at the level of my own hybridity. As a descendant of both European settlers and Indigenous people in North America, the images I witnessed were strangely reminiscent of stereotypical portrayals of Indigenous people found in Canada and the United States. Since I don’t resemble these stereotypes, but rather move through the world with a considerable amount of white privilege, I found it difficult to convey my experiences to many white European friends and colleagues. First, many people with whom I spoke believed that Indigenous people no longer exist. Second, since I resemble
nothing of the popular imagery many Europeans have seen of Indigenous people, they could not grasp my hybridity or my perspectives about ongoing colonialism.

In this introduction, I use a critical reading of colonialism to understand some examples from Canada and Europe. Canadian settler identities have often been formed on a dualism, common to Western ontology, between Euro-Canadian citizen and Indigenous Other. Iconography about ‘Indians’ is a pervasive part of Canadian public space and consciousness because it has been a key part in building national colonial identity. Such images in Canada have been used to articulate a unique Canadian identity, one that is distinct from Britain and other European countries and unique from the United States.

Jean Barman (2007) argues that space and symbols are used through colonialism in ways that dispossess people of their land and give the newcomers a sense of place. She notes that, in areas in and around what is now known as Vancouver, people were displaced from their traditional land as it became lucrative urban property. In such places as Stanley Park and downtown Victoria, Squamish and Songhees people were removed from their land (and given relatively meagre financial compensation), their homes were burned, and the land was converted for urban development. Barman demonstrates how, after this forced removal, ‘sanitized’ symbols of indigeneity, such as totem poles (which were sometimes imported from other coastal nations and, therefore, not reflective of the local people who inhabited the land) were left in these places by settler city developers (2). In other words, the art and architecture of Indigenous peoples became a non-threatening alternative to the presence of the actual people living there. While people were displaced and marginalized from these urban centres, the Indigenous art and symbols were integrated into urban planning to create a distinct identity of the place.
Settlers then appropriated these markers as their own. Through colonialism, trade, and the creation of museums and ethnological exhibits, symbols of indigeneity and of Indigenous people themselves circulated to different parts of Europe, carrying with them racial meanings for new audiences.

There was a specific incident that drew my attention to certain notions that Europeans may hold about Indigenous people and that led me to ask some of the questions I am now raising here. It was in 2003, when I accompanied an international group of young adults to the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford, Ontario. I had a chance to witness people interact with Indigenous art and historiography through the lens of a critical anti-colonial perspective. During our visit, we were given a guided tour through the permanent exhibit on Anishinaabe and Onkwehonwe history and culture and a temporary exhibit on contemporary Indigenous art. While debriefing the visit, it was some of the Europeans who were the most vocal as they expressed their disappointment of not having seen traditional dances with people dressed in feathers. They lamented having missed what they considered an ‘authentic’ Indigenous performance. They were surprised by the contemporary and modern nature of the tour, which did not match their conceptions of indigeneity. I explore some of these conceptions as they appear in particular European contexts and how they contribute to an ongoing discourse of Indianness.

The endurance of Indian figures in Europe

The ‘Indian’ has also become a prolific symbol in parts of the world beyond North America. In Switzerland, for instance, there is an ice cream bar called Winnetou that is manufactured by the Swiss company Nestlé (Nestlé). On the package is a caricature of a
man with a colourful feather headdress. The name Winnetou, which would be
recognizable to many Swiss, is a reference to the fictional Apache character from the
books of the German author, Karl May, which were first published in the late nineteenth
century. His books about cowboys and Indians continue to be popular literature,
especially for young audiences, and have provided the basis for TV series and films.

May’s work has been so prolific that Dagmar Wernitznig (2007) claims:

May, actually, can be held responsible for having single-handedly synchronized the
minds of generations of German speakers in their understanding of an Indian
Otherness. Karl May’s most famous Indian creation is Winnetou, chief of the
Mescalero-Apaches. The impact this character had in German-speaking countries is
close to a cultural narrative (58-59).

The Karl May museum boasts that May is “…one of the best loved and most widely read
German writers”, with his adventure novels selling close to 100 million copies in German
alone and millions more in thirty-three other language translations (Karl May Museum).

Winnetou is also the company name for a line of children’s playground toys and
equipment advertised in France and Switzerland. Furthermore, there is a Karl May
festival that has taken place in Germany for the past two decades. It is described in the
following way:

The Karl May Festival offered 23 000 adventures into foreign cultures and past times.
Native Western clubs, artists and performers provided country and western music as
well as spontaneous duels, train attacks, bank robberies and pie fights for the typical
wild-west atmosphere (Karl May Festival 2010).

In this sense, Winnetou has a certain history, context, and legibility for particular
European audiences, which would not necessarily resonate in another context in the same
way. Such representations become naturalized and are seldom directly challenged. I will
revisit the work of Karl May, whose fiction contributed to the imagination and fantasy of
‘Indian’ figures in Germany and was later exported to other parts of Europe.
In order to understand the relationship of a place like Switzerland to Indigenous people in a foreign land, it is helpful to understand how European political, economic, and cultural development has been invested in the colonization of North America. This relationship looks different for different countries and, for places like Switzerland, it seems to be mostly a symbolic connection. In Geneva, there is a park dedicated to the Genevois philosopher and political theorist, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau wrote about the challenges he perceived that Switzerland was facing as a result of its cultural and scientific developments in the mid-eighteenth century and drew heavily on the idea of the New World humans, or the ‘Noble Savage’, as an allegory to critique what he perceived to be his own society’s attachment to luxury. In later years, the Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung, also drew from his encounter with Mountain Lake, a Hopi elder, to understand and develop theories about culture, individuality, and the human psyche (Thomason 2008). In Germany, Hegel’s philosophy of history and zeitgeist (or ‘spirit of the age’) depended on notions of the ‘Indian’ (Wernitznig 2007, 35). They, along with others, perpetuated ideas about New World peoples as indifferent to wealth or status and as inhabiting an idyllic and innocent world close to nature (posited as the opposite of European civilization) (Muthu 2003, 25). It is through such theories (which have been deeply integrated into the formation of Swiss political thought and identity) and narratives (that have circulated through popular culture, such as the Winnetou novels) that discourses on Indians have been able to persist in contemporary Switzerland. In this light, the notion of the Indian has played a fundamental role in dominant Western European philosophies and has provided key fodder for white self-understanding and various nation-building processes in these regions of Europe. In order to know itself,
Europeanness has, since the time of colonial contact and Enlightenment theories, needed the proximity to this ‘Indian’; this remains true today. While such processes have taken on different manifestations in various contexts and have not remained static over time, my question is why do places like Switzerland need these Indian references today?

While there are some obvious and direct links between countries like Britain and France and the colonization of Canada, it interests me how the Indian figure has become prolific in a place like Switzerland. I limit the scope of my data in this research to Switzerland and its neighbouring countries of France and Germany because of what I was able to observe in this region while I lived there. When I mention examples outside of these countries, it is only to draw attention to certain trends that I see appearing in my case studies. Switzerland is a confederation of twenty-six cantons, which each have a certain amount of autonomy and a distinct history. There are four official languages in the country, including Swiss-German and French. Because of the country’s proximity to Germany and France and the linguistic and historical links they share, it makes sense to examine these three places. Switzerland is a small country and influenced by popular culture from both Germany and France. For instance in Geneva, French television channels outnumber the Swiss channels. France surrounds Geneva and it is a quick city bus ride to the border which is a commute many French citizens make every day to work in the international city of Geneva. While Switzerland is not formerly part of the European Union, it follows, and is subject to, many EU policies (i.e. those related to trade) and has many bi-lateral agreements with EU countries. Switzerland is part of the Schengen visa system that regulates the movement of people (foreigners) in and out of EU space.
Use of Names and Language

Throughout this thesis I use the word ‘Indian’ when referring to what are often commercial images of Indigenous peoples from North America. Of course, as I learned as a child, the term Indian is a misnomer and a colonial invention for the original people of this land by early European explorers, who believed they had arrived in Asia (or Indian Ocean, thus the naming of the Caribbean as the West Indies). Nevertheless, this term, and how it is manifested and circulated through popular culture, carries a great deal of meaning. While the term Indian is problematic, especially for many Indigenous people, it remains a legal category to classify people under the Canadian Indian Act. The term Indian becomes a sign and referent for constructed representations of Indigenous people in colonial discourse. I use the term ‘Indigenous peoples’, which Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (1999) makes a case for, stating that it internationalizes some of the struggles of the world’s colonized peoples and is a way to recognize the plurality and differences between different peoples (7). This term does have limitations however, in that it may also homogenize distinct peoples. I limit my use of terms like ‘Aboriginal’ and ‘First Nations’, which refer specifically to legal status-Indians or entities that are legally recognized according to the state. The points I am making in this thesis related to colonialism go beyond the scope of legal state definitions, since colonial violence also affects non-status, and dispossessed, individuals and communities.

I use the term ‘Europe’ mostly to refer to the Western region that I examine in my case studies, which are, with a few exceptions, Switzerland, Germany, and France. When I speak about a ‘European space’, I am referring particularly to the institutionalized legal space of the European Union and, in particular, to Western European countries. I also use
the term ‘Europeanness’ in a similar way that I would use the term ‘whiteness’. The limitation of this is that it collapses certain particularities, but again these are terms with legibility in colonial discourse and constructions around race. Where I am able, I will refer to the specific names of people and places to locate them in the particular local contexts (i.e. Gitxsan, Inuit, Genevois, and French-speaking areas of Switzerland). Such particularities are an important factor to avoid conflating distinct local realities and the particular relationship different people have with colonialism.

**Organization of the Thesis**

In Chapter One, I outline my theoretical parameters by drawing on works by Michel Foucault to examine how knowledge and power operate to produce colonial discourses and their effects. This framework is helpful to develop understanding of the ongoing reliance on representations of Indigenous people, because it demonstrates that Indigenous people are part of a broader discourse through which different subjectivities can be known (i.e. those of white European citizen). This lens allows me to provide links between symbolic and material realms, between the way images of Indigenous people are constructed and the way resource extraction takes place on Indigenous lands. I explore important extensions and critiques of Foucault’s work in the way race, gender, and class work in concert to make colonial discourse possible, by drawing on scholars such as Andrea Smith (2005), Ann Laura Stoler (1995), and Meyda Yeğenoğlu (1998). I draw from Cultural Studies theorists, such as Stuart Hall (1997), who introduces how racialized meanings are inscribed through signifying practices thereby extending Foucault’s work.

Several writers have explored the figure of the Indian, particularly as it appears in North America. However, work on the contemporary relevance, productive faculty, and
ubiquity of the Indian figure in contemporary Europe remains limited. I look at how this figure has been exported from the Americas as an essential part of nation-building, identity, and civility formation in both colonized Canada and metropole Europe. Through a review of existing literature, I examine how people have thought about Indianness and demonstrate that Indianness is itself a discourse.

Some of the major works that I review address the relationship between knowledge and power as they operate in colonialism and race, specifically in North America; I extend this literature to the European contexts that I examine. One of the major themes I investigate is how colonial representations of Indigenous peoples cannot be considered benign or neutral. I analyze this concept through work by Rayna Green (1988) and Andrea Smith (2005). Through the writing of Dan Coleman (2006) and Renée L. Bergland (2000), I explore how their notion of the ‘Indian as ghost’ facilitated the removal, dispossession, and killings of Indigenous peoples in America who were framed as disappearing people (Bergland 2000, 3). I draw on this concept, as it is applicable in Europe. Therefore, the contribution of my study is to generate a multi-sited analysis about decolonization, centered on the ways that power operates through contemporary discursive tactics on indigeneity. Furthermore, I draw from authors such as Richard Dyer (1997), Dagmar Wernitznig (2007), Daniel Francis (1992), and David Theo Goldberg (2009) to explore how the discursive Indian figure is implicated in the formation of white, consuming subjects.

In Chapter Two, I employ two main case studies concerned with discursive tactics as they relate to race, indigeneity, subject formation, nationhood, and Indigenous self-determination. I use these case studies because they shed light on the kinds of knowledge
being created about Indigenous people in the European imagination. They demonstrate how constructions of Indian figures thrive in consumer contexts and are linked to notions of childhood, innocence, adventure, and play. They also help demonstrate the ways in which Indian figures appear in European public spaces and the subsequent need for decolonization in this broader context beyond North America. I start with the ethnographic exhibit “Peaux Rouges Hier, Indiens Aujourd’hui: Du Myth à la Réalité” (“Red Skins Yesterday, Indians Today: From Myth to Reality”). This exhibit invoked notions of ‘playing Indian’ as people interacted with several stations. My second case is based on Merck’s advertisement for their line of Kytta ointment and their slogan “An Indian Knows No Pain Thanks to the Power of Nature.” The slogan may be interpreted that certain bodies are violable (because they don’t know pain). The company legitimates its product through claims to science and modernity, which are juxtaposed against the supposed pre-modernity of Indigenous peoples and local knowledge about medicinal plants.

In Chapter Three, I argue that colonialism is both a discursive and material process and, therefore, the European case studies I examined must be read alongside ongoing struggles against colonialism. I examine this problem through the following areas wherein the state and industries deploy and produce knowledge about indigeneity: delegitimization of Indigenous governance, land dispossession, foreign direct investment, and trade. I look at the Canadian government’s understanding and approach to Indigenous self-governance and also examine a couple of cases from the United States. To analyze the material consequences of colonialism, of which discourses about Indianness play a part, I look at foreign direct investment and resource extraction on Indigenous lands. In
this way, I highlight the relationship between countries, such as Switzerland and Canada, and argue that the economic ties between these two places exist within a colonial paradigm. I show how discourses about the Indian in Europe have direct consequences on the lives and bodies of Indigenous people and communities.

In the conclusion, I suggest that the pervasive rhetorical Indian, which colonial perspectives have used to stand in for authentic indigeneity may delegitimize or deny recognition of Indigenous peoples and movements in different parts of Europe, such as the Sami in Northern Europe (Sweden, Finland, Norway, Russia) and the Basque (northern Spain, southern France). It also draws attention away from the fact that Europeans have their own Indigenous roots and traditions with which they can connect but that may be seen in opposition to modern, white subjectivities.

The discursive Indian, therefore, is not neutral, but serves a function of erasure here and there or Indigenous struggles in North American and Europe. Indigenous people are up against certain notions of authenticity in order to legitimize their self-determination and connection to their land. I examine sites where struggles for self-determination and decolonization are taking place and where I believe they should continue or expand. Through my case studies, I argue for the work of decolonization to reach beyond state confined geographies in North America, since discursive regimes of Indianness are connected to the ongoing material struggles for decolonization and are not restricted to nation-state boundaries.

**Methodology**

I used public documents, observation, and visual data in my research. My epistemological assumption was that the phenomenon I was researching could be known
through textual and visual sources that appear in the public domain, such as advertising campaigns, websites, newsletters, and public exhibitions. The main sources that I investigated were available in the public domain in Switzerland, Germany, and France. I drew on examples from other Western European countries insofar as they illustrated other similar European discourses of indigeneity. After presenting my observations of the sources for these two cases, I generate meaning from them by drawing on critical race and post-colonial theories. Julia Emberly (2007) argues that the symbolic production of values contained in advertising become important sites for investigating attempts to secure colonial rule (133). For my case studies, I focused on two specific incidences, as they provided strong clues as to where and how thinking about indigeneity appears in Western Europe. For my case study on the Planete Charmilles commercial centre exhibit, I drew on my observations and field notes from this event situated in a Swiss shopping mall as my primary sources. To unpack and understand this exhibit, I looked at the knowledge that was presented through image, text, objects, and interaction between the animator of the exhibit and his audience. I looked at how the exhibit makes use of space in an urban, commercial setting. I examined the different faculties and genres this exhibit came to embody (educational, ethnographic, artistic, and entertainment) and the truth claims the exhibit made about indigeneity. I also generated data from the poster that circulated by mail for this exhibit, which combined image and text.

In my second case study, the primary sources of data came from print advertisements for the Kytta ointment made by the pharmaceutical company, Merck. I also examined the company’s website and their online magazine, *The Explorer*. I used discourse analysis to examine the textual and visual data. The Kytta products are
available in Europe but can be ordered outside the region through a few specialized dealers on the internet. The posters that I analyzed appeared in French and information on the website was available in German. Only the article in the web-based magazine was in English. In this light, it appeared that the target audience of Merck’s advertising campaigns were mainly pharmacies, vendors, or individual consumers in Europe.

I also drew from secondary sources, such as community-based research highlighted by Indigenous scholar Smith (2005), who looks at Merck’s trial vaccination practices among Indigenous communities in North America. This information contextualizes Merck’s discursive practices by making a link between these symbolic representations and the impact that this pharmaceutical company has on actual Indigenous bodies. I examine information put forward by medical journals that foreground the medicinal uses and limits of the comfrey root ingredient used in Merck’s product. These medical debates shed light on the way that Merck relies on notions of indigeneity to legitimate their medical claims and mitigate the potential negative effects of their product.

The ways in which different bodies are portrayed and how they occupy space makes up an important part of the way that I analyzed the data in my case studies. I drew from several scholars, including Foucault who examined how sexuality, madness, and crime were made knowable and visible through practices of spatialization in places such as schoolrooms, houses of confinement, and prisons. Through the visual data from my case studies, I looked at how discourses give shape to what is seen, what is unseen, and how space is used to construct certain bodies or bodies of knowledge as superior or inferior. Razack (2002) argues that space is a social product. Her examination of how
“bodies are produced in spaces and how spaces produce bodies,” (Razack 2002,17) emphasizes that space is not neutral or natural, but rather is constructed. With these critical approaches to space in mind, I looked at how white European space, knowledge, and subjectivities were created in the Charmilles commercial centre and through Merck’s pharmaceutical advertisements.

I looked at the particular contexts and conditions through which the visual and textual sources I employed were constructed as a way to demonstrate how colonial knowledge production and power work together. As I scrutinized particular moments where discourses around indigeneity were articulated, I checked for the assumptions and truth claims that were being made about white European and Indigenous bodies and examined what makes such representations seeable, knowable, and legible in these contexts. In the case studies, I prioritized what was viewable, or framed as seeable, in the public domain, rather than gather information about the intentions of the creators or experience of the advertising campaign and exhibit by interviewing Merck and the animator of the Charmilles exhibit directly. However, the fact that I did not solicit direct input from Merck and the Charmilles exhibitor is also a limit in the scope of my research; the inclusion of this could have led to other insights. I choose these two particular cases because the amount of different information available about them in the public domain allowed for substantial data generation.

Both of my case studies relied on images and ideas about ‘Indianness’ to attract attention to a commercial product or site. The Charmilles exhibit was created by a French entrepreneur and the Merck advertisements were created by a major German pharmaceutical company. This imbued them with particular culturally-specific
perspectives that make them legible first and foremost to European audiences in these regions. I drew from popular culture and literature (i.e. Winnetou novels) to demonstrate this legibility. Both sources appear in Switzerland, which does not have direct connection to the initial colonial formation of Canada (as opposed to Britain and France, for instance). Goldberg suggests that discourses about race (or, in this case, indigeneity) are not fixed, but circulate widely, although they are articulated in specific, local ways (Goldberg 2009a, 1275). The Charmilles exhibit took place in a specific time and place and demonstrated how Swiss and European people may interact with racialized Indian figures that reinforce dualities of modern/premodern spaces and subjects. The physical context of the shopping mall was significant, as it is a neoliberal consumer backdrop in which Indians become commodified for the profit of a French entrepreneur. In the Merck case, the posters advertising the Kytta ointment represent the ubiquitousness of showing Indian figures as commodity (i.e. advertisements on every public bus in Geneva). It also showed how these representations circulate transnationally (e.g. the German company claiming links to North America advertises in Switzerland). Again, the context of this case reveals the making of a neoliberal colonial order in which Indianness is marketed, sold, and consumed for the profit of a major industry in Germany. Both of these cases provide grounds for establishing a connection to the materiality around land, resources, and trade. In a neoliberal and capitalist paradigm, colonialism is deeply rooted in the way certain racialized Indigenous bodies are commodified and circulated symbolically, while their lands and bodies continue to be ravaged by Canadian, Swiss, and other foreign industries (i.e. through mining and medical experimentation). I also looked at examples
of figurative Indians used in North American consumer marketing to explore possible similarities and differences.
Chapter One: Analytical Framework & Literature Review

Representations of Indigenous people found in Europe today are not random, isolated, or accidental incidences, but rather make up an organized discourse on indigeneity, or what Foucault calls a ‘regime of representation.’ In this chapter, I explore the theoretical basis that suggests that power works to produce such knowledge and that this knowledge created about the Native Other is intimately linked to processes of ongoing colonialism. Western Europe has always relied on rhetorical Indians to facilitate self-understanding. I examine the work of various authors and look at sites that point to what could be called a discourse on Indianness. I examine this discourse at work in both North America and Europe to look for places of overlap and difference, with the understanding that, through processes of colonization, discourses on Indianness have circulated through several locations. I look at examples in literature, film, and exhibits and employ the work of several scholars to understand the impact that such discourses have on processes of colonization and decolonization.

The imaginary realms and fantasies about Indians as they are played out in modern Europe contribute to ongoing violence and material consequences of colonialism and prop up constructions of white European identities as modern and civilized. As a part of this discourse, the Indian figures of the shopping mall, pharmaceutical company advertisements, and theme parks perpetuate colonial violence insofar as such constructions portray Indigenous people as pre-modern, vanishing, or dead. As Indigenous scholar, Smith (2006), suggests:

A second pillar of white supremacy is the logic of genocide. This logic holds that indigenous peoples must disappear. In fact, they must always be disappearing, in order to allow non-indigenous peoples rightful claim over this land. Through this logic of genocide, non-Native peoples then become the rightful inheritors of all that was indigenous—land, resources, indigenous spirituality, or culture (68).
I problematize these constructions by drawing on several methodologies from post-colonial studies, cultural studies, and feminism. I draw on theories to explore how subjects are formed and come to know themselves, how power operates to create representations of Indian figures, how meaning is ascribed to signifiers in popular culture, and how certain racial identities are enacted and articulated as superior or inferior. I conclude this chapter by linking the discourses of these different sites of knowledge production to some of the material realities of struggles against colonialism in North America. I also reflect on what I see as the gaps in the existing literature and my contribution to this work.

Discourse and Power

I draw from particular works by Foucault to explore the concepts of power, knowledge production, representation, discourse, and spatiality. Foucault examines how power operates to produce knowledge and how this process both shapes the ways that we enter different subject positions and forms what we consider to be truth. He demonstrates this process in *Madness and Civilization*, wherein he examines the ways in which the category of ‘madness’ was constituted in Western European history through the ideas and statements organized about ‘madness.’ These organized statements, or discourses, also delineated what could be seen as rational and irrational. In this sense, knowledge can be produced within parameters of what is legible or within what Foucault calls a ‘regime of truth.’ He writes of his research objective:

If I have studied ‘practices’ like those of the sequestration of the insane, or clinical medicine, or the organization of the empirical sciences or legal punishment, it was in order to study this interplay between a ‘code’ which rules ways of doing things …and a production of true discourses which serve to found, justify and provide reasons and principles for these ways of doing things. To put the matter clearly: my problem is to see how men govern (themselves and others) by the production of truth (…not the production of true utterances, but the establishment of domains in which
Foucault shows that the ‘mad’ have been classified in historically specific ways (e.g. as poor or unemployed people) in different western European epochs and how only recently, through science and medicalization, has the idea of ‘mental illness’ been understood as a category (Mills 2003, 101). His work describes the mad as a public spectacle for public consumption—a material and symbolic process upon which individuals rely in order to define their subjectivities as ‘normal’ or ‘sane’ (Foucault, 1965, 68). I argue that Indian figures also become a commodity and vehicle through which Europeans become modern.

The representations that made the category ‘madness’ possible are not limited to written text (e.g. scientific theories or doctor’s diagnoses), but also include what is visibly shown or seen (e.g. images, architecture, objects, or space). Foucault refers to a regime of representation that implies that these texts and images were not random or isolated, but worked together to create a discourse. John Rajchman (1988) further develops Foucault’s emphasis on visibility by using images as historical snapshots in his analysis of institutions. He writes of Foucault’s methodology:

In both cases we have pictures not simply of what things looked like, but how things were made visible, how things were given to be seen, how things were "shown" to knowledge or to power—two ways in which things became seeable. In the case of the prison, it is a question of two ways crime was made visible in the body, through "spectacle" or through "surveillance." In the case of the clinic, it is a question of two ways of organizing "the space in which bodies and eyes meet" (Rajchman 1988, 91).

Rajchman emphasizes Foucault’s perspective that knowledge is produced both visually and textually and that images cannot be taken at face value. As such, he posits that we need to examine how the image is presented and question what is excluded or not shown. In a similar way, Henrietta Lidchi (1997) teases out Foucault’s argument that the process of visual representation is not a ‘natural’ process but is linked to the choreography of
knowledge and power, which constructs what can be seen (195). She extends Foucault’s analyses of power and knowledge to articulate what she calls a ‘politics of exhibiting’ (199). Lidchi examines the ways that colonized people became ‘seeable’ to Europeans as mainly ‘ethnographic objects’ (through anthropological displays, photographs, and other artifacts) in exhibits such as the Exposition Universelle de Paris in the late nineteenth century (199). Emberly (2007) critiques Foucault's underestimation of how visual forms, such as advertising, are used as a primary technology of power to secure bourgeois Europeans’ disposition to rule calling this use of technology the “symbolic production of commodity discourses” (124). She argues that visual and print media became one of the most powerful cultural forces in the twentieth century and, as such, was key in carrying out the symbolic processes of colonization (14). Both the notion of a ‘politics of exhibiting’ and Foucault’s visual methods are important in grounding my case studies, which draw on visual data. I analyze how images of Indigenous people in Europe are part of a discursive process that makes particular Indigenous identities visually recognizable through certain kinds of traditional dress and objects (e.g. images of Indigenous peoples as modern or in contemporary Western clothes are mostly excluded from the European discourse).

In terms of understanding how power works, systems of domination (e.g. the nation-state, prisons, hetero-normativity, and colonization) marginalize and oppress people, but they do not entirely monopolize as a system of power. Foucault (1978) believes that the state is not the source or embodiment of power (88-89). He describes power as:

everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. [P]ower is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain
strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex
strategical situation in a particular society (Foucault 1978, 93).

Therefore, power is a complex process and is cannot be given or taken like an object. Nor
can power be ‘overthrown’ because we do not live outside of it (Foucault 1978, 93).
Foucault (1978), therefore, shifts the meaning of power from tyranny to a definition of
productivity (92). Power does not repress but actually produces things, such as
knowledge, and works in concert with institutions and ‘truth’ claims (i.e. science).
According to Foucault (1978), medicine, science, sexuality, and prisons are therefore all
potent sites of power (103). These concepts of power are important to this research, as I
refer to the Canadian state’s relationship to Indigenous people, but also draw from sites
such as exhibits, medicine, and popular culture which produce knowledge about
Indigenous people.

When Foucault suggests that power is productive, he refers to the ways in which
power and knowledge work together to generate ideas or discourse. For instance,
Foucault (1978) shows that in nineteenth century Western Europe, the desire to create
norms around sexuality (facilitated through various scientific, medical, religious, and
educational institutions) actually resulted in a proliferation of knowledge about childhood
masturbation, sodomy, hysteria, procreation, and so on (104). Contrary to the assumption
that sexuality had been repressed since the Victorian era, Foucault (1978) demonstrates
that this period was marked by a clear fixation on producing knowledge and inventing
discourses about sexuality (69). He writes:

Take the secondary schools of the eighteenth century, for example. On the whole,
one can have the impression that sex was hardly spoken of at all in these institutions.
But one only has to glance over the architectural layout, the rules of discipline, and
their whole internal organization: the question of sex was a constant preoccupation
(Foucault 1978, 27).
Analogously in Canada, race and Indianness appear to be unspeakable and non-existent in an era of official multiculturalism. In Canada, when Stephen Harper denied that Canada has a history of colonialism at the 2009 G20 summit (Ljunggren 2009) or when Indigenous peoples’ histories are noticeably absent from public school textbooks, an impression is created that colonialism may be a non-issue or repressed from public discussion; in fact, the opposite is true. In The Threat of Race, Goldberg (2009b) claims that we live in a neoliberal era of raceless racism. In other words, race cannot be spoken of, especially in the public sphere, and yet racism continues to categorize, marginalize, and subjugate certain racialized bodies. While racism and colonialism are unspeakable in public politics, the cartography of colonialism demarcates the very land we inhabit by discerning, through law and race, who can occupy different spaces (e.g. Indian Reserves and Crown lands).

In spite of Harper’s claims, state institutions embody colonialism vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples and indigeneity through its legal, judicial, political, and medical apparatuses. Knowledge is produced through the Indian Act and other legal, political apparatus that regulates many aspects of Aboriginal peoples’ lives, such as entitlement to Indian status, the management of Native health concerns, the outcome of land claims, and who gets policed and disproportionately managed through the criminal justice system. The mass scale of involvement of the Canadian Indian and Northern Affairs department in First Nations communities and the lives of individual Indigenous people gives testimony to the generative nature of power. This process not only regulates the Other through colonialism, but also produces settler/citizen subjects. Along with the identity of the Other, the state’s identity also comes into being through this colonial story and
process. In Canada, the denial of colonialism (and counter emphasis on democracy, multiculturalism, and white innocence) is an important discourse to trace as notions of indigeneity and national identity are made up of both what is, and what is not, said or included. While colonial relations of power continue, Indianness appears to be both nowhere and everywhere at the same time.

Razack’s (2002) work shows that this ‘racelessness of the law’ forms a sort of amnesia, whereby white subjects are perceived as innocent in a colonial context such as Canada (19). In this way, no one is held responsible for colonialism. In *The National Uncanny*, Bergland (2000) argues that American nationhood is built upon the denial of colonialism (13); I suggest that the same is true for Canada. Bergland’s work, which I explore at greater length later in this chapter, shows how American literature has drawn heavily upon the notion of the Indian as ghost. Bergland argues that this ghostly Indian figure has shaped American national identity, which is deeply unsettled and haunted by the fact of genocide and oppression of Indigenous peoples, while also glorifying the success of colonial conquest (2). Describing Indigenous people as “insubstantial, disembodied, spectral beings” is a discursive technique to displace the humanity of Indigenous people and remove them from history and their land (3). Settlers, therefore, become the inheritors of the land and Native people serve as “substitute ancestors” in the cultural and national narrative (19). This is similar to Smith’s (2006) assertion that Indigenous people must always be seen as disappearing in order for settlers to appropriate Indigenous lands and culture (68).

There are several examples of this discursive technique at work and I highlight how this is so in my case studies. For instance, the James Fennimore Cooper story, *The
Last of the Mohicans, was resurrected in 1992 as a Hollywood movie. The story, which was set in the late eighteenth century, depicts the Seven Year’s War between the French and British as they vie for control over the North American colony. In the story the Mohican people, who are allies with the British, supposedly go extinct because of war and contact with Europeans. Mellissa Sayet (1993), a Mohegan woman, contests Fennimore Cooper’s fable as one that falls into the trope of the ‘vanishing Indian race’ (55). Indeed the Mohegan (or, according to the story, Mohican) people are very much alive today and are recognized as a scheduled tribe in the Northeast of the United States (The Mohegan Tribe 2009). It is not insignificant that this story made a come back in popular culture just two years after the Oka crisis on the Mohawk reserve at Kanesatake. At Kanesatake, the government-backed military intervention pressed forward on the Mohawk people as they attempted to protect their land and gravesite from being turned into a golf course by outside developers. Narratives such as The Last of the Mohicans, where the disappearance and death of Indigenous people are seen as inevitable, continue to be recycled in popular culture. They normalize the violence of the ongoing removal of people from their lands and portray colonialism as a phenomenon of the past. These examples demonstrate the interplay between the discursive and material aspects that work together in order for colonialism to function.

For First Nations to secure their territories, land claims processes in Canada fall short of being avenues for decolonization and exemplify Foucault’s explanation of how power operates and circulates. Land negotiations must typically go through the Canadian state apparatus (such as government negotiating processes or courts) as a way to assert self-determination. Such processes, while an attempt to assert ancestral and territorial
rights, also reify the sovereignty of the state by going through a system wherein Canada sets the terms and its own overarching sovereignty is not up for debate. The fact that Canadian institutions cannot undo the state’s own sovereignty is a paradox that Foucault brings forward when he explains that power cannot solve the problems it has invented. However, he also argues that all power sows the seeds of its own resistance (Foucault 1978, 95).

To understand that which is at work to make ongoing colonial violence possible, Razack (2011) examines policing in Canada and cases of Aboriginal people who have died while in police custody. She argues that Aboriginal people are confined to a space of difference in both law and society where they are seen as too damaged to be considered the owners of the land (88). Through this racial narrative, settlers become owners of the land and the law appears to rescue and improve Indigenous people who are in need of assistance (Razack 2011, 89). Violence is normalized in this space of difference that Aboriginal people are relegated to occupy. In this way, developing a golf course or a mine on Indigenous land is seen as the inevitable course of economic development, growth, prosperity, and modernity in relation to which Indigenous people are often framed as obstacles inhabiting a realm of pre-modernity and helplessness. As Razack states, “Aboriginal bodies become violable as damaged bodies that can only be managed through force” (Razack 2011, 93).

In Orientalism, Said (1979) draws from Foucault’s ideas about representation and the discursive processes at work to create an object of knowledge (Loomba 1998, 43). I draw on Said because he extends Foucault’s work and develops useful tools for analyzing colonialism. Said explores how the ‘Orient’ became an object of knowledge for the West
through colonialism and the production of literature and art about people and places in the east. He argues that the techniques of representation used by the West to construct this ‘Orient’ reveal more about the West and how it understood itself than it does about the ‘Orient’ (Said 1979, 22). Furthermore, Said points to material realities of colonialism connected to this process of knowledge production. Battles to take and settle land at the price of killing, displacing, and dispossessing Indigenous people are accompanied by narratives of the Native Other as backward (Said 1993).

The substance of my thesis is about more than just stereotypes. As Said (1979) states “one ought never to assume that the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies or of myths which, were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away” (6). In other words, the representations of Indigenous people that exist today are not the result of a lack of information or ‘truth.’ Representations that tend to relegate Indigenous people to a pre-modern past is a symbolic strategy that accompanies and facilitates the removal of Indigenous peoples from their lands and are deeply embedded in processes of white subject formation. As Smith (2006) argues, this logic is violent and insists that Indigenous people must always appear to be disappearing in order for non-Indigenous people to take claim of land and resources and appropriate Indigenous cultures (68).

**Subject Formation**

We cannot think outside of discursive practices. Rather, as Foucault suggests, subjects are formed by, and come into being through, discourse. Knowledge is thereby caught up in power and “[d]iscourse transmits and produces power: it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it”
(Foucault 1978, 100-101). In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault explains that subjectivity comes into being through discourse. Rather than building up his own discourse of sexual behaviour throughout history, he strips away notions of truth built up around sexuality as it has been constructed in Western history. Through this disassembling process, Foucault uncovers the ways in which power works through the production of knowledge, discourse, and institutions, and on the body itself. Institutions, such as clinics, churches, courts, and schools produced knowledge and categories such as the “sodomite [which] had been a temporary aberration; [whereas] the homosexual was now a species” (Foucault 1978, 43). As subjects, we enter into fields of pre-determined choices/un-choices that we agree to through the guidance of discursive interactions. In its most potent and subtle forms, these ‘truths’ exist on the body through beliefs about such things as ‘sexual impulse’, gender, or race. In these contexts, anything that deviates from what is described as normal must be investigated and classified. Power, therefore, works on subjects by scripting a field of choices, the spectrum of which we mistake choice for freedom.

Foucault’s examination of power is often criticized as denying agency to subjects because he abandons Enlightenment and humanist notions of individual autonomy. Ideas around social change, agency and, empowerment in general therefore become slippery. Yeğenoğlu (1998) highlights this dilemma in her work *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*, which is a helpful resource to develop understanding of why representations and discourses about Indigenous people are a powerful element of colonialism. She, along with many others, argues that the assumption of autonomy, which gives the subject its universal status, has been exposed as a historically specific construction located in a white, male, European self-understanding (Yeğenoğlu 1998, 3-
She confronts the idea of agency situated in debates about post-structuralism by drawing on Derrida’s theories about subject binaries. Derrida (1994) argues first that in order to break down the subject binary between Self/Other, the subordinate (or Other) must be displaced into the heart of the dominant subject (7). In other words, it is not enough to ‘empower’ the Other. If subjectivity works in a dualism, the dependence that the dominant subject location has on the Other to shape its own identity must be exposed. A transformation and unsettling of this dualism, rather than a mere reversal of roles, is necessary. Yeğenoğlu argues that striving for agency through an autonomous sovereign subject position amounts to a mere reversal of positions, rather than a displacement, because it denies that this dualism is at work (8). Subject formation is, therefore, never a stable or fixed process, but rather is filled with gaps and tensions that can be interrupted. This understanding is crucial in my analysis of Indigenous self-determination and of political Indigenous art which interrupt colonial relations with different readings of indigeneity. No sign or utterance can be certain of its own interpretation and it is in this process of constant reiteration that the instability and gaps lay (Derrida 1994, 347-358).

As Yeğenoğlu notes, “[t]he Other is what makes the subject possible again and again” (9).

Extending Foucault’s work, Stoler (1995) shows that racial discourse reverberates between the metropole and colony, thereby securing bourgeois rule and constituting both European and Indigenous subject positions (97). Stoler notes that middle class sensibilities were not exported to the colonies but, rather, were created through colonial contact itself (99). She goes on to argue that, in this process, there is always a ‘return effect’ from colony to metropole and back again, which allows for internal and external colonization to be effected (Stoler 1995, 75). Discourses that portray European
subjectivity, masculinity, and citizenship as rational are constituted through this colonial exchange and racial constructions of the ‘Native.’ Since the time of contact with New World peoples many Europeans have entered into their own subject positions and nationhood through colonial discourses. Foucault (2003) explains:

The savage—noble or otherwise—is the natural man whom the jurists or theorists of right dreamed up, the natural man who existed before society existed, who existed in order to constitute society, and who was the element around which the social body could be constituted (194).

As I show through my case studies, European subjectivities continue to be iterated and reiterated in the present day through knowledge production about the ‘Indian’.

Similarly, Europeans drew on notions of Indianness in novels and popular culture to produce their own self images. For example, Phillips (1997) examines mapping and popular literature in relation to Europe's project of colonizing new lands and argues that “terra incognita” is not discovered, but is socially produced (168). He explores how mapping unknown lands was a fantasy and adventure for Europeans most evident through popular literature during the formation of empire. This genre of literature was not only a form of entertainment, but became a vehicle through which European boys became men through engaging in ideas, fantasies, and role play of conquering distant lands and backward peoples. From about the early nineteenth century, popular adventure literature was prolific in Europe as books became more accessible and affordable and literacy rates increased. These developments gave birth to a new reading public (Phillips 1997, 11). For instance, up until the early twentieth century boys were socialized through adventure novels such as George Alfred Henty’s *Redskin and Cowboy: A Tale of the Western Plains* (which was published in London). As lands were mapped and charted through
colonialism, the desire for new adventures continued. The previously cited Karl May Winnetou books fit into this trend. I argue that this fantasy continues to thrive in the European contexts where I do my case studies and are expressed, not only in literature, but also throughout popular culture and in various commodity forms.

Exploring Subjectivity and Space

Space may seem to be empty or innocent but, as many authors (including Razack), have argued, space is a social product in which certain bodies are produced (Razack 2002, 17). Subjects enter into discursive fields and material space. Space and bodies constitute each other through a dialectic which is a process Razack asserts reproduces uneven social relations and racial hierarchies (1). This process can be seen at work in several cases throughout this thesis, including how Canada is portrayed, or ‘sold’, to Swiss investors as a vast and underutilized land, the demarcation and governance of land, the attempt to create a ‘purified’ sense of the national body through patrolling nation-state borders, the constitution of commercial space and the market through encounters with Indian figures, and the spaces of the summer camp and exhibit where modern subjects come to know themselves through ‘playing Indian.’

To understand these spatial relations, Foucault gives the example of the Panopticon apparatus used in prisons in which prisoner’s bodies can be made visible and monitored from a single central observation tower. This is an example of the regulation of bodies by power and space. Such techniques force individuals to internalize the gaze of the prison guard. Foucault (1995) refers to this as disciplinary power, or a shift from external force and violence done to the body to self-surveillance (203). Foucault (2003) notes the evolution from the theory of disciplinary power, which makes individual bodies
docile, to biopower as a technique and regulatory power constructed to manage the life of an entire population (249). He describes this power as the ‘making live’ and ‘letting die’ of certain bodies. Biopower is established through tracking statistics, such as birth rates and mortality rates (Foucault 2003, 243). This is useful in examining how power is at work not only on individual subjectivity, but also on entire populations (such as Indigenous people) to sustain colonial violence. This process is evidenced in the disproportionate incarceration rates experienced by Indigenous people (the removal of certain bodies from public space), the division of land through colonial governance (the allocation of where different bodies can live), and environmental degradation of Indigenous territories (the elimination of certain bodies and their means to survive).

Renisa Mawani (2000) underlines the importance of spatial relations relevant to regulating Aboriginal populations during the formation of British Columbia. Anxieties about race, sex, and land acquisition were palpable as authorities attempted to deter interracial heterosexual relations in order to maintain clear racial boundaries and delineation of who had the right to occupy certain spaces. Mixed race people were seen as a threat to the colonial project because they could occupy white settler space or Indian reserves and bridged the gap between colonizer and colonized (Mawani 2000, 11). She notes that authorities wanted, “…to vigilantly protect the real and discursive parameters of whiteness and Indian-ness from “half-breeds” because they were seen as an obstacle to usurping desired native lands and as a negative influence on white and Native society” (Mawani 2000, 28). Mawani's work illustrates the functioning of binaries in subject formation, in which people who occupy an in-between position are seen as a threat.
Sara Ahmed (2000) explores how bodies come to be recognized as belonging, or not belonging, to particular spaces through the notion of ‘stranger fetishism.’ Communities come to define themselves as a ‘purified space’ by constructing the idea of the dangerous stranger and actively monitoring who does, and does not, belong in their space; this is evidenced through neighbourhood watch programs that Ahmed explores in Britain, where community surveillance is a technique used to monitor who belongs and doesn’t belong in their space (25-27). Ahmed states that a stranger is not just someone that is unrecognizable, but is a figure that comes into being through techniques that allow us to differentiate who does, and who does not, belong (23). This concept not only has implications for how certain spaces (such as neighbourhoods or a nation-state) are formed and managed, but also for how the subject “comes into being by learning how to differentiate between others” (Ahmed 2000, 24). Ahmed argues that the policing of valuable space legitimizes social exclusion, whereby the stranger is seen as suspect and “a crime (waiting to happen)” (30-31). I return to this idea when examining the ways that racialized figures are used to establish who belongs inside and outside the nation and who can pass through its borders.

Haunted Histories of the Indian Figure in North America

Ward Churchill (1992) writes about the ways in which symbolic and material processes work in concert in order for colonization to take place. He states, “[d]uring each phase of the genocide of American Indians, literature, film, and the assimilation of culture have played critical roles” (Churchill 1992, 1). A couple of examples that I lift up to demonstrate Churchill’s point as it occurred in North America come from literature, ethnological exhibits, tours, and museums. Coleman (2006) and Bergland (2000) have
both traced the ways in which writers throughout Canadian and American literature attempted to carve out specific national identities as unique from metropole Europe. Through these literary moves the ambivalence and dependence of the speaking and/or writing colonial subject emerges through the ferment of Indigenous Peoples’ disappearance.

Bergland (2000) demonstrates how the portrayal of Indian as ghost at once facilitated the removal, dispossession, and killings of Indigenous people in America and also stood in for a supposedly disappeared people (3). She does this by looking at how this ghost appears in early developments of American literature as authors were trying to establish a distinct literary genre that was particular to their context and experience. As an example, Bergland looks at the first monthly magazine published in American in 1787, called “The American Museum” (40). In its first year, the magazine published the American Constitution in the same issue as a poem called “The Indian Burying Ground” by Philip Freneau (40). Indigenous bodies are not included in the phrase “We the People” of the Constitution but, rather, are constructed as artifacts and objects for investigation emphasized by the inevitability of their death and disappearance through discourse such as Freneau's poem (Bergland 2000, 40-42). Bergland argues that American subjects and nationalism are themselves dependent on colonial spectres as victors of a conquered land yet haunted as inheritors of a murderous history based on colonialism and slavery. While she claims that, in Europe, subjects are haunted by the spectre of communism and the oppressed worker (Bergland 2000, 7), I would add that Indian spectral forms also play a role in modern Europe rooted in a sense of alienation from nature and spirituality.
Coleman (2006) further develops the idea of colonial nostalgia and haunting in the formation of white civility in Canada. In Coleman’s retelling of John E. Logan’s lament in 1884 over the lost opportunity for British Canadian national identity to integrate Indigenous traditions he states, “…the fantasmatic historical spectre haunts the present pronouncements of symbolic history…” (30). In that very historical moment, while such laments were proclaimed, the supposed vanishing Indians were being suppressed through the Métis Northwest Rebellion and were still very much alive and fighting for political rights. This is very similar to the dynamic I highlighted in the case of narratives about Indigenous people in popular culture in and around the Oka crisis. Coleman poignantly twists Logan’s words into the phrase “‘we’ are [always] here now and they are [always] gone” to emphasize how the native is seen in a constant state of disappearing (30). Coleman also argues that writers relied on race and the spectre of Indianness to develop Canadian literature.

The construction of Indigenous peoples as a ‘vanishing race’ also occurs in many museums and ethnological exhibits. This trope has been used to justify dispossession of lands and the appropriation of objects, art, and cultural patrimony for colonial use and consumption. Francis (1992) notes the transition from the erasure and removal of Indigenous Peoples and cultures from public space to the invention of the ethnological museum as an important moment in Canada’s colonial history (103). He argues that the urgency with which museums and projects for preserving Indigenous cultures on the part of non-Native people took place reiterated the notion that Indigenous people were a ‘vanishing race’ (Francis 1992, 104). He compares the Wild West shows of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries with the creation of ethnological museums (1
return, at a later point, to the phenomenon of the Wild West shows as another connection to Europe. While these two sites are different, he states that they were not completely disparate, as both constructed similar attitudes towards Indians as objects of study whose cultures needed to be preserved for posterity (Francis 1992, 105). What Francis points to here is significant, as a great deal of Indigenous cultural objects and property were also traded with, and exported to, Europe, where, to do this day, they sit in museums, such as the Louvres in Paris and Museum of Ethnology in Vienna. Many Indigenous peoples have recognized the importance of recovering and reclaiming these objects. A group of Yup’ik elders from Alaska travelled to Berlin, Germany to see objects collected from their community by Johan Arian Jacobsen (a Norwegian sailor) in the late nineteenth century; they were not able to recuperate the collection, but interacted with the objects during their visit and left with photographs of the pieces (Lührmann 2004, 219). The Yup’ik elders revealed that generating, or recovering, knowledge about such objects was stimulated by interacting with them and having the opportunity to share and discuss with others from the community (Lührmann 2004, 222). Recovering cultural property is a decolonizing strategy, although not all attempts for Indigenous people to do so have been successful.

Crosby (1991) describes how the anthropological project of preserving totem poles and Indigenous art in museums made Indigenous culture an important object of knowledge for colonial institutions in western Canada. She states, “[h]istorically, Western interest in aboriginal peoples has really been self-interest...” (Crosby 1991, 267). This was not just an intellectual project, but was one that involved physically removing Indigenous art, cultural property, history, and presence from their land as Northwest coast
villages were pillaged for totem poles and other ‘artifacts’, thereby fortifying the position of the new settlers as owners of the land. Crosby notes that “the philanthropic efforts of non-natives also lend itself to the commonly held belief that if it were not for them, native culture would not exist today” (270). As I will demonstrate later with the Indian Hobbyist movements in Western Europe, this is the case for both North American settlers and European entrepreneurs. Emberly (2007) adds that advertisements, ethnographic writing, photographs and film all played a part in the colonial ‘salvaging’ project of Indigenous cultures (11). She argues that this was based on a fear of ‘lost origins’, which was unfounded as Indigenous people were not actually vanishing but instead their traditional ways of life were being re-signified through technologies of representation (Emberly 2007, 11).

The discursive Indian figure builds up a discourse about what indigeneity is. This discourse has material consequences for people who, as a consequence of colonial rule, are faced with having to prove their identity and authenticity as Indigenous people in order to secure rights to land and culture. Attempts by the Mashpee people in the United States were unsuccessful in repatriating items to their community since they were not recognized as a legitimate or authentic tribe (Garoutte 2003, 71). The Mashpee strongly believe that the recuperation of such objects would help them in their process of decolonization and stimulate a revitalization of their own culture (Garoutte 2003, 64-71). This phenomenon is not unique to North America. Museums throughout Europe, including the Louvres in Paris, contain Indigenous art and cultural patrimony. Through processes of colonization and trade, these items were exported to Europe and many Indigenous communities continue in the struggle to bring them back home.
People are required to fit into certain notions of authenticity in order to maintain or recuperate their autonomy and rights to the land. In regards to legal struggles over land, Panagos (2007) and McNeil (2000) examine the case of Delgamuukw, in which Gitxsan and Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs asserted their jurisdiction over their traditional territories. Both authors show that the burden of proof for Aboriginal title and rights is always placed on First Nations people, while the tendency to frame legitimate or authentic Indigenous identity rests with the government and courts. Through this analysis, the author’s contest the assertion by the courts of an ‘inherent limit’ to the land, arguing that this does not take into account the adaptation required for Aboriginal peoples to survive in the modern world. In these cases, the law appears to be benevolent and offering assistance to the original inhabitants of the land. As Razack (2011) suggests, this process affirms settlers and their institutions, as owners of the land through the attempt to improve the situation of Indigenous people (89).

These struggles over land and the involvement of notions of identity in these struggles have important implications for First Nations people and their ability to assert their rights in face of major economic interests in their lands, such as mining, hydro-electric dams, and logging. For instance, most resource extraction projects occur in northern regions of Canada, where the majority of the population are Indigenous people (Gordon 2006, 18). Barsh (1987) corroborates these claims and extends the analysis beyond Canadian industry to examine how Europe also depends on the unsurrendered lands of Native people for much of its raw materials, such as oil and gas (565).
In summary, discourses on Indians that posit Indigenous people as disappearing and backward have played a key role in facilitating the formation of settler subjectivities and national identity in North America. Francis (1992) notes that in the Canadian context:

Government officials wanted Indians to become a part of the modern world by giving up whatever it was that made them Indians, while the others preferred Indians to affirm progress by remaining a picturesque example of what it was not (103).

These notions have accompanied, and in fact work to make possible, the removal of Indigenous bodies from the land. Such formations of Indigenous people are evident in literature, exhibits, and popular culture and work to secure the settler subject positions as superior, innocent, and rightful inheritors of the land. Furthermore, when asserting their political, territorial and cultural rights, Indigenous people must contend with, and challenge, dominant notions of indigeneity promoted through these discourses. But these discourses are not exclusive to North America. They are reformed and rearticulated in the contexts I explored in parts of Europe thereby broadening the scope of where efforts towards decolonization must be rooted.

**The Legibility of Indian Figures in Europe**

Bergland (2000), who focuses specifically on the spectre of Indianness in the United States, also traces how nationalism, civilization, and subjectivity emerged as specific concepts during European Enlightenment (9). As such, the foundations of European self-understanding through colonial expansion is also built upon the spectre of the ‘Indian.’ She notes several specificities distinguishing the American national subject from the European imperial subject (as haunted by the spectre of communism and the oppressed worker) (Bergland 2000, 7). I show that the notion of the Indian ghost continues to be invoked and felt in Europe today. The placement of Indian ghosts and haunting cannot be reduced to an exclusive national milieu. As Stoler (1995) stresses,
bourgeois civilizing missions in the metropole and colony have too often been treated as independent from, and not informed by, the colonies (12). Foucault notes that the idea of savage is a dreamed up figure that pre-exists society. It is through this figure that European theorists have imagined and critiqued their own societies. The savage is the figure through which modern society is created (Foucault 2003, 194). Europeans have looked to Indians for self-definition because this figure has come to represent that which is outside of civilization. Encounters that support this discourse about Indians have formed through sites (such as the Wild West shows of the late nineteenth century and the 2011 Foire du Valais in Switzerland), in literature, film, and displays, and through tourism. Ideas about Indians have developed and flourished with particular local meanings and functions in different European contexts.

Notions about Indians travelled to Europe in many ways during contact with the so-called ‘New World.’ Indigenous people themselves travelled to Europe (by choice or force) to take part in various ethnological exhibits and shows. Most of these exhibits were imbued with themes of civilization, progress, a romanticized past, and the inevitability of Indigenous peoples’ disappearance. This is clearly expressed by the painter George Catlin, who hired nine Ojibwa to go to England and promote his artwork under the slogan “Get a chance to see them while they are still here” (Wernitznig 2007, 71). Authors, such as Wernitznig (2007), look at the influence of the Wild West Show by William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) that toured throughout North America and Europe in the late nineteenth century and included stops at Windsor castle, the Vatican, and the Paris Exposition Universelle (79-83). Indigenous actors in Buffalo Bill’s show were asked to remain in their costumes after the show as spectators were invited in a quasi-ethnographical tour
behind the scenes to witness how the Indigenous performers lived their daily lives (Wernitznig 2007, 74). Bolz (1987) explains that the Wild West shows were a mixture of adventure and ethnography that placed great value on authenticity through the idea that the characters were enacting ‘real performances’ and not just a circus routine (482). He argues that the Wild West shows were largely responsible for the Wild West clubs and Indian hobbyist groups that were created all across Germany by the early twentieth century. Francis (1992) notes that the “[p]erforming Indian was playing the role of extra in somebody else’s story” (103).

Haberland (1987) looks at the story of nine Bella Coola men who travelled to Europe in 1885 with the Norwegian Jacobsen brothers. The Jacobsen brothers specialized in ethnographic shows of Indigenous people. The nine performers (who were motivated by economic reasons to work in Europe) were received with skepticism by European audiences, who doubted the authenticity of the Bella Coola men and found them ‘un-Indian’ (Haberland 1987, 345). Bolz notes that due to the presence of Sioux people in Europe since the late nineteenth century the Plains people are seen as the ‘Indian par excellence’ (Bolz 1987, 77). This trend also appears in the visual data of my case studies. The Bella Coola men performed traditional dances and the potlatch ceremony dressed in various Pacific Northwest costumes and masks that the Jacobsen brothers had collected (not necessarily indigenous to Bella Coola). Haberland makes no mention of the fact that, while these Bella Coola men performed the potlatch in Europe, the ceremony had been banned in Canada since 1884 (Dickason 2002, 265). Along the same lines, Wernitznig and Gilders both note that Ghost dancer activists (Lakota Sioux) were shipped off with Cody for the Wild West show, a strategy endorsed by the United
States government to temporarily remove Indigenous dissidents from the continent (Wernitznig 2007, 88). Käsebier (2007) argues that many Indigenous people welcomed the opportunity to travel precisely because of the persecution they faced at home (21).

Wernitznig (2007) surveys the narratives and iconographies related to Native Americans in Europe. Her case studies span different eras and locations, from Pocahontas’ travel to England at the turn of the seventeenth century to the Wild West shows that toured throughout Europe. She focuses on the particular ways that discourses about Indians developed in Europe (mainly Germany) through literature, exhibitions, and contemporary trends in new age spirituality. Wernitznig uncovers the impact that two German authors, Charles Sealsfield and Karl May, had on shaping Europeans’ consciousness about Indianness in the nineteenth century. These German men launched their literary careers writing adventure novels about North America, the ‘Wild West’, and Indians.

The cultural narratives and symbols that May propagated through his literature continue to appear in Europe today. One example of this are the Swiss ice cream bars called “Winnetou”, which are based on May’s Apache chief character. His literary career started in the 1870s and has had a deep and lasting impact on German, and other Europeans’, understanding of Indians as a ‘vanishing people.’ Influenced by Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, Wernitznig (2007) states that it was May’s intention to write a memorial for the ‘red race’ which perpetuated the myth of the disappearing Indian (59). May writes about two main characters in his adventure novels: Winnetou, a fictional Apache Chief who is portrayed as undergoing a civilizing process thanks to white settlers, and Old Shatterhand, a German in America who fights injustice and crime in the Wild
West with help from his sidekick Winnetou (Wernitznig 2007, 59). The duo is something of a precursor to the Lone Ranger and Tonto stories. The tales about danger, discovery, and survival in the wilderness are told as a first person narrative from Old Shatterhand’s experience. Old Shatterhand first arrives to the American frontier in search of danger and adventure as Karl (a character based on the author). He goes through several rites of passage, such as learning to hunt and making a lasso of rope, and uses his knowledge about the West, which is entirely based on books he read when he was in Germany (Frayling 2006, 108). Karl is eventually given the name ‘Old Shatterhand’ after he demonstrates his ability to fight his enemies barehanded. Through his bravery and prowess he gains the attention and eventual acceptance of the Apache people, who then teach him about their ways of life. He is made a blood brother to an Apache warrior named Winnetou who is equally as brave and strong as Shatterhand (Frayling 2006, 110). The two set off fighting crime instigated by Mormons, half-breeds, Yankees (who are portrayed as corrupt, cruel, and violent), and the Apache’s enemies, the Kiowa Indians (who are portrayed as savage and backward as compared to the Apache people). In the novel *Christmas in the Wild West*, which was written in 1897, a missionary who has lived with the Apaches says of the Apache warrior Winnetou:

> If he was the son of a European monarch, he would become a great leader in battle—better still, a prince of peace. But as heir to an Indian Chief, he will die—perhaps miserably. For that is the destiny of his race (Frayling 2006, 112).

May’s novels emphasize the inevitability of progress and superiority of German culture (contrasted by the slow demise of Indians and the brutishness of American frontiers people). Winnetou and his people are doomed and they know it. In the end, there is nothing they can do but convert to Christianity (which is portrayed in a dramatic scene when their hero, Winnetou, is mortally wounded and on his deathbed declares that he has
become Christian) (Frayling 2006, 112). May only travelled to North America after the success of his early publications and was disillusioned that the ‘West’ he witnessed was nothing like the fantasies about which he wrote (Wernitznig 2007, 58). As Wernitznig states:

On his brief travels to America, the best and, in fact, most interesting Indians for May exactly were dead ones. The photographic archive of his trip to North America shows him ‘gravehopping’ from tombstone of one dead native chief to the next (60).

Wernitznig and Gilders (2003) highlight that May’s novels fascinated Adolf Hitler and captivated German nationalist movements with ideas of a special fraternity with Indians, racial hierarchy, white masculinity, and Wild West battles between good and evil. As Wernitznig observes, this fact is often neglected by May fan clubs and May scholars (62). May’s imagination was not limited to the literary realm. He converted his home into a theme park (now a museum) and there is an annual festival that celebrates his work.

While the German May wrote about a ‘Wild West’ that was far from his personal, or his country’s own, experience, Prasad (2009) explores the genre of French Romantic literature and how it was marked by a distinct sense of longing and nostalgia for colonies once held under French rule. She makes reference to the work of François René de Chateaubriand, whose quintessential depictions of what she calls the ‘disciplined savage’ (or ‘white man’s sidekick’) opened up a certain genre of writing about the lost French Americas (Prasad 2009, 72). In his most well known book, Les Natchez, published in 1826, Chateaubriand excavates colonial conflicts from the eighteenth century for nineteenth century readers. This similar sense of mourning over the tragic, yet inevitable, elimination of Indigenous people also marked British civil sensibilities (Coleman 2006, 29). Being haunted by Indians and past colonial glories set a stage on which the ambivalence towards progress, modernity, and colonial pursuits were played out.
Prasad (2009) highlights how Chateaubriand’s nineteenth century writing was significant in an era when France was looking to Africa for its next colonial opportunities. She argues that this sense of nostalgia for America and ‘disappearing Indians’ shaped the literary vehicle through which French nationhood, civility, pride, masculinity, and racial superiority were explored. With a renewed sense of purpose, France was shaped for a new, supposedly egalitarian, colonial venture in Africa that could be at once civilizing and abolitionist of slavery (Prasad 2009, 95). Attempts to renew and recapture a sense of European and white innocence are noticeable in this shift. As French writer and historian, Alexis de Tocqueville, noted, the social stress and demands of democratizing and modernizing France could be alleviated through the project of colonizing Algeria (Sankar 2003, 280).

**Playing Indian**

Europeans take fantasies about Indians to great lengths; in doing so, they enact Indianness in various ways. Playing Indian is a popular pastime and finds a place in both Europe and North America. There are several examples of playing Indian that I will highlight before analyzing some of the differences and similarities between the way Indian discourses are formed and played out in these different regions. Green (1988) argues that, while Indigenous Peoples were pushed to become civilized and more like Europeans, it became a source of pleasure for non-Indigenous people to ‘play savage.’ She notes, “it is the (primitive) role, not the real, which is to be enjoyed, and thus perhaps it is better for non-Indians to play it” (Green 1988, 34). Similarly, Wernitznig (2007) notes:

[t]he moment Indians were considered to be vanished, or at least not ‘traditional’ any more, Indianness became a surrogate identity for Europeans and Americans; the minute actual Indians would not pose a genuine threat to society, civilization, and
expansion any longer, one could safely start playing Indian...[this] marked a transition towards a white tendency to impersonate rather than simply gaze at Indianness (106).

Ahmed (1999) explores the fascination with ‘playing’ or ‘becoming’ the Other. She argues that before we even meet the Other we are already informed about the “otherness of the other” (53). She suggests that it is not just the Other, but the stranger Other that, by fact of being identified as alien, steps into dense discursive significations (Ahmed 2000, 2). Ahmed looks at how techniques of consuming and becoming the stranger (in this case, the Indian figure) confirm the agency of the subject (118). The consuming subject, or the one who appropriates and ‘plays’ Indian, has the ability to become different rather than simply being different. Being and embodying difference is a characteristic of the Other.

Dyer (1997) argues that what makes this possible is the construction of whiteness as ‘not raced’, non-located, and disembodied (4). In this way, white subject positions are posited as universal and mobile (Dyer 1997, 2). This provides strong theoretical grounding for the ideas of ‘playing Indian’ as a way that whiteness attempts to recover its innocence through its ability to move across racial boundaries.

In the French film “De l’autre côté du lit” (2008) by Pascale Pouzadoux well known French actors Sophie Marceau and Dany Boon play out a scene that relies on race and ‘Indian play’ in order to understand the stress of modern family life and gender norms in a modern, white, French context. The comedy is about a white, middle class couple, Ariane and Hugo, who decide to switch their roles and responsibilities (both heavily inscribed by gender norms) in a desperate attempt to save their marriage. The film opens with Ariane as she recounts her daily life looking after her children and home. While scenes of her daily life are played out, the character Ariane narrates how she feels unappreciated, isolated, and stressed by her daily routine and fears she is inadequate as a
mother (i.e. she can never manage to get her children to school on time and her husband doesn’t acknowledges her work in the home). There is a break in the story as she reminisces how her life used to be:

*When I think that we don’t even have time for fun anymore with my husband. He is strong, courageous, solid, muscular...all this is in the past. The truth is my husband doesn’t stop working (Pouzadoux 2008).*

During a fantasy dream-like sequence about the past, Hugo is seen walking through the snow towards a log cabin in the woods while carrying a bear carcass over his shoulder. He opens the door and flops the bear down inside the cabin. His wife and children are waiting for him. Ariane quickly leaves what she is cooking on the stovetop and runs around the dining table with her children; they all yell and slap their mouths with their hands. Ariane is dressed in a brown suede top and skirt with a tall feather in her hair held by a red band wrapped around her head. She has red lines painted across her cheeks. The children are dressed in a similar manner. Hugo, on the other hand, is wearing a raccoon fur hat and a red checkered shirt. After Ariane and the children stop running in circles around the table, Ariane runs up to her husband and starts licking his face.

Hall’s (1997) work in cultural studies helps unpack what is going on in this scene. He notes that meaning works through language and that objects do not have inherent value in and of themselves (i.e. the feather in Ariane’s hair has come to epitomize indigeneity in Europe through a process of discourse) (Hall 1997c, 15). The film sequence can be analyzed on several levels and is reminiscent of scenes from other films or books (such as Hollywood Westerns) where ‘Indians’ or people ‘playing Indian’ circle around a fire in a similar fashion with signifiers such as particular clothes and face-paint. This intertextual reading shows how certain symbolic patterns get repeated in discourses

---

1 My translation from the original French version.
about ‘Indianness.’ In other words, this scene depends on other symbols (such as Indian costumes), images, or scenes to have meaning amounting to what may be considered a regime of representation (Hall 1997b, 232).

One interpretation of the signifiers in this film is the notion of ‘play’ as Ariane reminisces how she no longer has the chance to enjoy life with her husband. This scene is inseparable from a gendered understanding about what it means to be a woman or man and the expected tasks that correspond with these roles. It may also represent a romanticized view of family, living a rustic life out in nature, which can only be made sense of by using ‘Indians’ as a signifier seen as inherently close to nature, noble, and simple. The scene comes to symbolize an escape from modernity, which is made sense of through the juxtaposition to the ‘Indian’ figures. The trope of ‘playing Indian’ has been used as a device and response to anxieties that modernity was eroding white masculinities and femininities in the late nineteenth century, as evidenced by movements such as the Boy Scouts (Deloria 1998, 105). The final act in which Ariane licks her husband’s face while ‘playing Indian’ is not insignificant. It may symbolize animalistic nature or unrestrained sexual desire both of which have been used to mark Indigenous women as oversexed, degenerate, and savage (Stevenson 1999, 57). Only through Indian role-play does Ariane’s character have permission to express desire and transgress norms around restrained white female sexuality (Dyer 1997, 39).

At first glance, this scene demonstrates how signifiers in French popular culture are heavily imbued with dominant notions about indigeneity, race, and gender. As Smith and Green’s work suggests, ‘Indian play’ is thoroughly immersed in genocidal logic and violence, thereby demystifying the façade of play portrayed in European popular culture.
Just as Phillips (1997) problematizes ‘fun’ adventure literature to show how it is tainted with violence and imperialism, I also problematize forms of ‘playful’ entertainment in French and Swiss popular culture. At the same time, Hall (1997a) proposes that there is never one true interpretation in representational or signifying processes and meanings may always shift. He describes that in such representational processes the meanings being constructed always remain partial (Hall 1997a, 4). This instability opens up space and possibility for counter-strategies to work against signifying practices that inform racial and gender hierarchies, such as the case of the work of contemporary Indigenous artists that I examine in this thesis.

The discourses around indigeneity that I examine in my case studies are framed as benign and innocent in the public sphere because notions of play and hobby accompany them. But as Green (1988) suggests ‘playing Indian’ amounts to violence as “...the living performance of ‘playing Indian’ by non-Indians peoples depends upon the physical and psychological removal, even the death, of real Indians” (31). ‘Playing Indian’ is harmless only insofar as it can be assumed that Indigenous peoples have vanished or have lost their ‘authenticity’ or legitimate claim to their identity and land. Some Indian hobbyist groups, who role-play imagined fantasies about Indigenous culture and life, have argued that Native traditions must be reclaimed, preserved, and articulated by non-Indigenous people claiming that Indigenous people have either disappeared or become too modern. Green and Smith (2006) suggest that Indian representations or role-play amount to violence in that they freeze Indigenous people in the past and deny that Indigenous people are the rightful inheritors of their own lands and cultures.
This sense of proximity to the Other as a facilitator of self-discovery is a dynamic that Bolz (1987) explores in his article about the Hunkpapa Indian club, which started in 1934 in Frankfurt, Germany (480). The club’s goal was to correct popular clichés about Indians as ‘bloodthirsty’ by enacting what members believed to be an ‘Indian lifestyle’ (Bolz 1987, 471). At the time of Bolz’s work in the late 1980s, members of the club would gather on the outskirts of the city and practice so-called Indian customs and wear traditional Sioux clothing in an attempt to ‘bring back to life’ what they considered a past culture (486). They occasionally gathered with other Indian clubs from Switzerland, Belgium, France, and the Netherlands and did outreach programs for urban youth to introduce them to an Indian way of living in nature (Bolz 1987, 480). Bolz notes that an important part of this past time is for its members to renounce the comforts of civilization (at least for the weekend) (478). In this way, people ‘play Indian’ on a part-time basis and demarcate ‘civilized space’ from ‘Indian space’; this is a key theme in my case study of the Charmilles exhibit.

The birth of the Boy Scouts and other youth movements in North America at the turn of the twentieth century share similar pedagogical tools with European Indian hobbyist groups. Deloria (1998) examines how modernity posed major challenges that destabilized notions around masculinity, gender, and authentic American national identity (101). He notes:

To reaffirm modern identity, Americans needed to experience that which was not modern. Just as one visited nature in order to be able to live in the city and enjoyed leisure in order to work more effectively, one turned to the past in order to understand the present and future. To be modern, one acted out a heuristic encounter with the primitive. Indian Others, constructed firmly outside American society and temporality, represented this break not only historically, but also racially, socially, and developmentally (Deloria 1998, 105).
The use of Indian role-playing in youth movements, such as the Woodcraft Indians in the United States, became a pedagogical model for shaping outdoor education, fraternal community, and young masculine identities during an era that was anxious about the effeminizing effects of industrialization and urbanization on boys (Deloria 1998, 96). Other groups, such as the Camp Fire Girls, also use Indian role-play to emphasize domestic gendered roles for girls, such as sewing and beadwork (Deloria 1998, 113).

With a common pedagogical basis, the Swiss environmental group, Pro Natura, holds an annual summer camp experience for children to build friendships and learn about nature, biodiversity, and ecological preservation. In 2010, the camp carried out its environmental education under the theme “‘Hugh’ Nature, Sur les Traces des Indiens,” which was based on an Indian role play adventure where children participated in making ‘Indian’ costumes and sleeping in tipis (Pro Natura 2010). Doxtater (2004) explores how the notion of a ‘green Indian’ has been invented by the European media industry to stand in for ecological consciousness (625). This is not to refute the importance of Indigenous knowledge about the land, but to show how Indianness has been closely likened to flora and fauna of the landscape cordonning off the possibility for Indigenous people to be fully human in this discourse. LaRocque (1975) echoes this notion by adding that the Indian as ‘Nature Lover’ is also a predominant image in North American literature (32). The space of the nature camp becomes a place of play where the participants’ modern identities are affirmed through the Indian role-play. As Dyer (1997) suggests, white subjectivity is mobile (2). The participants encounter with the Indian, whose supposed animality and closeness to the earth allows them to discover nature understood as a frontier of adventure.
Wernitznig (2007) takes up another form of ‘Indian play’ in her examination of how para-esotericism in Europe met New Age spirituality of North America and has resulted in a large ‘Indian’ market, particularly in Germanic areas such as Switzerland, Austria, and Germany (121-122). This form of ‘playing Indian’ takes on particular metaphysical meanings where people claim to ‘feel’ like Indians from a past life or by channeling spiritual energy. In many cases, white Europeans claim to be in touch with authentic Indigenous cultures and spiritualities and attempt to save traditions that are perceived as no longer useful to modern Indigenous people. Gilders (2003) highlights a testimony from the founder of the Native American Association of Germany who notes that Indian hobbyist groups tend to exclude actual Indigenous Peoples, claiming that they are too modern and have lost their indigeneity. Like Ahmed (1999), Wernitznig also draws from the film “Dances with Wolves” as a demonstration that it is possible to ‘go native’ without any ethnic lineage (125). She demonstrates that esoteric movements separate play from racial politics, and I would add Indigenous self-determination struggles (Wernitznig 2007, 130).

In Europe, discourses on Indianness are seldom challenged. They are not rooted in very similar material struggles as I have noticed in North America (i.e. rights to land and cultural property). In North America, discourses on Indianness are imbued with deeply rooted ambivalence, as described by Bergland (2000) through the notion of haunting and Indian ghosts. In Europe, there are similar themes of lamentation and longing for a mythical time and place of the Wild West and Indians, which effectively relegates Indigenous people to the past. At the same time, Indian figures are created in contexts where there is no direct relationship and limited historical ties with Indigenous people.
Nevertheless, encounters with Indian figures allow white European subjects to know themselves as modern. Playing Indian in Europe becomes a form of escape from one’s own history into an imagined, mythical one and is used as a vehicle to get closer to nature (framed as opposite from urbanity and modernity). In North America, similar techniques of playing Indian have accompanied the displacement of Indigenous people from history where the new settler inherits Indigenous culture and land.

The existing discourses on ‘Indianness’ underwrite colonial violence. Were it not for an Other against which to define itself, gendered knowledge and whiteness would not be known. The production of racial knowledge about Indigenous people in Canada and Europe has both symbolic and material consequences of dispossessing people of their land, identity, history, language, and culture. Europe appears to be heavily invested in producing knowledge, images, and discourse about ‘Indians.’ In Europe, this process is secured through popular culture, medicine, consumerism, ethnography, New Age spirituality, and a genre of tourism focused on ‘playing Indian’. The literature surveying the discourses on Indianness provide a glimpse of how these discourses have proliferated in Europe through these various sites of knowledge production. The authors also demonstrate how the ‘Indian’ has been exported from the Americas as an essential figure for nation-building, identity, and civility both in colonized North America and metropole Europe.

The literature and examples I have examined provide historical background to make sense of why discursive Indians continue to be legible and popular symbols in contemporary Western European societies. Some authors show how Indigenous people have been important to the construction of Canadian and American white identities and
nation-building, but one area for further exploration is how Europeans continue to be reliant on a similar process. One gap in this area of research is that contemporary examinations of discourses on Indianness in Europe are often limited to analyses of New Age spirituality and Indian hobbyist movements. Through my cases studies related to the pharmaceutical industry and ethnographic consumerism, I contribute an examination of other potent sites of power and knowledge production to this area of scholarship. I also offer an analysis of how the racial knowledge produced through sites such as those put forward in my case studies support ongoing land dispossession in North America through the impact of foreign direct investment of European countries and companies in the resource extraction industry on unsurrendered Native lands and the consequences of European pharmaceutical companies on the health of Indigenous bodies. I elaborate on the symbolic and material consequences of these discourses through the demands put on Indigenous peoples to perform certain notions of authenticity, which contribute to the erosion of self-determination and rights to land.
Chapter Two: Playing Indian, Buying Indian: Contemporary European Discourses of the Indigenous Other

In this chapter, I discuss two case studies and show how discourses about Indianness that appear in Swiss public space facilitate the formation of white subjects as modern and European space as civilized. The figurative Indians I examine appear as commodities and are, therefore, emblematic of how neoliberal capitalism is underpinned by colonialism that produces racial hierarchies by normalizing constructions of white consumer subjects and colonized, consumable Others. Europeans quite literally play Indian in order to know themselves as modern subjects. Such encounters with the imaginary Indian takes place in shopping malls, fairs, camps, and amusement parks. The first case study is an exhibit from the Charmilles shopping Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a snapshot of a particular moment that I argue depicts how Europeans are dependent on heuristic encounters with Indianness in order to know themselves and to map out and inhabit desirable modern spaces. The figure of the Indian becomes a tool that allows Europeans to get close to Otherness, while simultaneously cordoning off undesirable bodies by marking racial boundaries of the nation. As the exhibit appears in a major shopping Centre, it is also indicative of how the consumption of Indianness becomes grossly normalized.

My second case study of the Kytta ointment, which is an example of how colonialism takes on pernicious forms in contemporary European economies. Through the Kytta advertising Merck pharmaceuticals posits Indigenous people as inherently violable through the product slogan, “[a]n Indian knows no pain”. I expose how the economy of consuming Indianness is lucrative and profitable not only for individual entrepreneurs (as in the case of the Charmilles exhibit), but also for this large German
pharmaceutical company. This economy of consuming Indianness takes on both symbolic and material dimensions. On the one hand, Indianness and Indigenous bodies are symbolically framed as close to nature and pre-modern in order for Merck to uphold its medicine as modern and superior. On the other hand, the Kytta products promotion conceals Indigenous knowledge, histories of violent colonialism, and Merck’s controversial practice of trial vaccinations conducted on Aboriginal children.

The examples I draw on in this chapter, mainly from Switzerland, Germany, and France, are not discrete incidences but are circulated, adapted, and articulated in different ways that play into a larger discourse around indigeneity. In addition to my main case studies, I conduct a survey of other instances where Indianness is commodified and consumed to show how the deployment of Indian figures assert hierarchies of race, gender, bodies, and geographies. These examples illustrate more about how whiteness and Europeanness are constructed than about indigeneity itself. I argue that European dependence on Indian figures perpetuate the colonial logic of violence against Indigenous people as they are posited as consumable, violable and disappearing. Though many of these sources (such as Indian themed amusement parks) are framed as innocent and benign, I argue for ‘Indian play’ and consumption to be read alongside the power struggles that are rooted in colonialism that continues to oppress Indigenous people. This analysis problematizes what may appear to be a playful pastime by historicizing and rooting representations of Indianness in particular contexts of ongoing colonialism.

Becoming Without Becoming

Ahmed (2000) discusses the role of everyday encounters in forming social space and how particular encounters carry hints of broader relationships of power (8-9). She
speaks of the stranger as a figure that is someone we already recognize as not belonging (Ahmed 2000, 21). She notes how both individual subjects and communities come into being through techniques of learning how to differentiate between those who do, and those who do not, belong (Ahmed 2000, 24). Through the stranger, communities are able to demarcate and police the boundaries of belonging. The stranger also comes to stand in for what is dangerous and unknown (Ahmed 2000, 37). The stranger only becomes a figure through encounters of proximity (Ahmed 2000, 13). I draw on this concept in my case studies to understand how European subjects and space are formed as modern through techniques of recognizing Indian figures in contemporary consumer markets as ones who don’t belong outside of a past era or ethnological gaze.

Ahmed (2000) explores the notions of becoming and consuming as two important techniques that confirm the subject’s agency (133). She argues that the stranger is assumed to be knowable, seeable, and be-able and on the other hand the dominant subject, who is mobile, can get close to this stranger (Ahmed 2000, 133). To illustrate this technique of becoming, Ahmed unpacks the 1990 film “Dances with Wolves.” As the character Lieutenant John Dunbar encounters Sioux people at the American frontier of colonial expansion:

[w]hat he discovers is his lack. His (self-) discovery is mediated as a discovery of the truth about the Indians. In other words, although the narrative involves him becoming other, it does so by positioning the Indian as a means to his discovery. Here, the Indians remain other – they remain at the service of a white, masculine story of (self-) discovery. (Ahmed 1999, 60)

Ahmed argues that this process where Dunbar becomes like the Sioux is informed by the assumption that power relations between settlers and Indigenous people could be overcome through the act of getting closer (Ahmed 2000, 124). However, Ahmed shows how Dunbar’s proximity to the Sioux actually reinforces his white masculine subjectivity
One can therefore ‘become’ Indian without inheriting the Other’s condition which is a theme that emerges through the Indian hobbyist movements I explore in this chapter. As Deloria (1998) states, mimetic action facilitated a sense of difference that was important as one played Indian to temporarily traverse modernity (120). He states that, “[m]imesis was not simply the copying of something Other. Rather, modernist Indians imitated and appropriated the Other viscerally through the medium of their bodies” (Deloria 1998, 120).

The understanding of the Indian as commodity is referenced on several occasions throughout this chapter. Ahmed argues that the subject’s agency is established through proximity to objects and images that represent Indianness. She states:

The consuming subject in approximating the smell or look of strangers is clearly not the stranger: this proximity allows rather than disallows the (ontological) distinction between the one who becomes (the consumer), and the one who merely is (the stranger)…the consuming self is established through, rather than against, the proximity of strangers; it is a proximity that requires that the stranger be fixed in the ‘beyond’ of the commodity form, and hence it does not assume the stranger’s co-presence in bodily and social space” (Ahmed 2000, 118).

I explore this dynamic further examining Merck’s products that fetishize Indianness through their medical ointments.

**Playing Indian: The Case of the Charmilles Shopping Centre Exhibit**

In September 2005, I received a flyer in the mail from the Charmilles shopping Centre in Geneva. On the cover of the flyer was an advertisement for an exhibit called “Peaux-Rouges Hier, Indiens Aujourd’hui: Du Myth à la Réalité” accompanied by a cartoon drawing of a man with pinkish brown skin and a nude torso wearing a feather headdress. The flyer unfolded into six pages of coupons and advertisements for the stores, while the cover was entirely dedicated to publicity for the exhibition. The cover stated:
From 26 September to 8 October 2005, animated exhibition, “Red Skins Yesterday, Indians Today—the myth and the reality.” Animated exhibition about the history of Indian Peoples of North America from their origins to present day. Three displays/scenes of daily life, a totem sculptor, a stuffed bison, a collection of Indian objects, videos, 150 photos and texts and face painting for children. With the generous and exceptional participation of Sylvio Asseo, the celebrated artist and wood sculptor.  

Charmilles is a medium-sized shopping Centre with over fifty stores located in the downtown core of Geneva. The exhibit was put together by Michel Besnier (who is from Nantes, France). During the exhibit, Besnier stood by a table display of photograph albums and where face painting was offered for children. He appeared in some of the photographs at the exhibit that had been taken in Victoria, B.C.. There were also photographs of totem poles and West coast artists in the process of carving poles at Thunderbird Park outside the Royal BC Museum in Victoria. Some newspaper articles that he had on display labeled him as an “ambassador for Native cultures from North America.” I observed the exhibit one afternoon for about an hour and, while there, heard from Besnier, who explained to a small crowd of people that he tours schools and public centres around Europe with his display and that he has been fascinated by Indian cultures since he was a young adult. People would gather around to watch as Besnier carved a large wooden totem pole from time to time.

Given that the text included in his exhibit was in French, one can assume that his main target audiences are from francophone countries, such as France, Switzerland, and Belgium. However, many other parts of his exhibit (i.e. the objects and art) did not rely on any text and, as such, the potential audience and demand for his display may be wider than a francophone audience. However, as I do not know how often or where this display

---

2 My own translation from the original French version.
has been, I cannot make any claims about its reach. The exhibit displayed a myriad of items and artifacts (some labeled and some not). Assembled together in one area was a display of two tipis, a stuffed bison, tanned animal hides and pelts hanging from a wooden frame, feather headdresses, drums, and a mannequin dressed in a deerskin dress. Most of the items in this ensemble seemed to resemble items typically from Plains people.

In another area was an ‘Indian schoolroom’ display. The schoolroom diorama featured a painted backdrop of children seated at desks, a poster of a buffalo grazing in the prairies, a bookshelf, and students’ paintings. In the foreground of this painted scenario was a homemade mannequin with painted brown skin, a black wig, baggy clothes and dark sunglasses covering her eyes. Her paint had chipped off in several places revealing white plaster under the brown paint. She represented a modern-day Indigenous schoolteacher.

Many people were crowded near a table where children could get their faces painted like ‘Indians’ and buy a leather strap and a colourful craft feather to tie around their heads. The children could choose how they wanted their face to be painted from a poster depicting different cartoon ‘Indian’ face designs. Some of the children ended up with bindi-like dots on their foreheads, others with clown-like face paint, and others with multi-coloured stripes across their cheeks. All around the mall and in the shops were children dressed and painted in this way.

There were around half a dozen information panels situated around the periphery of the exhibit. These panels presented both historical and contemporary accounts of Indigenous Peoples’ cultures and histories. Some statistics and information was provided about the history of European colonization and contemporary challenges Indigenous
communities face in North America. Many people circulated near the display of objects and artifacts (buffalo and tipis) and around the face-painting stand in the centre of the exhibit. During the time that I was there, I saw few people circulating near or reading the information that was posted on the large display panels.

The way space is used and how bodies, objects, and images occupy these spaces can be examined through two aspects of this exhibit. The first is the flyer advertising the Charmilles exhibit. The caricature Indian figure is front and centre of the flyer and the title “Peaux-Rouges Hier, Indiens Aujourd’hui” is in the largest font at the top of the page. The inside pages of the flyer consist of advertisements and coupons for different stores in the shopping centre, situating the ethnographic exhibit in a consumer space. The cover acts as publicity for both the exhibit and the Charmilles Centre. It emphasizes the mall as a space where people can not only buy familiar products in the shops, but also consume an exotic experience and encounter with Indianness.

Second, the exhibit itself took up several metres located in the centre of the shopping mall. The architecture of Charmilles consists of two floors and an open court in its centre. The venue of the exhibit was set up in this centre court of the mall, making it visible from all floors and practically all sides of the building. The information panels of written material were situated around the periphery of the exhibit. At the centre was the mise-en-scène of objects, the totem pole carving and the face painting station. As I mentioned earlier, based on the fact that most people congregated around these areas the main points of attraction appeared to be these latter parts of the exhibit.

The architecture of the commercial centre provided the backdrop against which the exoticized and racialized exhibit was juxtaposed. On the Charmilles Centre’s website,
an entire page is dedicated to describing the architecture of the building in which the
glass ceiling in the centre of the building is emphasized as “modern, urban style
infrastructure” (Planète Charmilles). This detail is not insignificant. On several occasions
I organized and participated in guided tours of Geneva with different tour guides and
historians. One structure that was been highlighted on these tours was an office building
in the city’s core that was constructed in the 1960s. What sets it apart and makes it of
historical interest is that, in a city consisting of many centuries-old buildings made of
stone and wood, it was one of the first ‘modern’ building developed in the city built
mainly of glass walls and windows. Places like the Charmilles Centre, therefore, become
iconic of Geneva’s development as an urban, modern centre of Europe. The Charmilles
Centre is also symbolic of commerce, consumerism, and affluence. The exhibit’s items
and images privilege depictions of Indigenous people as pre-modern (i.e. items like
animal skins far outweigh scenes of the classroom). The imaginary Indians are made into
a commodity form and the exhibit is a site where Indian difference is both constructed
and consumed. An exhibit such as this blends elements of what would be typically found
in a museum and places them in an explicitly commercial setting where passersby are
engaged to have encounters with Indian Others.

Several meanings can be derived from this complex exhibit as it attempts to be at
once educational, ethnographical, and entertaining. My initial reaction to the exhibit was
that it amounts to cultural appropriation, as it is a white European artist who makes a
living by duplicating Indigenous art and carries the label of ‘ambassador’ for Indigenous
cultures. Western institutions and academia in North America and Europe have often
attempted to preserve Indigenous knowledge and art forms in places such as museums,
based on the assumption that Indigenous people were vanishing and some record of their culture was needed for posterity (Crosby 1991, 270). The exhibit typifies another trap often found in popular culture in both Europe and North America, which is the homogenization of diverse Indigenous cultures into a few familiar symbols. In the movie *Winnetou and Shatterhand in the Valley of Death* (1968) based on one of the German author Karl May’s novels, the southwestern territories of Sioux and Apache peoples are marked by tipis and totem poles. Totem poles, with unique Northwest coast forms and design, become a signifier for Indigenous space or land in popular culture. Francis (1992) notes another similar example of a totem pole that shows up out of context in a Hollywood movie, *The Cariboo Trail* (185). This montage of distinct southern and northwestern Indigenous items and architecture, while not culturally accurate, are key symbols that come to signify North American indigeneity for many non-Native audiences.

Another space that must be considered in regards to where this exhibit was situated is the context of the city, which articulates its identity regarding race in several ways. Over one third of Geneva’s population are foreign residents (Migration Policy Institute 2009) and the city is host to several international organizations, including the World Trade Organization, the Red Cross (whose founder, Henry Dunant was Genevois), and various offices of the United Nations (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, World Health Organization, International Labour Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, etc.), which add to the sense of international significance of the place. There is a juxtaposition between Geneva as a city emblematic of democracy, international diplomacy, commerce, and a dearly held national value of ‘neutrality’ and a pronounced fear of the Other and, more specifically, a fear of the foreigner. This is most evident
through Swiss political campaigns on issues related to immigration. Throughout Geneva, political debates are made visible through graphic billboards aimed at lobbying the public for upcoming referendums (which occur regularly in the Swiss model of participatory democracy). In 2007 for instance, I observed the conservative Swiss People’s Party (SVP) billboard campaign on immigration, which depicted several white sheep standing on a Swiss flag and kicking a black sheep off of it. In 2008, the SVP launched another campaign in reaction to a proposal that would allow some Eastern European citizens easier mobility across the Swiss border wherein black crows picking away at a map of Switzerland were pictured with the slogan “Open the door to abuse? No!” In the same year, the SVP launched another campaign accompanied by a billboard picturing hands grabbing at a box filled with Swiss passports. In September 2011, I noticed another billboard that stated, “Stop mass immigration” with a picture of legs walking across the Swiss flag. Another form of fear of the Other was conveyed through the Swiss vote to ban the construction of minarets at any mosques in the country. The visual political campaign by conservative parties included black minarets covering a Swiss flag and a dark, shadowy figure of a woman in a Niqab in the foreground. The campaign to ban the minarets was successful and was added into the Swiss Constitution (Cumming-Bruce et al. 2009). Furthermore, a professor from the Geneva School of Diplomacy argues that the popular support for the SVP has steadily increased (Ureta 2011). These billboards appear all over the city downtown, outside of parks and shopping centres and in quiet neighbourhoods. They demarcate European and Swiss space and how these boundaries are policed and protected, especially from Eastern Europeans, Muslims, and racialized foreigners (i.e. the black sheep) who are depicted as a threat to Swiss values or resources.
The boundaries of European space (and more specifically the European Union) are not only protected, but are also negotiated and constructed in the national imagination in relation to these Others. Ahmed (2003) explores this encounter with the stranger in constituting spaces and boundaries:

To be alien in a particular nation, is to hesitate at a different border: the alien here is the one who does not belong in a nation space, and who is already defined as such by the Law. The alien is hence only a category within a given community of citizens or subjects: as the outsider inside, the alien takes on a spatial function, establishing relations of proximity and distance within the home (land). Aliens allow the demarcation of spaces of belonging: by coming too close to homes, they establish the very necessity of policing the borders of knowable and inhabitable terrains (3).

It is through the proximity and encounter between subject and stranger that the subject finds a sense of home in the European or national space (Ahmed 2000, 3). How the participant enters into the space of the Charmilles exhibit as a racialized subject located within borders is significant. In this context, the stranger, or immigrant Other, might be considered an “impossible and phobic object” (Ahmed 2000, 54). Its difference cannot be assimilated and, therefore, has no value (Ahmed 2000, 118). The threat of its body shapes the identity and boundaries of the ‘pure’ national body (Ahmed 2000, 51-52). This exhibit must be read in this wider context of race and fear of the Other as the Indian figure plays a role in mitigating what kind of difference can cross the border and be assimilated or consumed.

The subject also enters the site of this exhibit as a consumer. Goldberg (2009b) argues that, with neo-liberalism, the emphasis of the state is placed on privatizing public services, expanding the freedom of trade and the market, and minimizing state intervention (332). In this sense, the citizen as neoliberal subject is reconstituted as consumer. Goldberg (2009b) argues that race is a key technology in the formation of both modern states and neoliberalism (338). Race is restructured in what Goldberg (2009b)
calls ‘racial neoliberalism’, which protects racially driven exclusion to the private sphere (337). In this way, he argues that the neoliberal state privileges those who are already privileged:

Where the welfare state was committed to ameliorating what were deemed structurally produced or magnified deficits for individuals...the neoliberal state is concerned above all with issues of crime, corruption, controlling immigration and tax-cut stimulated consumption, social control and securitization (Goldberg 2009b, 335).

Furthermore, Venn (2009) extends Foucault’s analysis of biopower to argue that “when we take proper account of colonialism and neoliberalism, it becomes clear that liberal capitalism and neoliberalism are zero-sum games…” (Venn 2009, 215). Inequality is seen as the natural order of things, rather than a construction based on notions of race, gender, and class (Venn 2009, 213). This exhibit shows that colonialism persists, as Indianness is marketable, profitable, and a consumable commodity in places such as a Swiss shopping mall. What operates under the surface here are the ways the Indian figure subtly informs what kinds of bodies are allowed entry into Swiss space (i.e. those which can be consumed and are presumed disappearing or dead and therefore non-threatening) and what kinds of bodies are not (i.e. the figures depicted in the SVP immigration campaigns).

What then does the popular figure of the Indian stand in for in a space like this? Geneva maintains a clear position as a space of international stature in the world some of this through humanitarian service. Yet, it is also a space that is wholeheartedly ambivalent towards the Other. The Indian enters into this discursive field as an innocuous Other and a racial commodity. Real Indigenous people are not seen as a threat to Switzerland through immigration and remain anachronistically placed in a realm of fantasy.

Furthermore, Indigenous people are relatively excluded from many of the international organizations, such as the United Nations, which is comprised of state actors. Indigenous
people may have representation in these organizations, but as stateless people they do not hold full membership. Not perceived as being any kind of real threat to European space, the Indian is framed as a commodity consumed through forms of play and entertainment. The participant at the Charmilles exhibit enters into an embodied encounter with this strange Indian figure. As Ahmed (2000) explains, subjects can almost become the stranger through consuming objects that are associated with strange cultures or other places (114). What she terms ‘stranger fetishism’ is displaced onto the commodity (in this case, face paint, craft feathers, and the whole experience of the exhibit) and is assumed to contain the ‘difference’ that the consumer can possess (Ahmed 2000, 168). The stranger becomes the object of desire or embodies a place that the subject would like to inhabit (in this case, it might be the Wild West frontier or closeness to nature) (Ahmed 2000, 115). The production of the stranger, or the Indian, as a commodity fetish is articulated through the representation of difference or an emphasis that they are not like us (Ahmed 2000, 116). The differences that can be consumed and assimilated are made valuable (Ahmed 2000, 117). The Indian who is consumed in this transaction becomes a vehicle through which the subject asserts themself as consumer/citizen/white/modern/metropolitan.

Through this spectacle, Indian figures are allowed entry into this restricted white space. Encounters with the Indian in the commercial Centre of the city are benign, so long as the Indian is perceived as a relic. It suggests that racialized Others are allowed in this space as relics and commodities, not as real bodies with entitlement to citizenship and rights. In this dialectical performance, the European space is asserted as civilized and modern through its ability to consume and speak for supposedly dejected Indigenous people.
This exhibit continues to take on embodied dimensions of ‘Indian play’ that go beyond a mere demonstration of Indigenous cultures and art. In this space, Besnier (the European artist and organizer) takes the primary and authoritative role as ‘expert’ in the midst of his exhibit. He displays his carving craft and artistic prowess by imitating West coast art forms. The photographs on display show Pacific Northwest coast artists making totem poles and Besnier studying and practicing traditional carving techniques and patterns. But as totem poles represent people’s particular histories, family stories, and connection to specific geographical location, what meaning or purpose might they have when made by Europeans in Europe? Besnier’s white European subjectivity and authority is bolstered through the ‘Indian play’ of becoming the totem pole carver and expert. Observers come to him with questions about the origin, significance, and meaning of the totem pole. This harkens back to Ahmed’s (2000) analysis of the movie “Dances with Wolves” and how through his close encounters with Indigenous Others, the American soldier, John Dunbar, is ‘becoming without becoming’ (60). In other words, white subjectivity is mobile and able to move between ‘playing Indian’ and back again to its privileged position in modern space. In this discursive field, Indians become the vehicle through which Besnier’s white authority and dominant subject position are reasserted (Ahmed 2000, 123). Besnier’s visit to British Columbia and introduction to Indigenous arts led to his own self-discovery as an artist and entrepreneur. It is not clear how, or if West Coast Nations, are benefitting economically from Besnier’s exhibit. Rather, the exhibit becomes Bernier’s way of making a living as he turns his encounter in British Columbia into a commodity for other participants to experience.
Tobing Rony (1996) argues that art forms such as photography and cinema are not mere technological tools, but rather are social practices (8). She demonstrates that anthropology and ethnography have used visual forms in an effort to close temporal, spatial, or cultural gaps by bringing audiences closer to those subjects of investigation (Tobing Rony 1996, 9). At the same time she looks at how disciplines, such as anthropology, along with popular culture in North America and Europe have tended to posit Indigenous Peoples as distant and fixed in the past. Tobing Rony argues that, with the emergence of cinema and photography, white audiences desired (and simultaneously feared) the close encounters with racialized Others made possible through entertainment and media (10). It is the white European who sets the stage, plays the role of interpreter, and saviour and invites others to play along or watch. To this day, Europeanness needs the proximity to this Indian to know itself, as has been the case from the time of colonial contact.

Where it is clear that Besnier’s white European male subjectivity is reinforced through the ‘Indian play’, it becomes more complicated among the children who participate in the face paint and ‘Indian play’. The children who participated in the ‘Indian play’ were not all white and many of them were probably not Swiss. A child born to foreign residents may grow up immersed in Swiss culture and attend Swiss schools, but not ever be granted Swiss citizen status. Given the diverse population of this city, it is important not to homogenize or make assumptions about the children who engaged in the Indian role-play. With this in mind, if and how the children’s racial identity and subjectivity were impacted through this ‘Indian play’ would be nuanced by their different social locations. Regardless of this, whatever information was transmitted to, and
interpreted by, these children about indigeneity was done so through a European lens and presentation. The exhibit demarcates modern and pre-modern space. Even the attempt to display the modern schoolroom teacher is unsuccessful in portraying contemporary Indigenous life as the mannequin was poorly fabricated and falling apart. Those participating in the exhibit and ‘Indian play’ are able to move between these spaces through role-play unlike the predominant portrayal of Indigenous people as frozen in the past.

Exhibits such as this, which mix ethnography with entertainment, are not a new phenomenon. For instance, the Exposition Universal in Paris, and other similar exhibits, that took place in London in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries displayed exoticized mise en scène of people, objects, and architecture from French and British colonies. They had mass appeal and were expanded from displaying military technology to include forms of entertainment, such as food, products, and performances from different parts of the world (Hale 2008, 15). Spectators would walk around in large exhibition spaces to encounter people and objects from the colonies. Such exhibitions were ways of promoting empire and colonial policy among metropole citizens (Hale 2008, 13). Québécois artisans and entrepreneurs who sell their products, such as maple syrup, at commercial fairs in France are a more recent example of how ideas about indigeneity, or Indigenous peoples themselves, appear in consumer spaces in Western Europe. Heller (2010) studies some such vendors who invite what they distinguish as ‘real’ Indigenous people (as opposed to imposters who may also take part in such fairs) to animate their kiosk and use other pan-Indian symbols, such as tipis, to signify authentic Canadian products in order to attract European customers (730). In September 2011, while walking
through the Geneva train station, I noticed posters and pamphlets for the Foire du Valais in Martigny, Switzerland, which had chosen “Wanted” as its theme. On the posters was the caricature image of a man with braids, stripes painted across his cheeks, a bone choker around his neck, and feathers in his hair. The subtitle of the exposition was “The American Indians – Myths and Legends of the West.” The Foire du Valais is a large exposition with over three hundred exhibitors and claims to attract over 200,000 visitors (Foire du Valais 2011a). This large venue offers music, food, an area for farm animals, and kiosks selling Swiss cheese, wine, fruit, and other produce. The main thematic event of the exposition invited people to “penetrate the fascinating world of the Crow, Apaches, Comanches, Cheyenes, Navajos, Sioux and Cherokees” (Foire du Valais 2011b). Images on the pamphlet include a black and white photograph of men with feather headdresses riding horses accompanied by the caption: “this event will take you on a captivating voyage into the past to the times of the Red Skins and Pale Face.” Other text advertising the exposition glorified the “famous conquest of the West” as an adventure and framed white dominance and colonial expansion as an inevitable fact of history. The advertisement is also imbued by a morbid fascination with Indians who were “dead en masse, decimated by European maladies” (Foire du Valais 2011b). People were invited to “discover” the lives of Indian tribes before the conquest of the West. Again, the Indian appears in commercial space and is depicted as incommensurable with modernity. The focus on death, conquest, and myth transforms these bodies into otherworldly spectres. Indigenous people are denied any contemporary relevance or presence. The Foire du Valais testifies to the pervasiveness and aggressiveness with which European audiences hunger for spectacles of Indianness. As Prasad (2009) notes of French romantic literature
(which revived tales about the North American frontier and European expansion into Indigenous territories), exhibits like that at Charmilles and the Foire du Valais suggest a lingering nostalgia for colonial conquest of the Americas and create a playing ground where fantasies about Indians can be acted out.

**Buying Indians: Embodying Otherness through Merck Pharmaceuticals**

The multinational pharmaceutical company, Merck, uses discourses about indigeneity to sell their products. Merck prides itself as being the world’s oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company (having started in 1668) and having reached multinational status (The Merck Group). In early 2009, a new line of ointment from this German pharmaceutical company first came to my attention through advertisements posted in Geneva’s public buses. The photograph of an Indigenous man holding a tube of ointment labeled “Kytta” takes up the most space in the print advertisement. The man’s long black hair falls behind his bare torso and he is wearing a bone choker and beaded armband. His eyes are squinting, as if he is looking into the sun. His teeth are showing, but he is not smiling. Behind him there appears to be a mountainous terrain covered by evergreen trees. Accompanying this image is the caption: “Les Indiens ne Connaissent pas la Douleur” (Indians don’t know pain).

The Kytta website gives more information (in German) about this line of ointments. In German, the slogan, which is “Ein Indianer kennt keinen Schmerz – dank der Kraft der Natur!” (“An Indian knows no pain – thanks to the power of nature!”), differs slightly from the French version. Merck states that for generations North American Indian tribes have trusted the healing power of comfrey root (‘beinwell’ in German) and I imagine it is for this reason Merck claims that Indians don’t experience pain. Merck goes on to claim
that the root’s medicinal properties have been clinically tested to be an acceptable component of modern medicine (Kytta). The same photographs from the print advertisements, along with others, are featured on the top of the different webpages detailing the variety of Kytta products (cream, gel, and tablets). In most of the advertisements, this male figure, the ‘Kytta Indian,’ remains nameless. In another photograph on the website the model’s bare back is visible and he has something in his hands, which are raised above his head. He is alone and surrounded by mountains and trees. These images are juxtaposed by those on the other Kytta webpages. In one scene, six people who appear to be white and ranging in age are linking arms and smiling as they descend a green mountainside. Another image shows a white man and woman sitting on a rock, wearing hiking gear and in the background there is a mountainous terrain covered with trees. Another photograph shows an elderly white woman smiling and holding an exercise ball in the air by a pristine blue lakeside. There are a couple of other photographs, but what they all have in common is that the people are white and smiling and are portrayed as the satisfied benefactors of the Kytta products. Through the way that the bodies are portrayed, these images invoke a sense of activity, health, movement, contentment, nature, and vigour. This marketing strategy is not surprising because the Kytta ointment is intended to relieve joint and muscle pain, especially that associated with arthritis.

Additional information about the Kytta products is provided in an article written in 2010 titled, “A Natural Classic with a Big Future” from Merck’s web-based magazine “The Explorer”. The intended audience for these products could be individuals, pharmacies, or other companies interested in Merck’s products for personal or
commercial purposes. The article is one of the few sources about the product written in English, which might signal Merck’s interest in expanding the target consumers of this product internationally. The article is short but the amount of medical and scientific jargon used throughout the text (e.g. “modern medical research”) is significant. In summary, the article offers history about the use of comfrey root and the scientific tests done on the root to determine its usefulness as a treatment for joint and muscle pain.

Merck explains that the Greek physician, Dioscurides, recorded early uses of comfrey root in the first century CE (The Explorer 1). This article also explains that Merck has used comfrey in its line of products from a recipe developed in Germany in 1931 (Merck 2010, 1). Merck (2010) goes on to claim:

…the plant’s use wasn’t confined to Europe; Christian missionaries taught North American Indians how to use comfrey to treat muscle and joint pains, sprains, rheumatism, and gout, thus helping to make comfrey’s use as a medicinal plant widespread on the continent. Merck … once highlighted this early case of medical information exchange between cultures by using the slogan “An Indian knows no pain” (1).

There is no reference made about the current socio-political relationships between Germany and Indigenous Nations in North America or any ongoing exchange regarding medical knowledge.

The article emphasizes modern scientific research as an “added value” to what people have known and used for years. This discourse is used to legitimate the ancient knowledge about this plant medicine. The reference to “ancient wisdom” draws on the comfrey root’s long established (and presumably trusted) history as a natural remedy, while the “modern medical research” affirms and legitimates its properties. The folk medicine is contrasted by modern medicine and the phrase “researchers are thus providing hard facts”, thereby relinquishing folk medicine to the realm of non-facts (or
pre-modernity, unreliability, and myth). The active ingredients of the comfrey root used in the Kytta ointment are listed. These medical terms (i.e. allantoin, rosmarinic acid, and polysaccharide) may be relevant for people in the medical or pharmaceutical fields and certainly serve as markers of scientificity. The text is juxtaposed by terms like “ancient wisdom,” “traditional healing lore,” “natural,” and “Native American healers.”

In the article, a photograph of a man and a woman is beside the text. Underneath the photograph is the caption: “Julia Wehner, Product Manager for Kytta products, and Sam Bearpaw, the White Mountain Apache from the ad ‘An Indian feels no pain.’” Bearpaw is featured in some of the same clothing that he wears for the Kytta advertisements (i.e. bone choker, earrings, breast plate, etc.). Here Bearpaw and Wehner are standing side-by-side, smiling.

Merck relies on the juxtaposition between indigeneity and Europeanness to carve out modern medical space to support its pharmaceutical endeavours. This space is created through the ways that bodies are depicted, the way they occupy the space, and the discourses used in the text of the website and article. The ‘behind the scenes’ photograph of Wehner and Bearpaw represent this juxtaposition between modernity and pre-modernity. The text adjacent to the photograph states, “Modern medical researchers are thus providing hard facts that confirm the lore of ancient doctors and Native American healers” (Merck 2010, 2). It seems that Wehner, the product’s manager, stands in for the “modern medical research” as the representative of Merck who has conducted the research and tests on the comfrey root. Bearpaw, on the other hand, stands in for “Native American healers.” Nothing mentions whether or not he is actually a traditional healer or medical practitioner. For Merck, it could also symbolize intercultural cooperation (but
there is a clear commercial interest on the part of Merck to capitalize on Indianness to promote their new products). What are missing are any direct quotes from Wehner or Bearpaw. Wehner is presumably represented in the text since she works for the company. Bearpaw, however, is just an image. He does not have a say (i.e. there is no comment from him about the product or why he has modeled for this company’s ad campaign).

Bearpaw, ‘the Indian’ who remains unnamed in the ads, appears as a solitary figure in a vast wilderness. His body is relegated to the realm of other-worldliness as one that “doesn’t know pain.” He is relegated to the past through his traditional clothing and the text, which emphasizes ancient healing traditions. His people are not attributed with scientificity, modernity, or even knowledge. Merck asserts that it was Europeans that introduced comfrey root to North America and neglects the fact that there already existed a plethora of medicinal plants in use by the peoples of these lands. While the Kytta ‘Indian’ is seen alone (perhaps vanishing or on the verge of extinction), his supposed knowledge is appropriated by modern medicine for the benefit of white European bodies. In contrast, the white bodies are together, full of vigour, energy, and smiling as benefactors of the Kytta ointment. The Indian body, which “knows no pain” is a sacrifice to the white population. This dynamic can be understood through what Foucault refers to as governmentality or a shift from disciplinary power on the body to regulatory power of populations. He uses this concept to understand the “making live and letting die” of certain populations, which is highly relevant to colonial politics (Foucault 2003, 241).

There are some similarities between how Kytta products are presented and Ahmed’s (2000) analysis of how The Body Shop emphasizes the story of how their products are made and who produces the main ingredients in their creams and cosmetics
(namely women in the global south). She looks at the example of the Shea butter cultivated by women in Ghana. The consumer can become ‘a little more like them’ through the narrative that Shea is a traditional skin care product for these Ghanaian women. The encounter becomes one of consuming the difference of these women through the cream, while also giving the consumer a sense that they are helping Ghanaians (Ahmed 2000, 169). In this way, Ahmed (2000) argues that more violent forms of encounter are concealed (i.e. impoverishment of poorer countries by richer countries through global trade) (170). Ahmed notes that “their tradition” is re-constituted as “our modernity” (169), which is a similar dynamic as that of the Kytta marketing. Consumers of the Kytta ointment are not just receiving a remedy for pain relief; they come to consume and embody the difference of the Indian figure. Eliminated from the consumer encounter are any notions of the difficulty for Indigenous people to maintain traditional subsistence practices, such as harvesting food and medicine, because of restrictions on land use, ongoing resource extraction, and land theft.

Merck’s Kytta products can be likened to the Lakota brand products often found in North American health food stores and pharmacies. Indeed there are similarities between the two products and their marketing strategies. For instance, Lakota (2009a) claims to be the top natural arthritis remedy in Canada. Lakota’s slogan is “Legendary Native American Formulas” and the products are marketed with an archival photograph of what we may presume to be a Lakotan man wearing a bone choker and feather in his long black hair. But there are also some differences between the products. Lakota does not use comfrey root, but uses other plants known for their properties to ease muscle and joint pain. The founder of the Lakota products, Rick Stewart, states he is Cree Métis and
purports to both honour and make use of several remedies and plants known to various
Indigenous people in North America (Lakota 2009a). Unlike Merck, the Lakota company
recognizes and names this expertise and knowledge that Indigenous people have about
plant medicine. Why then does the Lakota name and iconography become the signifier
for a product based on several different Indigenous traditions and knowledge about plant
medicine? I return to this question later in this chapter as I survey several products that
use Indianness in their marketing schemes. On the website, Lakota Canada also promotes
the Lakota Language Consortium and states, “The Lakota language is one of the few First
Nations’ languages that has a significant chance of survival as a living language” (Lakota
2009b). The fact that Indigenous languages are under threat and need to be preserved may
also contribute to the notion of Indigenous peoples as constantly vanishing without
proper contextualization of the ongoing colonization in North America. Similar to the
example of The Body Shop, buyers not only consume the difference of the Lakota people
through this product, but can also feel like they are assisting them by helping to preserve
their language. By using historical photographs of Indigenous people in traditional outfits,
this product plays into the stereotypical images of Indians as relegated to the past. If
Indigenous people were portrayed otherwise perhaps they would not be recognized as
Indigenous. On the Lakota website it states:

Many of the ingredients in the Lakota formulas, such as White Willow Bark and
Yucca Root have been used in traditional Native American medicines for centuries.
Modern natural ingredients such as Glucosamine and Collagen Type II have been
added to enhance the effects of the traditional medicine (Lakota 2009a).

Here again we see the dichotomy created between natural or traditional medicine with
modernity and science. The latter of which is seen as an added value to Indigenous
traditional knowledge.
It is possible that Merck’s selection of an Apache man as the model for their Kytta products was not accidental. As Wernitznig (2007) details, May’s adventure novels about the beloved Winnetou, Apache chief and ‘last of his kind,’ and Shatterhand, the crime-fighting cowboy, were highly popular throughout Europe (56-63). These stories were turned into films for later generations. In the films, Winnetou was played by the French actor, Pierre Brice, who was also fluent in German (the original language of the films). The beloved Winnetou character is the namesake for other products, such as Nestlé ice cream, which I described in the introduction. Thanks to May, the Apache people have become a household name in Germany and other parts of Europe. Wernitznig notes that the Apache were a relatively overlooked people in the literature of May’s time and it remains unclear why he chose to focus on this particular group of people (59). I suspect it has something to do with Geronimo (or Goyahkla), a Bedonkohe Apache man, who became well known as a warrior for his stance against U.S. and Mexican expansion during May's lifetime (in the late nineteenth century) (Geromino 1906, 12). In the places in Europe where May's stories have circulated and enjoyed a great deal of popularity, a consciousness and narrative about Apache people (however fictionalized) has made possible some of the continuing discourses around indigeneity or the ‘Wild West.’ May’s Winnetou character provides cultural codes that make ‘Indianness’ in the Kytta campaign decipherable. Merck capitalizes on this familiarity and legibility through Sam Bearpaw. But, unlike the French actor, Brice, Bearpaw signifies an authentic Apache person for European audiences.

The slogan “An Indian Knows No Pain” is presumably connected to the fact that the comfrey root products are used for pain relief. However, some German friends and
colleagues informed me that this phrase is also a common German expression used particularly when a child falls or scrapes their knee as a way to discourage them from crying over a minor injury. It is a way to say, ‘don’t cry, be strong’. LaRocque (2010) notes how a similar expression, ‘Indians don’t cry’ is embedded in the notion of Indigenous people as stoic (106). The Merck photograph of Bearpaw’s stern regard that is void of any smile confirms that this body (in spite of genocide, dispossession of land, and the immutable ravages of colonialism) cannot know pain. Indigenous bodies are marked as violable. Another interpretation of this slogan is that “Indians know no pain”, thanks to the superior medical knowledge of Europeans who, through their missionaries taught Indigenous people how to use comfrey root. This is the story told through the Merck article and denies two important facts. First, that Indigenous peoples had already developed knowledge about medicinal plants and their uses long before contact with Europeans. Second, that colonization is undeniably violent.

It is not by accident that these particular racialized images have been employed in the advertising campaigns that I have highlighted. It is through race and indigeneity that Merck attempts to associate its products with popular thinking about Indians as close to nature, resilient, strong, innocent, and inviolable. As Francis (1992) explains, “[p]roducts are linked to the Indian in the expectation that some supposedly Native virtues will rub off. Indians themselves become commodities in the marketplace” (189). The European consumer can align him or herself as a moral, ecologically conscientious subject who opts for natural alternative pain medication through the claim that the main active ingredient in the Kytta ointment is a trusted natural medicine used by North American tribes for generations. But perhaps what is most ironic about this case study, is that
comfrey root is not unique to the Americas, but originates from Europe and is known in traditional European folk medicines since the time of antiquity (Katsarou et al. 2008, 95). Why then does this fact not provide the basis for a successful marketing campaign? As the connection to Indigenous peoples in North America is irrelevant, why does Merck need the Indian?

Reclaiming European traditional plant medicine poses a challenge to the construct of European modernity. This is not to say that plant medicines are not cherished in Europe because, in many places, they are. However, Merck's legitimacy as a major modern pharmaceutical company relies on creating a space and figure of difference – the Indian. Without the Indian, Merck would not be able to articulate it’s own claims to scientific superiority. This makes sense of why the Indian becomes such a potent signifier for Merck. It is not enough to state that comfrey root is already part of European indigenous knowledges or an ancient medicine trusted by European ancestors. It is through the Indian who signifies nature (the opposite of science and modernity) that Merck attempts to legitimate their claims, thereby setting up two mutually exclusive realms one of Indian difference and the other European modernity. By using the Indian, Merck invokes notions of ecological harmony and innocence, which contrast the controversy related to comfrey root’s possible side effects (which I continue to historicize by offering other examples to conclude this chapter).

Tests have shown that, in certain doses, comfrey can have carcinogenic side effects (Guo et al 2007). Inquiries into the toxicity and carcinogenic side effects of this plant medicine have lead Canada to ban some comfrey root products (Guo et al 2007). Kytta’s use of the main image of an Indian is, therefore, a discursive strategy. Through
the Indian figure, Merck aligns itself with nature, tradition, and innocence to gain the consumer’s trust and avert suspicions about the safety of comfrey root or the company’s own unethical medical experimentation practices. As Merck states, comfrey root as trusted Indigenous medicine, is transformed through clinical testing and made into a legitimate part of modern medicine (Kytta). It is not just the comfrey plant that has been uprooted and put through a process of modernity’s consumption and regurgitation, this is also true for the commodified Indian body that is supposedly numb to all pain.

The violence of the Merck slogan “An Indian Knows No Pain” takes on new meaning with a closer examination of Merck’s trial vaccination practices in North America. Smith (2005) draws on medical reports and community-based research to overview medical experiments done in different Indigenous communities. She highlights how Merck’s Hepatitis B trial vaccines were used on Native children during the 1980s in Alaska and Manitoba, sometimes without parental consent (Smith 2005, 110-111). This has created concern among community advocacy groups; especially since Indigenous communities’ risk of contracting Hepatitis had greatly decreased by that time (Smith 2005, 110). The vaccine trials, therefore, were not seen as very useful, but rather as dangerous since there are side effects associated with various vaccines. One doctor noted these risks after observing severe reactions to the Merck vaccines in Manitoba (Smith 2005, 111). Smith (2005) argues that such trial vaccines only represent a small portion of the problems related to lack of health care funding, poor living conditions, and pervasive medical experimentation faced by people of colour and Indigenous communities (114). She calls this phenomenon “biocolonial ideology” (Smith 2005, 116) and goes on to explain that:
Unlike Native people, who see animals as being deserving of bodily integrity and, furthermore, view their identities as inseparable from the rest of creation, colonizers see animals as rapable and expendable. By extension, because colonizers viewed Indian identity as inextricably linked to animal and plant life, Native people have been seen as rapable, and deserving of destruction and mutilation. This equation between animals and Native people continues (Smith 2005, 117).

To illustrate her point about Indigenous peoples being associated with animality, Smith highlights how Merck is cited among the pharmaceutical companies in the 1992 Physicians’ Desk Reference that has conducted experiments on Native children and chimpanzees (Smith 2005, 117). Relatedly, Foucault notes a shift in the way that knowledge and power is not only inscribed upon individual bodies but also on entire populations through medicine. As he notes:

…medicine becomes a political intervention-technique with specific power-effects. Medicine is a power-knowledge that can be applied to both the body and the population, both the organism and biological processes, and will therefore have disciplinary and regulatory effects (Foucault 2003, 252).

In this sense, Aboriginal populations are regulated through medical experimentation. What is significant about this information, when compared to Merck’s advertising campaign for the Kytta products, is that its claims to medical legitimacy and sound findings are achieved through referencing their scientific method of testing the products. It is stated that “[a]t Merck, developing the drugs of the future involves not only a search for new active ingredients; it also requires continuous assessment of tried and tested products” (Merck 2010, 1). It is through this testing that traditional plant medicine becomes reinforced and trustworthy. Modern science supposedly adds values and credibility to ancient folk medicine and Indigenous knowledge. Allegations from community groups and medical professionals expose that racism and colonization persist through practices such as this medical testing and that this comes with a real price for the health and safety of Native people.
Indigenous knowledge about plants, medicine, and ecological life cycles may be considered as subjugated knowledge and have certainly been appropriated by corporations through being patented as intellectual property, packaged, and then sold by major companies. Foucault (2003) describes subjugated knowledge as historical content and knowledge that has been buried or as disqualified, nonconceptual, or supposedly inferior knowledge that is below the standards of scientificity (7). Subjugated knowledge may be understood as resistance to power. For example, the popular cosmetics company Aveda borrows from Ayurveda, an Indigenous knowledge system and approach to health and wellness in India (Gurung 2010, 46). Shiva (1996) outlines problems that Intellectual Property Rights pose for communities, particularly in the global south, when it comes to ownership over natural resources and Indigenous knowledge. What she refers to as ‘biopiracy’ has major implications for Indigenous self-determination. Kytta silences these struggles by denying that Indigenous peoples even have their own knowledge. Coombe (1998) examines how intellectual property rights, under the guise of ‘authorship,’ come to protect the commodification of racialized figures. She looks at the persistence of U.S. sports teams whose entire identities refer to Indigenous people:

The dynamics of relationship between those whose social alterity was specularized and those who profited form its commodification in marks of trade have shifted dramatically as these objects of property have been turned into subjects and sites of politics. ...Whether these commodity/signs are commodifications of their heritage or stereotypical signs of their alterity, many peoples find “their own” representations legally owned by others.... Long after the Frito Bandito has been laid to rest, and black mammys and little black Sambos have ceased to signify on American commercial terrain (although they have returned as a form of collectible nostalgia), Indians are still a privileged form of alterity in advertising (Coombe 1998, 185-186).

This demonstrates that there is still a lot of work to do in the area of decolonizing intellectual property. The way the Kytta ointments have been framed departs slightly from these debates. Knowledge about comfrey root is not unique to Indigenous
knowledge in North America. This construction is not about the appropriation of subjugated Indigenous knowledge into modern Western medicine, but rather it invents a story that denies Indigenous peoples’ knowledge and posits Western medicine as superior. It is a tale wrought with contradiction, as comfrey root is far removed from its actual origins and associated with a foreign people and land.

Similar to many other European companies and entrepreneurs, Merck’s Kytta ointment draws heavily on images and notions about Indianness in its advertising campaign. The amount of Indian iconography used to market different products and places in Europe is prolific. I survey some examples that help illustrate some common trends and themes used in these marketing devices and relate to my two case studies.

**Intertextuality of Indian Commodities**

As with the Merck products, Indianness is closely associated with notions of nature, health, physical strength, and resilience and is popular in marketing medicinal products in other European contexts. Indianness, for example, connotes natural or traditional alternatives to mainline pharmaceutical products. There are a couple of different European companies that market omega 3 fish oil supplements for adults and children under the name ‘Eskimo’. One British company claims that they are inspired by Greenland Eskimos (Eskimo-3 2002). They assert that ‘Eskimos’ are at a lower risk of certain maladies because of their diet and lifestyle and, therefore, Europeans would do well to supplement their diets with that consumed by ‘Eskimos’ to gain balance and wellness in their lives. The other manufacturer is Metagenics Europe, which uses the brand name ‘Eskimo’ under its Bionutrics line of products (Bionutrics 2010). There are a
a plethora of other products named ‘Eskimo’ including ice cream, liquor, children’s toys, and clothing.

Food products, such as the Eskimo and Winnetou ice cream, also seem to be popular avenues for marketing Indianness in Europe. Outside the Buffalo Grill, restaurants found all over France and in parts of Switzerland and Spain, one can typically spot plastic tipis, totem poles, and fibreglass buffalo. Sometimes, the tipis are also designated as a children’s play area. The interior design of the restaurants is full of Indian iconography, including paintings and statues (Buffalo Grill 2012). Recent billboards in Geneva for the Burger King Barbeque Whopper take on a western theme portraying tipis in a southwest desert landscape where birds of prey circle overhead. The food and medicine products that use Indian imagery seem to imply that Indianness gives strength, force, and health. It also implies that indigeneity can be consumed and ingested.

A lot of marketing is geared towards children as I mentioned above in the examples of ‘Eskimo’ products. In addition, there is a line of outdoor playground equipment for children called ‘Winnetoo’ after the fictional Apache figure in May’s novel (Delamaison 2009). There are also countless adventure novels, comic books, and movies geared towards young European audiences today, similar to the appeal of May’s literature for young generations in his day. Examples of such literature include, Tintin in America by Belgian author Georges Remi and a more recent publication by another Belgian author, Daxhelet (2011), Monsieur Cheng. This children’s book describes Monsieur Cheng, who is a “charming inhabitant of China”, who chooses different hats and shoes to wear each day. On the cover of the book, Mr. Cheng is wearing a feather headdress. In one of the illustrations during Mr. Cheng's dress-up adventures, he appears beside a creek where
there is a tipi and some wild animals. The text reads, “What work does Mr. Cheng do? Is he searching for gold in Apache territory? Or is he a hunter in the land of bison?” (Daxhelet 2011) At the height of European imperialism, Phillips (1997) describes how adventure literature was particularly geared towards children who made up a high percentage of the population from the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. Adventure stories were more prolific than academic literature on colonialism and reached a broad readership that shaped younger generations (Phillips 1997, 10).

By using Indian images in marketing children’s products, Indigenous people are aligned with childlike qualities. In Western thinking, these qualities include innocence, naivety, dependence, vulnerability, and play. European constructions and perceptions of primitive peoples have contributed to the association of Indigenous people with such concepts. Deloria (1998) states that Indians and children were perceived as ontologically immature and underdeveloped and this thinking contributed to the popularization of ‘Indian play’ through groups such as the Boy Scouts in North America (120). Aboriginal people have been, and continue to be, seen as vulnerable dependents on the state, who are unable to fully care for themselves. This racist attitude has legitimized the creation of laws where every aspect of Aboriginal peoples’ lives is been regulated. Mawani (2009) gives the example of the role of government Indian agents who policed Aboriginal people’s possession, and use, of alcohol as they were seen as unable to take care of themselves, especially with the influences of European civilization (141). Carter (1997) cites the example of the pass system in the late nineteenth century, which restricted the movement of Aboriginal people, especially women, off the reserves and into urban centres in search of work (187). Lawrence (2004) notes how it became compulsory
through law for Native people to send their children away to church and government-run residential schools, which effectively removed generations of young people from the care of their families and communities (106). Through the paternalism of the Indian Act, Aboriginal people have been understood as wards of the state that are in need of assistance, assimilation, and surveillance. This has resulted in the regulation of Aboriginal populations in several aspects of daily life, including education, movement, and land use.

Similarly to the Charmilles exhibit, which is a mix of ethnographic entertainment and ‘Indian play’, there are several other places in Europe (such as the examples of the Ecotopia children’s camp in Switzerland and campgrounds where German hobbyists gather and ‘play Indian’) that I described earlier. In the Netherlands, there is a company, Bosjuweel (“jewel of the forest” in Dutch) that considers itself the main tipi-rental company in Europe (Bosjuweel). In addition, they build other tents and structures from Morocco and Mongolia. But they do not only focus on various tent structures. They also host workshops and events, such as an ‘Indian program’, with opportunities for campers to dress up and ‘play Indian’ through a variety of activities. In northwestern France, there is an “Indian and Cowboy Land”, which is a sort of theme park and campground where people can sleep in tipis or stage coaches and go horseback riding, sit around a campfire, and practice throwing a tomahawk. The website advertises an experience where visitors can gain “a sense of living a primitive, natural lifestyle” (Indian and Cowboy Land 2007). In southeastern Spain, there is a tourist attraction at Fort Bravo Cinema Studios where many western cowboy movies have been filmed in this arid environment. People are invited to watch live performances and go horseback riding. According to the images
used on their website, the emphasis of the Fort is on European settlement (i.e. frontier
towns, saloons, etc.). The front-page slogan on their pamphlet is “Have a great time
remembering the Wild West” (Fort Bravo). They also claim, “[e]ven if you've been to
Arizona or Texas, you'll barely be able to tell the difference. And you can find it all here,
in Europe.” These examples emphasize the phenomenon of encounter and ‘Indian play.’

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, due to performances (such as the Wild West
shows) that travelled throughout Europe with Sioux performers and the subsequent
proliferation of western films, Plains people have become recognized as the
“quintessential Indian” in Europe (Bolz 1987, 77). This becomes obvious in the cases I
have cited in this chapter, where a select few signifiers (such as tipis, feather headdresses,
and totem poles) come to stand in for indigeneity. Aside from the totem poles, most
images relate to the cultural forms, or modes of living, of various Plains people. As a
consequence, the discursive tactics I have surveyed through these examples homogenize
indigeneity. Given their close connection to the outdoors and camping, these different
sites suggest that by playing Indian participants can become closer to nature.

Wade (2010) explains that “[r]acial thinking…purifies in various ways. It may
assign some categories of people to the realm of nature and others to the realm of culture”
(46). Doxtater (2004) furthers this understanding in his article about subjugated
Indigenous knowledges. In this article, Doxtater explores the notion of what is called the
‘Ecological Indian’ who stands in for the environmental consciousness that has been
invented by the European media industry (625). He cites the specific example of the
“Keep America Beautiful” commercials that star Iron Eyes Cody (who was not Cherokee
but Italian American) (Doxtater 2004, 625). In the television commercial from 1971, a
tear is brought to Iron Eyes Cody’s eyes as he observes pollution in the water as he canoes to the shore and more garbage and litter near a highway (Advertising Educational Foundation 2003). The commercial was part of a campaign to encourage people to stop littering. Furthermore, LaRocque (1975) notes that the portrayal of Indigenous people as ‘Nature Lovers’ has become a major stereotype (32). She argues that the myth of the ‘Nature Lover’ is dangerous because Indigenous people are portrayed as part of the landscape and close to animality (LaRocque 1975, 34). She argues that, with urbanization and the realities in which Indigenous people live, this image is much too simplistic.

Enlightenment thinkers, such as Rousseau, used these notions to build up theories of the connection between human nature and culture. Rousseau critiqued in his own Swiss context what he saw as European civilization’s attachment to luxury (Muthu 2003, 25). New World peoples were viewed as empirical cases for a portrait of fundamental human nature. As ‘savages’ were seen as offering a glimpse into both European and humanity’s primitive past, through observing Indigenous Peoples, Europeans could supposedly look to real living examples for notions of a past golden age (Muthu 2003, 22). When the Savage was deemed innocent and uncorrupted, Europe was portrayed as decrepit. When the Savage was seen as natural, Europe was seen as artificial and suffocating from monarchy, church hierarchy, culture, society and science. This primitive/civilized binary exposes the ambivalence of Europe’s attitude towards it own identity. Indigenous figures became the discursive tool through which writers like Rousseau could critique his own society. While seemingly praising the Savage as noble and natural, such ahistorical and acultural constructions characterized Indigenous peoples as pre-modern and less human.
Therefore, colonial discourse historically posited Indigenous people as qualitatively closer to nature than other people.

As Francis (1992) notes, the ‘Imaginary Indian’ comes to stand in as a symbol for Canada itself when used in the variety of marketing strategies that he has examined. Francis cites a tension for European-Canadian settlers who inevitably feel out of place in the land they occupy (189). He argues that the use of the ‘Imaginary Indian’ as a marketing icon helps settlers to appropriate a sense of belonging to the land. It is key to identity formation. In Europe, this same dynamic of alienation may not be at play. But Indianness in marketing serves other potent functions in European sense of place and identity formation. The Indian is constructed as closely connected to nature. Much like the Boy scouts and other youth movements that use ‘Indian play’, the Indian in European marketing eases anxieties about being alienated from the land as a result of modernity and urbanization. This would explain a strong emphasis on figurative Indians as being close to nature. European consumers are invited to encounter, play, and ingest Indianness as a way to know themselves as white modern citizens. Native space becomes a vehicle through which people can escape European modernity. The subject is mobile and its power as a consumer/citizen is reified through the ability to move into Native space by encountering the Indians as commodity while European space remains in tact as modern and civil.

Conclusion

Through these case studies I have exposed European dependence on Indianness, which serves to strengthen European spaces and subjectivities as modern. In order for encounters with Indians to generate this effect, Indigenous people must be repeatedly
homogenized and relegated to the past, which continues to have material consequences for ongoing political, economic, and territorial struggles. Merck’s Kytta advertising campaign conjures up themes of nature, strength, and the violability of Indigenous bodies, while the Charmilles exhibit evokes a child-friendly exoticism inviting European spectators to join in the ‘Indian play’ of cultural difference, no longer seen as useful to peoples who inhabit the realm of myth. These constructions promote the idea of the figurative Indian as admirable yet backward, full of vigour yet close to animality, innocent yet naive, and pure and close to nature yet pre-modern. It is clear that the Indian in these various sites continues to be framed as always disappearing and always dying. The trope of ‘playing Indian’ as a fun, innocent pastime conceals the ongoing struggles against colonialism. Economies of consuming Indianness are themselves forms of ongoing colonialism. Through the symbolic commodification of Indigenous bodies, people encounter and consume figures of the strange Indian and partake in the violent logic of colonization and racism. These encounters are backed by both individual entrepreneurs and massive industries that make profitable gains from ‘Indian play’. These must be considered important sites of decolonization. As I will explore in the next chapter, through economic ties countries like Switzerland are complicit in the need for ongoing struggles against land dispossession in Canada.
Chapter Three: Material Consequences of Colonialism

This chapter examines different sites that are important to Indigenous self-determination struggles related to self-governance and land rights. In the previous chapter, I outlined several cases where modern subjects and spaces are formed through Indian figures. I also examined how these figures contribute to a regime of racialization centered on Indigenous peoples from North America as violable, consumable, and ultimately relegated to the past. What I have taken up through these cases contribute to broader discourses on Indianness. While articulated in different local ways, all of these representations carry traces of violence and colonial logic. Returning to Smith’s (2006) argument, Indigenous people must always be seen as “disappearing, in order to allow non-indigenous peoples rightful claim over…all that was indigenous—land, resources, indigenous spirituality, or culture” (68). It is from an understanding that colonization is constituted by both material and symbolic processes that I look to struggles for self-determination in this chapter. Colonization dispossesses people of their land through physical violence and discursive tactics that frame people as Other to both legitimize and normalize settler occupation and oppression. In this way, I argue that the case studies I have examined cannot be read as discrete instances. They must be historicized in colonial relations of power. The trope of playing Indian both at home and abroad is interconnected with wider discursive schemes that conceal ongoing colonial violence.

The notion of violability is a common theme deployed by both the state and industries in the sites for self-determination that I examine in this chapter. In this way, struggles for self-determination are a matter of life and death, where some populations
are made to live while others are left to die socially, culturally, politically, economically and physically (Foucault 2003, 241). Another discourse at work is that of modern industry (e.g. mining companies) pitted against pre-modern Indigenous bodies and communities who are seen to stand in the way of progress. My aim in this chapter is to examine some of these material struggles and the racism that Indigenous people are up against in order to expose economies of ‘Indian play’ and consumption as productive. The first area I examine is related to self-governance. Self-determination is linked to material realities, such as land rights which are necessary for Indigenous individuals and communities to sustain themselves. However, state definitions of indigeneity construct Aboriginal political entities as ‘culturally different’ and cast the burden of proof and need to account for ‘authenticity’ with Indigenous peoples in land disputes to show that they are the legitimate inheritors of their lands. Through examining the Canadian government’s 1995 policy paper on Aboriginal self-government, I explore how state discourses about Indigenous people attempt to alienate people from their land and law and disavow the legitimacy of their nationhood. I compare Delgamuukw v. British Columbia and Mashpee cases to show how ‘proving authenticity’ becomes a major mitigating factor in legal struggles for land and self-determination.

The second area I examine is how Indigenous territories make up some of the most resource-rich land in places like Canada. While many territories, especially in the western part of the country, have not been surrendered by Indigenous nations, they have been settled. Here I look at the importance of land for self-determination and debates about sovereignty. The connection to land in self-determination struggles is essential. As Ovide Mercredi (1994) states, “If we gain [political] power for the community but we
don’t get the economy, we have power that cannot exercise itself” (7). Fay Blaney from the Homalco Nation talks about the displacement of her people from their coastal village on the Pacific ocean to the reserve where her community now lives inland (Welsh 2006). The community was no longer able to make a living from fishing after a federal policy was introduced that required a minimum catch quota in order to keep the fishing licenses. With the loss of their traditional economy and the introduction of residential schools, the Homalco people were eventually forced to abandon their traditional village. This displacement from the land has resulted in what Blaney calls a ‘collective grief’ that the people have not been able to talk about or heal from. Blaney iterates the loss of land, way of life, and identity resulting from colonization as the factors leading to this grief and violence in her Nation. In order to reclaim lands from state control, many Indigenous nations have had to negotiate with the Canadian government to name their grievances and mark out the geography of their traditional territories.

Finally, I look at trends in foreign direct investment insofar as countries like Switzerland are implicated in these debates through investment, resource extraction, and trade in the unsurrendered territories of Indigenous nations. Therefore, European countries play a role in land debates and avenues for self-determination. These sites of knowledge production about Indigenous peoples and what constitutes ‘true’ or ‘authentic’ Indigenous identities culminate in a discursive tool to regulate Indigenous populations and their lands in the Canadian settler-colony. These areas where people are struggling for justice and self-determination shed some insight on the case studies I examined in the previous chapter that discourses around indigeneity and ‘playing Indian’ cannot be considered neutral or innocent in the face of the violent effects of colonialism that
perpetuate the notion of Indigenous people as disappearing, violable, or available for consumption.

**Self-Governance and the Burden of Proof**

Indigenous nations have long asserted their national integrity in spite of shifts and varying strategies used by the colonial administrations occupying their lands. The Canadian Constitution Act of 1982, particularly section thirty-five, claims to recognize and affirm existing Aboriginal and treaty rights (The Constitution Act 1982). Through this legal discourse, the Canadian government has tried to make sense of the nature of what is known as Aboriginal title (i.e. title to land and certain rights such as hunting and self-governance) in a way that will reconcile its colonial occupation and assertion of sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands (in many cases in contradiction to its own common law). The Canadian policy on Aboriginal self-government (Government of Canada 1995) reveals how the state has deployed and produced notions about indigeneity. In the introductory pages of the document, references to Aboriginal peoples and cultures as “unique” and “distinct” are articulated at least four times. This is significant, as notions of cultural authenticity have become key factors in the state’s determination of who can legitimately hold claim to lands in North America. The dehistoricized perspective of the government’s policy is evidenced by the claim that “Aboriginal peoples in Canada have long expressed their aspiration to be self-governing...” (Government of Canada 1995, 3). Rather, what many Indigenous scholars and claimants, such as the hereditary chiefs in the Delgamuukw case, would assert is that Indigenous nations have always been self-governing and have not surrendered their inherent right to be so, in spite of British assertions of sovereignty in their territories (Alfred 2005, 35). The government policy
goes on to state that its goal is to “build a new partnership with Aboriginal peoples and strengthen Aboriginal communities by enabling them to govern themselves” (Government of Canada 1995, 4). Such claims reassert the idea of Indigenous people as wards of the state in need of assistance from settler law. The government policy asserts that negotiations for self-government will happen within the framework of the Canadian constitution and that negotiations will not result in sovereignty in the international sense of the term or independent nation-states (Government of Canada 1995, 5-6). All of these statements portray the ways in which the government is setting terms and conditions for potential negotiations in ways that do not conflict with the state’s own self-understanding (e.g. that it is sovereign).

Alfred (1999) argues that sovereignty is a culturally specific Western notion related to nation-states that is not necessarily congruent with or transferable to traditional Indigenous systems or notions of governance (55-56). Rifkin (2009) takes the critique of sovereignty vis-à-vis Indigenous self-determination further by applying Georgio Agamben’s notion of the ‘state of exception’ into a white-settler context. Rifkin argues that sovereignty does not inherently contain any substance that could be replaced by Indigenous visions of independence (as Alfred suggests) because sovereignty is itself a process of relation. As Rifkin notes, the nation-state is conceptualized as a unitary body informed by place and how it defines its territory (94). Canada’s sense of itself as a nation-state and the development of its jurisprudence came into being through a dialectical relationship of how it imagined Indigenous nations and peoples. The competing claims of Native people as independent entities who maintain their territorial integrity continue to trouble the law and state’s self-understanding. Rifkin raises the point
that the state has the potential to displace Native polities altogether, but does not because it is through this very relationship that the state is able to articulate its own sovereignty and self-understanding as democratic, liberal, and multicultural (106). He argues that the state’s sovereignty is “a retrospective projection generated by, and dependent on, the ‘peculiar’-ization of Native peoples” (Rifkin 2009, 91). This idea emerges several times in the Canadian policy paper on Aboriginal self-government, wherein the emphasis on Aboriginal peoples and cultures as ‘unique’ and ‘distinct’ is articulated in relation to the state. Razack (2011) argues that by constituting this Aboriginal difference and examining land claims or forms of violence outside the context of colonization, the law is able to appear as benevolently providing ‘assistance’ to damaged Aboriginal communities (89). She explains that:

Dispossession of the Indigenous population is not accomplished once and for all at the time of conquest and it requires a number of institutional strategies, both material and symbolic. It also requires settlers who come to understand and perform their own entitlement to the land, something that policing accomplishes, and the law manages (Razack 2011,118).

In this way, the state’s assertion of political and territorial sovereignty amidst competing claims from Indigenous nations is an ongoing process. Razack argues that this is achieved through Aboriginal difference making. Marked by this difference, Aboriginal people are excluded from the law and confined in a space of exception that facilitates ongoing land theft and violence (Razack 2011, 104). Therefore, discursive tactics to pronounce Indigenous cultural difference serve to re-establish and sustain the coherence of the nation-state (Rifkin 2009, 105).

The Delgamuukw trial is considered a landmark case in understanding the scope of Aboriginal title presumed to be protected in the 1982 Constitution and is another site where Aboriginal 'peculiarity' is exonerated. In order for the law to understand the scope
of Aboriginal title and rights, notions of Indigenous cultural authenticity, history, and connection to the land needed to be proved by the Gitxsan and Wet’suwet’en people.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Lamer described that, in order for Aboriginal people to maintain the special relationship with their lands, certain uses of the lands that threaten this relationship were excluded from Aboriginal title (what is known as an ‘inherent limit’). In the case, ideas about culture came strongly into play and the emphasis on the ‘distinctiveness’ of Indigenous Peoples was used:

...there will exist a special bond between the group and the land in question such that the land will be part of the definition of the group’s distinctive culture. It seems to me that these elements of aboriginal title create an inherent limitation on the uses to which the land, over which such title exists, may be put (Delgamuukw v. British Columbia 1997, para.128).

Chief Justice Lamer goes on to assert that once the claim to lands have been made, a hunting ground must remain a hunting ground and a ceremonial site must remain a ceremonial site because the claims to these lands have been legitimated through their traditional importance in sustaining Indigenous culture and identity (Delgamuukw 1997, para. 128, 41). This example goes to show that once authenticity has been ‘proven’ or accepted by the colonial justice system the resulting rights and title continue to be limited by frozen notions of true or authentic culture, which are superimposed onto the material relations between Indigenous nations and their territories. Kent McNeil (2000) contests the assertion by the courts of an ‘inherent limit,’ arguing that this does not take into account the adaptation required for Aboriginal peoples to survive in the modern world and adds that, while maintaining a relationship to the land is integral to most Indigenous nations, putting legal limits on land use does not respect goals toward self-determination (25). The ‘inherent limit’ reifies a ward-like relationship with Indigenous nations and reserves any modern resource development on the land as the settler state’s exclusive
right. This dynamic is especially important in contrast to industrial interests in unceded Native land, which I examine later.

Parallels can be drawn between the Delgamuukw case and the Mashpee trial in 1977 in Massachusetts, United States where the Mashpee people made a collective claim to their traditional lands (Lawrence 2003, 22). The state similarly attempted to test and measure the extent to which they judged the Mashpee to be an ‘authentic’ tribe. Cultural criteria included aspects of language, religion, and traditions, the degree to which these aspects had been maintained in an undisrupted manner, and the extent to which the claimants were seen to be taking up modern (i.e. assimilated and American) lifestyles. The Mashpee were denied recognition from the state because they were not seen as authentic (Garroutte 2003, 64). The court’s construction of Aboriginal title decides to protect only specific kinds of attachments that Aboriginal peoples have with different territories and such notions fail to make space for notions of ‘aboriginality’ as articulated by Indigenous people themselves (Panagos 2007, 611).

Dispossession of land is a characteristic of colonialism and not only has consequences on the identity or culture of a people, but also on their economic sustainability. As Kuokkanen (2006) demonstrates this through the example of the Sami Indigenous people in Finland, who struggle to continue with their traditional livelihoods such as reindeer herding. These practices become impossible as the colonial state continued to encroach on Indigenous territories thereby eroding the basis for Indigenous economies and independence (7). Focus is put on Indigenous cultural rights and not on economic rights (Kuokkanen 2006, 5). She argues that, “[t]his reflects the neo-liberal agenda and approach to indigenous rights that seek to reduce and redefine indigenous
rights to fit into a new model of market citizenship with a focus on economic
development” (Kuokkanen 2006, 5). Indigenous people have continued to assert their
rights to occupy and use their land in order to sustain the economic, socio-political, and
cultural aspects of community life. However, there are competing interests within
Indigenous people’s territories, as I will highlight through a look at natural resource
development particularly in western Canada. This interest in resources is a link between
Switzerland and ongoing Indigenous self-determination struggles in Canada.

Desirable Resources on Indigenous Lands

As Russel Barsh (1987) argues, Europeans depend on unsurrendered Indigenous
lands because they are rich in natural resources, such as minerals, metal ores, and wood
(565). The majority of minerals and other valuable natural resources are located in places
predominantly inhabited by Indigenous people (i.e. the northern parts of Canada are
inhabited largely by Indigenous people whereas the majority of the population lives close
to the United States border) (Werniuk 2006, 5). Barsh goes on to note that this has always
been the case since the sixteenth century, starting with the fur trade and continuing with
other resources such as gold. Barsh cautions that the displacement of Indigenous people
and dispossession of land is not a uniquely domestic affair, but is often linked with
international economic interests over which a national government doesn’t have complete
charge (Barsh 1987, 570). This rings true in an era of liberalized trade where restrictions
on trade are lifted through international agreements. Foreign investment has played, and
continues to play, an important role in the development of Canada’s economy; this
implicates European countries and economies in the continuing struggles for Indigenous
self-determination.
The Canadian forestry industry is one of Canada’s leading manufacturing sectors and the largest net exporter of the country (Swiss Confederation 2009, 29). The country’s reserve of crude oil is the second largest in the world (Swiss Confederation 2009, 33). Canada is also the third largest producer of natural gas and hydroelectric energy (Swiss Confederation 2009, 33-35). From 2006 to 2007, Canada’s mineral production increased by nineteen percent (Swiss Confederation 2009, 34). All of this emphasizes the richness of this land. Despite the fact that Indigenous people live in some of the most naturally rich regions of North America, they are the recipients of a disproportionate amount of social welfare in contrast with the rest of the population in Canada (Anderson 2004, 34). Therefore, the development of natural resources might be seen as a solution to the social and economic disparities Indigenous people face. However, as some scholars and Indigenous critics suggest, engaging with the government or corporations to extract resources from the land can perpetuate a colonial dynamic so long as underlying land disputes are not resolved and Indigenous communities do not have a fair role in the decision-making processes concerning their land. I examine this dynamic by looking at cases in British Columbia and Alberta and trends in Canadian foreign direct investment and I trace the link between Europe and Indigenous self-determination.

One case that highlights some of these tensions is Taseko’s proposed Prosperity gold and copper mine. It had been approved by British Columbia but was finally turned down by the federal government in November 2010. The project, which would have been developed near Williams Lake in northern B.C., has been in the works for several years and has been turned down in the past by other governments. The proposed mine would drain Fish Lake to use for waste and mine trailings. The mine would have major impact
on the Tsilhqot’in peoples’ traditional territory, including the lake and surrounding watershed. There is a clash of worldviews about how this land should be treated between industry and Tsilhqot’in people (Bear 2009). For the Tsilhqot’in, it is an important area where there are burial sites, homes, and traditional gathering places (Mine Watch 2010). The people have a way of life connected to this land, including fishing in the lake, to which the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has also added their concern in stating that productive, healthy lakes should not be destroyed (Mine Watch 2010).

The Taseko Prosperity mine is only the third mine project to ever be rejected by the federal environment assessment process (Mine Watch 2010). In 2007, the Tsilhqot’in people took the provincial government to court when logging in the region infringed on their territory and rights. The B.C. Supreme Court ruled that the province needed to deal with the outstanding land grievances before any more developments could take place (APTN 2010b). In spite of these outstanding claims and the Tsilhqot’in peoples’ opposition and refusal to engage in any revenue sharing deals with Taseko, the B.C. government approved the major mine project. Political analysts conclude that B.C. found the economic benefits of the mine greater than the social, cultural and environmental costs (Ebner 2010).

In response to this, Chief Marilyn Baptiste stated, “how long will we have to keep on fighting?” (APTN 2010b). She raised the fact that this mine project has been on the agenda of the province and developers despite her peoples’ consistent opposition and assertion of their title to the land. In fact, the Tsilhqot’in’s stand against developers in their territory is not new. The Tsilhqot’in battled off gold seekers in an 1864 war in the region (APTN 2010b). However, the Taseko mine could be approved in the future if
revisions are made to the proposal, which developers are keen to do after the millions of dollars spent on its development and promotion to investors. This case begs a closer examination of self-determination struggles in the face of political and economic pressure from the state and industry. The question remains of whether or not the Tsilhqot’in land grievances will be taken seriously and if adequate consultation will take place before the project moves further forward. On the same day that the Prosperity mine was rejected, others in B.C. were approved, including the Mount Milligan mine near Prince George, which has created some tension and discontent amongst the Nak’azdli people (Stueck 2010a).

Indigenous communities face violent backlash from neighbouring non-Indigenous people and the Canadian government when raising concerns over mining or forestry projects that could benefit the majority population. President of the William’s Lake Chamber of Commerce, Walter Cob, responded to journalists about the Tsilhqot’in’s stance by stating, “they don’t want to work” (APTN 2010b). Communities around William’s Lake have suffered from high unemployment rates after a decline in logging due to the pine beetle that has infested much of B.C.’s forests over the past few years (Ebner, 2010). Cob and others anticipated violent reaction from surrounding non-Indigenous communities after the mine was not approved in November 2010 (Ebner, 2010).

In reaction to the same mine proposal, B.C. Minister of the State for Mining, Randy Hawes, stated, “some First Nations reject mining for a more traditional lifestyle — those linked to lower birth weights, higher birth-rate deaths and lower life spans” (Theodore 2010). After these comments, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs called for
Hawes’ resignation and a meeting with the Premier to discuss reform to mining practices in B.C. (Theodore 2010). Hawes refuted allegations that his comments were racist because he is stating socio-economic realities of many Indigenous people in the province, which he believes many people are not willing to openly discuss. What is problematic about Hawes’ comments are not that he identifies the poverty and social problems facing Indigenous people, but rather that he implies that people willingly opt for this and that poverty and social problems are inherent outcomes of ‘a traditional lifestyle’. In this way, he pits western models of economic development through massive resource extraction against traditional Indigenous modes of production. He implies that projects, such as the Taseko prosperity mine, are the solution to poverty faced by Indigenous peoples, while providing no context for the colonization that has contributed to this economic disparity in the first place. He further criticized the Tsilhqot’in Nation for “putting a lake before their kids” (Theodore 2010). Both Hawes and Cob’s comments paint a picture that Indigenous peoples lack work ethic and good judgement and reiterates a ward-like relationship with the state (or industry).

What I have laid out here is some idea of the climate wherein industry and economic growth is pitted against Indigenous land rights, unemployment, and maintaining the ecological integrity of Indigenous traditional territories. These issues are not new but are rather part of the continuing legacy of colonialism. Sarah Carter (1997) notes the racist overtones in attempts to introduce agriculture in Indigenous communities in the prairies in the late nineteenth century. The Indian agents and farm instructors attributed the failure of Indigenous men to produce plentiful crops to their traditional modes of production, subsistence, and nomadic lifestyles, which were posited as pre-
modern and incompatible with colonial development (Carter 1997, 160). Knowledge produced about Indigenous modes of production and what these days might be seen as a ‘traditional’ way of life are painted as backwards and pre-modern (i.e. anti-development).

Don Bubar, director of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) believes mineral exploration offers important employment opportunities in remote parts of the country where few other jobs exist. He claims that mineral exploration is not inconsistent with traditional land use whereby Indigenous peoples have made observations about the land and its uses for centuries (Shilton 2008, 37). This is a shift in thinking from the court cases, such as Delgamuukw, that I cited earlier whereby land use protected through Aboriginal rights and title under the law have been restricted to notions of traditional activities from a pre-colonial contact era.

In contrast to the sentiments expressed by Hawes and Cob that pit Indigenous peoples interests against employment opportunities, Anderson et al. (1997) shows that Aboriginal businesses have had a high survival rate and do at least as well as other businesses (1489). They also notes that there has been a general shift in corporate attitude towards the need for forming alliances with Indigenous communities to ensure long-term sustainability of economic development (Anderson et al. 2004, 1483). Anderson et al. study trends in corporate Indigenous business alliances and notes that, while non-Indigenous companies may have initially been motivated to create alliances because of legislated or licensing requirements, many companies have eventually expanded beyond these minimum requirements recognizing the added value of support from Indigenous communities for their long term interests (Anderson et al. 2004,1491).
The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People conducted in the 1990s estimated that the government would need to spend more money each year on all the outstanding land grievances over this past decade. They projected that the result of settling these grievances could result in a major economic shift for First Nations from dependency on the state to greater self-sufficiency and economic productivity (Anderson et al. 2004, 636). Anderson suggests that the experience of land settlements in Canada can serve as a model for other parts of the world. He states:

We feel the relevance of the Canadian experience extends further. Everywhere one looks—in Central and South America, Africa, the Near East, the Far East, the North, the Indian subcontinent, the former Soviet Union, and so on—“original peoples” are struggling to regain control of their traditional lands and rebuild their communities. In most locales they face resistance and even oppression from the “state” and as a result often are resorting to violent and revolutionary responses; the outcomes benefit no one. Perhaps both states and Indigenous Peoples can learn from the Canadian experience and move to a mutually beneficial approach as opposed to an antagonistic one (Anderson et al. 2004, 645).

These authors have highlighted case studies in their research of situations where business, state, and Indigenous nations have found a relative amount of agreement on the way forward for economic development on Indigenous lands. However, this is not always the situation and, in fact, many cases have erupted in violence both from the state and opposing Indigenous groups (i.e. Oka, as mentioned earlier). Related to this discussion are the findings of UN official, James Anaya, about Canada’s track record of dealing with Indigenous rights. The Canadian government endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people in November 2010 after the overwhelming majority of member states had already done so in September 2007. Anaya has strongly critiqued Canada’s position since endorsing the Declaration making reference to Canada’s 2010 Speech from the Throne where the Declaration is referred to as an ‘aspirational’ document (Canada 2010, 19). Rather Anaya counters the current government’s notion and reiterates that the
Declaration is an authoritative document rooted in international human rights standards in order to protect the individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world (APTN 2010a). This criticism of Canada comes directly from Anaya’s observations of the Lubicon people negatively affected by the Tar Sands development in northern Alberta. The UN Human Rights Committee has found Canada in violation of Lubicon rights since 1990 (APTN 2010a). Furthermore, the UN urges the Canadian government to stop advancing all projects on the Lubicon’s traditional land, including the proposed natural gas pipeline until the land grievances are properly resolved (APTN 2010a). In the meantime, the Joint Review Panel is conducting community hearings about the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline from January through the spring of 2012. In juxtaposition to industry and Canada’s position, over fifty signatories, including First Nations in the Fraser River watershed area, support a declaration that states:

Therefore, in upholding our ancestral laws, Title, Rights and responsibilities, we declare: We will not allow the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines, or similar Tar Sands projects, to cross our lands, territories and watersheds, or the ocean migration routes of Fraser River salmon (Save the Fraser Declaration 2010).

Caine and Krogman (2010) argue that there is a general climate of “develop now and deal with Aboriginal rights later” on the part of the government (85). They examine many of the limits and advantages of what are known as Impact and Benefits Agreements (IBA) between First Nations and natural resource developers. They acknowledge that for many First Nations these agreements with industry can provide additional legitimacy to their title over their traditional lands while the government plays the role of observer during the agreement process. The process is also important in that Indigenous communities who have typically been marginalized from decision-making may have more of a say on the fate of their lands. On the other hand, Caine and Krogman point out
that not all the parties are on an equal footing and, as a result, industry proponents may be favoured (Caine and Krogman 2010, 78-79). IBAs are not legally binding and, in the current oil and gas legislation, benefits to Indigenous communities from any developments are not required until after the rights to the company have been issued (Caine and Krogman 2010, 84-85). This influences how agreements may be reached and followed up on. IBAs can include confidentiality and non-compliance clauses, which can benefit communities who do not want to disclose certain information to the government. On the other hand, this means that communities cannot speak to, or seek advice from, other communities that may be going through a similar process, which leads to a lack of consultation and transparency (Caine and Krogman 2010, 85). In conclusion, Caine and Krogman identify what they call an ‘ideology of agreement making’ where the focus is on getting agreements signed rather than democratizing the entire process and the decision-making related to economic development in the first place. They suggest that much more research is needed in the area of IBAs and on how power operates through this model in order to address neglected social justice concerns (Caine and Krogman 2010, 88).

With specific regards to mine developments, Fidler (2010) also looks at the conditions around Negotiated Agreements that take place at a local level with the company and community and the Environmental Impact Assessments that take place with the Crown. The International Council on Mining and Metals recommended in a 2009 statement that support from the local communities is invaluable to ensure that mining projects benefit from lasting success (Fidler 2010, 234). In any case, whether or not agreements are reached between Indigenous nations and industry, the federal government
does have an obligation to consult with Indigenous people on any matters that might infringe on their Aboriginal rights or title (as established in the court case Sparrow of 1990) (Fidler 2010, 236). The Canadian Aboriginal Mineral Association estimated that there were over one hundred and twenty agreements made in 2008 alone (Fidler 2010, 236). Due to the complex considerations needed to establish any mining project and because of negative experiences that Indigenous communities have had in the past in protecting their lands and sustainability of their communities, Fidler highlights that companies that pay attention to, and consult, Indigenous people at the exploration stage of any project are more likely to succeed in later stages of the development (237). To not do so could result in an infringement on Aboriginal rights and title over unresolved land grievances. This is especially relevant in places like British Columbia, where few treaties were ever negotiated during colonial expansion into the west.

Natural resources make up a major part of Canada’s economy and have major implications for how land grievances may be settled with Indigenous nations. Mapping out some of the concerns facing Indigenous nations when it comes to natural resource development demands attention to what self-determination may look like in this climate. After the rejection of the Taseko Prosperity mine by the federal government, shares in the project went into sharp decline (Ebner 2010). The Mining Association of B.C. has raised concerns that this decision will negatively impact investor confidence in the region (Stueck 2010b). The reality that Indigenous people occupy resource rich lands in this continent raises an important question about the role of international economy and investors. While Taseko is not a foreign owned company, it does highlight some of the issues at stake in developing natural resources in unsurrendered Indigenous territories.
Implications for Europe in Ongoing Land Struggles

Looking at foreign investment trends in Canada, Alan Young (2007) draws attention to the high level of foreign acquisition of Canadian companies and the ways that this has fuelled debate that Canada’s economic sovereignty is being hollowed out (50). However, he notes that Canadian investments abroad are greater than foreign direct investment (FDI) within the country, which may result in a similar effect of ‘hollowing out’ other countries. To speak of ‘economic sovereignty’ is interesting when considered against the backdrop of Canada’s colonialism, whereby state sovereignty is pitted against, Indigenous peoples’ political and economic struggles to maintain their integrity and independence, especially in places like B.C. The Marlin Mine in Guatemala's Western highlands, which is operated by the Vancouver-based Mining company Goldcorp, has been criticized by human rights groups for not seeking the free, prior, and informed consent of nearby Mayan communities who bear the environmental, health, and social costs and risks that come with open-pit gold mining (Anderson 2010). After community members who engaged in protesting the mine were killed, an investigation and human rights assessment of the mine was undertaken (Human Rights Assessment of Goldcorp's Marlin Mine 2010). Similar investigations are taking place with regards to Canadian mining company practices in the Philippines (The Filipino Post 2012). Returning then to Anderson's point: can Canada really be seen as a non-violent model and alternative for other countries when it comes to respecting Indigenous rights?

In 2008, the federal government developed what is known as a “Competition Policy”, which encourages greater foreign investment in Canada (Young 2007, 51). The FDI in Canada focuses mainly on the sectors of manufacturing and natural resources and,
as previously underlined, it is Indigenous nations that occupy the majority of resource rich land (Hejazi 2004, 61). One specific case of FDI from Europe to Canada is the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Switzerland and Canada, which came into effect July 2009. Drawing from the background document on the Swiss-Canadian FTA (whose target audience is Swiss business), I analyze the text to determine how Canada is ‘sold’ to this European audience and what how this relates to my research questions. The document looks at the relations between Switzerland and Canada and gives some overview of the Canadian political and economic landscape including key sectors that might interest potential investors and businesses. The document states that the appeal of trading with Canada lies in “[t]he high quality of life, the excellent infrastructure and the abundance of natural resources [that] contribute to [its] attractiveness for foreign firms” (Swiss Confederation 2009, 7). Canada is cited as the fifth largest ‘Swiss colony’ in the world, with over 36,000 Swiss living in the country (Swiss Confederation 2009, 12). In this way, the document establishes some important links between the two countries.

The document includes three paragraphs about the Canadian population and demographics. The history of French and English colonization is mentioned along with the three constitutionally recognized categories of Indigenous people referred to as Indians, Métis, and Inuit (Swiss Confederation 2009, 8). This section highlights that Canada is one of the least densely populated countries in the world with most of the population living near the U.S. border. There is a prominent photograph that occupies the middle third of the page. In the foreground of this photograph is a tipi with fur pelts on it. The worn-out pelts do not adequately cover the wooden frame and, as a result, many gaps and holes are exposed between the furs. There is a large opening, similar to an entryway,
facing the viewer. The tipi is surrounded by flat ground lightly covered with snow where bits of shrub and dirt are exposed. In the background is a large wooden building. The structure is in good condition and appears to be new. The architectural design looks modern and sleek and combines the use of natural materials, such as wood. Several windows face the direction of the viewer, along with steps leading up to an open door. The contrast between the two structures is stark. One looks neglected, desolate, and not very functional. The other looks spacious, well configured, and new. There are no people or animals and hardly any plant life (except for a few barren plants sticking up from the snow). Both structures are made from natural materials and juxtapose what might be seen as Indigenous tradition and modern development the latter of which is positioned as superior. The photograph emphasizes the image of North America as a vast and uninhabited land full of natural resources.

FDI from Switzerland to Canada has employed over 32,000 people and is the fifth largest source of foreign investment in Canada, before Japan and Germany (Swiss Confederation 2009, 20). Key sectors for Swiss investors include oil, gas, energy, and mining (Swiss Confederation 2009, 20). Over the last few years, Canada’s foreign trade has concentrated mainly on natural resource exports (Swiss Confederation 2009, 10). Since the late 1990s, Canada’s foreign trade has been greatly liberalized, especially in the oil and gas sector (Swiss Confederation 2009, 17). Pharmaceuticals are Switzerland’s largest export to Canada. The document goes on to note that, although Canada is rich in natural resources, it consists of only twenty percent of the country’s exports due to the fact that most of the work force is in the services industry (Swiss Confederation 2009, 9). This point stresses the fact that there is potential for a lot more growth in this sector.
All of this data points to the interests that foreign investors have in natural resources, most of which are located in the unceded traditional territories of different Indigenous nations. As we have seen with the Taseko Prosperity mine proposal, B.C. approved developments to move ahead despite the Supreme Court ruling to deal with the Tsilhqot’in land case. Despite Canada’s endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we have witnessed little more than rhetoric from the government to take its recommendations seriously. Industry and foreign investment have great interest in natural resources on unceded territories and contribute to the tremendous pressure on Indigenous people to safeguard their lands. Given the importance of rich natural resources not only to the Canadian economy but to other countries as well, this has major implications on how Indigenous land grievances may be settled. This raises the questions of who gets to occupy, inherit, and develop or not develop the land? Indigenous communities face these questions and juggle how different kinds of economic development could contribute to addressing social disparity and poverty. Self-determination means that the original occupants of the land should be the key decision-makers in regards to the fate of their own land, whether that involves the cooperation with a mining project or not. The economic pressures and the way power operates through colonialism (whereby not everyone comes to a level playing field when negotiating these decisions) sometimes leave little room for alternatives. Fidler (2010) argues that, given their track record of boom bust cycles, western constructs of development and sustainability lack validity (235). Rather Indigenous knowledge and modes of production provide important insight and capacity into how we may use and take care of natural resources (Anderson 1997, 636). Joe Fobister (who was part of the
Anishinaabe blockade at Grassy Narrows in northern Ontario over the clear cut logging by Abitibi) says that a multi-use approach to using the natural resources, such as the forest, could provide more long-term jobs and opportunities. He imagines that Aboriginal access to resources through treaty rights would involve eco-tourism, trapping, fishing, and selective logging on the land (Braun 2003, 17).

Given the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) (which puts European companies and economic interests in direct tension with ongoing land disputes), more attention needs to be focused on how discourses and representations of Indigenous peoples in Europe may have an impact on investor choices. If Indigenous people continue to be posited as disappearing, relegated to the past, or violable (as, through my case studies, I have demonstrated is often the situation), how then can land grievances be taken seriously and self-determination struggles be recognized in the midst of strong foreign and domestic economic interests in the resource-rich lands of Indigenous nations? The court cases I highlighted earlier show how the state frames Indigenous relations to the land with particular notions of authenticity based on pre-contact ways of living. At the same time, business interests in these same lands exploit every modern tool and mode of production available to extract valuable natural resources. This double standard and discourse must be seen as the continuation of colonial interest to dispossess people of their land and right to self-determination. By discussing struggles around land, I have portrayed several ways that settler colonialism attempts to shape the forging of Indigenous identities. This knowledge production has consequences on who the law protects from different forms of violence and who is excluded or violable. For instance, in Taseko's revised project plan for its mine, they estimate it will cost an additional three
hundred million dollars to preserve Fish Lake, which they claim is not an economically viable route but they are willing to revise their plan to preserve the lake in order to move forward with the mine development. They propose to “uphold First Nations heritage use of land and resources” (Taseko 2012). Through Taseko’s continued appeals to the federal and provincial governments, they are denying the Tsilhqot’in people any political authority in their own territory. The Tsilhqot’in become just one more player, or potential stakeholder, in the project. If they have any authority in the land at all, it is due to their ‘heritage’ as framed in the media, public debate and law. Through the cultural difference making and peculiarization of Indigenous nations, they are relegated to a spectral space as disembodied figures severed from material and economic needs. It is through their cultural uniqueness and distinctiveness that their land rights are understood. In this case, Indigenous people may be seen as “putting a lake before their kids” and able to survive on culture alone. As disembodied figures and culturally different, Indigenous people continue to be regulated through violence. The economy of ‘playing Indian,’ which is evident in the exaggerated amusement parks or the caricatures played out by hobbyists (such as those cases I have drawn attention to in Europe), cannot be considered benign when we see that Indigenous peoples continue to struggle for rights to their land, material culture, and physical safety. With this reality in mind, the case studies can be recognized as part of the knowledge production and colonialism that perpetuates different forms of violence against Indigenous peoples. Regardless of these discursive productions, Indigenous people continue to subvert these dominant discourses in order to recuperate lands and chart paths for self-determination, which I explore further in the conclusion.
Conclusion

“My people will sleep for 100 years but when they awake it will be the artists that give them back their spirit.” –Louis Riel, Métis

Smith (2005) challenges the notion that the majority of problems faced by Native people are because of white, Settler ignorance that could be alleviated if people knew more about Indigenous cultures. She notes that there is no lack of interest in Indigenous peoples’ cultures, as evident in New Age spirituality and anthropology (Smith 2005, 120). She emphasizes that more knowledge is not the solution; rather ongoing genocide is rooted in the material conditions of colonialism and aggravated by the fact that Native people occupy desirable land resources (Smith 2005, 121). As I have demonstrated through my cases studies, knowledge produced about Indigenous people, especially in commodified interactions and spaces, does not serve to dispel ignorance about Indigenous people; rather, it perpetuates the conditions necessary for ongoing colonialism and land appropriation based on the idea that Indigenous people are disappearing, thereby making space for white people to become the inheritors of both Indianness and Indigenous lands (Green 1988, 30-35).

Therefore, self-determination in this context can be understood as struggles against the violence and consequences of colonialism, which have largely sought to control and regulate Indigenous peoples. Self-determination is a broad and complex concept stemming from the desire for greater autonomy, well being, healing, support, and strengthening of Native communities and individuals and there is no one model of how it will look. At their core, struggles for self-determination acknowledge that Indigenous people are not fully in charge of their own lives and destinies and understand colonization as an ongoing process. As Razack (2011) has noted, the dispossession of Indigenous
people is an ongoing process that requires numerous material and symbolic strategies (118). Self-determination can be thought of as ‘decolonization’ (or undoing the logic of colonization) in all aspects of life including economic vitality, governance, language, health, education, access and title to land, and opportunity to live in community free from interference or violence.

Europeans do not need to leave Europe to experience a Sun dance or sleep in a tipi, as many such touristic experiences have been created by entrepreneurs within Europe (as I have highlighted), but as Deutschlander (2003) notes, Europeans come to Canada to seek a ‘genuine’ immersion experience. Questions about self-determination are pertinent when considering who can determine what to do with one’s own knowledge, traditions, and practices. Aboriginal cultural tourism is a high-growth sector of the tourism industry that draws many Europeans to North America (Deutschlander 2003, 27). As Gilders (2003) attests,

Germans were the highest-spending visitors to British Columbia [in 2001], responsible for forty-four percent of all European revenues. German tourism had almost doubled in the preceding ten years, to become an annual $450 million industry. Aboriginal tourism is expanding at an even faster rate, with initiatives such as the 2001 convention held in Vancouver by Dertour—Germany’s top-selling North American tour operator—pushing the industry forward by as much as thirty percent annually.

However, Indian hobbyist groups in Europe have claimed that their preservation of Indigenous knowledge and traditions is superior, and more authentic, than the ways Indigenous communities have lived out their own identities. Such hobbyists claim that Indigenous people have become too modernized, thereby disqualifying them from having authentic or legitimate knowledge over their traditions and ways of life (Gilders 2003). In some cases, European hobbyists have even excluded Indigenous people from participating in their economy of ‘Indian play’ (Gilders 2003).
While tourism may be a route of economic viability or survival for many communities, scholars, such as Hawaiian activist Haunani-Kay Trask (1999), critically examine the relations of power at work in the demands of colonialism (and I would add globalization) to commodify Indigenous culture. She names this ‘cultural prostitution’ whereby “[t]he place, the people, the culture, even our identity as a ‘Native’ people is for sale” (Trask 1999, 144). However, the commodification of peoples through tourism may be subverted in such places as the Woodland Cultural Centre (to which I previously referred), where visitors are exposed to contemporary Indigenous art, ways that Anishinaabe and Onkwehonwe cultures continue to develop and a critical view of colonial history. This approach challenges notions that Indigenous people are disappearing or are culturally and politically static.

**International networking for solidarity**

Alfred and Corntassel (2004) argue for alternatives to the United Nations system through which Indigenous people can gather attention on their struggles for self-determination and network with other communities for solidarity and support. The UN is formed of nation-states, which places many limitations on how Indigenous nations, which are mostly not recognized as independent nations, can use this body to advance the cause for self-determination. At their core, nation-states are constructed out of particular European worldviews and values. Sardar (1996) notes:

> It was this nation-state which determines who could be a citizen and what being a citizen should mean and entail…To take the nation-state centered view of human rights is to consign oneself to a dynamic of debate and activity that precludes genuine plurality and the ability to accommodate equality and respect for heterodox perspectives and mores (252).

Alfred and Corntassel (2004) suggest concrete alternatives to the bureaucratic processes of the UN, such as involvement in the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organizations
(UNPO), which intentionally operates outside the state-centrism of the UN. Other suggestions include strengthening the unity between Indigenous nations and following best practices of Indigenous movements such as the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) in order to decolonize government structures. Other models that may lend themselves to building international solidarity also include the Inuit Circumpolar Council representing Inuit people in Greenland, Denmark, Canada, USA, and Chukotka (Russia) (Inuit Circumpolar Council). But Dylan Miner’s work through art also points to the importance of symbolic spaces where relationships of solidarity can be forged as integral to self-determination. Art, such as Miner’s, is a potential site for counter-discourse to representational regimes of indigeneity as it takes into account the relationship between the symbolic and material processes of colonization.

**Art as Resistance**

In February 2012, Métis artist and activist, Dylan Miner, showed his art exhibit in the Sámí region (northern Norway) to draw awareness to links between Indigenous people’s experiences and struggles in different parts of the world. In particular, he aimed to bring attention to the Sami peoples’ struggle to have their Indigenous language recognized in the region. The exhibit consists of several expressions, such as, “in defiance, in defense” in Sami and English, silk screened onto fabric banners. Miner says, “[i]t’s about drawing lines of solidarity between indigenous communities, often on national as well as global levels” (Utropia 2012). While he recognizes the different histories of Indigenous people in different parts of the world, he believes that there is much overlap between the different ongoing struggles against colonialism. Miner’s work
points to the importance of international solidarity between Indigenous communities when it comes to decolonization.

What is highlighted through Miner’s cross-national project is the recognition that, within the state structures and composition of Europe, there is a great deal of heterogeneity. Through the hegemony of the nation-state system, linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and historical distinctions are homogenized. There are many Indigenous peoples movements struggling for their rights within Europe itself, such as the Sami people in the north (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia) or the Basque in southern France and northern Spain. How do states manage this heterogeneity and their own claims to sovereignty and dominance in relation to competing claims from Indigenous people? How does European space get demarcated against its own internal Others? How do certain languages and cultures maintain their dominance? While a full exploration of these questions in terms of Indigenous struggles in Europe goes beyond the scope of my thesis, I believe it is important to emphasize these point in terms of how discourses around indigeneity are operating.

The introductory quote from Louis Riel, who was executed in 1885 for his leadership in self-determination struggles for land and political autonomy of the Métis people, has been adopted by many Indigenous artists and activists, including the Native Youth Media Society's project “Awaken 100”, an online gallery featuring Indigenous artists (Redwire Magazine). Riel points to an important role for artists in the “awakening of his people.” If the struggles for self-determination and decolonization are both material and discursive, then symbolic resistance and international solidarity through art (as embodied in Miner's exhibit in Sámpi region) become important strategies. As Hall notes,
since meanings can never be fully fixed, this opens up the possibility for meaning to be negotiated, interrupted, or challenged (which he describes as ‘trans-coding’) (Hall 1997b, 270). Artists who tell a different story and inscribe new meanings to dominant representations/portrayals of indigeneity, recover meaning from language and history and assert an important counter-discourse. One example of subverting ethnological constructions of Indianness is the “The Artifact Piece” by artist James Luna. Luna’s project involved him lying down on a display table in a San Diego museum in the section where Indigenous artifacts were displayed. McMaster (2007) describes that:

At that point he renders viewers suddenly self-conscious as they realize that they are now the spectacle...The observer is now on view and becomes “other.” For a moment, the artefact piece is alive, giving the artist/aboriginal person control over his identity and subject position. This work re-enacted the dead objectified Native American of museal displays (4-5).

Luna’s original installation occurred in 1987, but he has since toured in a multimedia performing arts show with Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s organization, La Pocha Nostra, in which he recounts his own reactions to his performance in “The Artifact Piece”. In this ways, he continues to engage audiences in reflection on this colonial gaze and complex processes of identity formation.

Secwepemc (Shuswap) artist and writer Tania Willard (2007), who has been active with the Native Youth Media Society, wrote an “Ode to Bev Oda” (the Federal Member of Parliament and member of the Conservative Party of Canada) after she cut millions of dollars to different language groups across the country. Willard laments the lost opportunity to record elders as a way to pass on traditional knowledge and their language. She explores the meaning of language, land, and sense of place in one of her multi-medium art pieces (painting and photo collage) that depicts two coyotes and beneath it a black and white photograph of two large rocks. She explains:
Willard also exposes the way power has operated through colonization by using the coyotes as symbols of endurance, in that they have survived unregulated hunting laws, targeted extermination practices, and encroachment on their habitat. Through her art, Willard offers a critical reflection on the loss of language, which she relates to cuts in government funding. She describes how she no longer remembers the exact story of Coyote and Son and why they were transformed into stones. She describes the words of her grandparents as “whispers I don’t understand” (Willard 2007, 25). Through her art she reinscribes and rearticulates meaning through a sense of place that is connected to the land. The meaning that comes through her art was passed on through oral history. In another piece, Willard created a comic strip about the “Bows and Arrows local 526”, which was one of the first unions on the Burrard Docks in B.C. consisting of mainly Squamish and Burrard Native people (Willard 2001, 35). Willard’s piece shows that, contrary to discourses that posit Indigenous people and economic development in opposition (as evident in debates around the Taseko mine proposal), Native people have a long history of involvement in B.C. primary resource industries. After strikes in the 1920s to secure a wage increase for their lumber shipping, many of the Indigenous workers were blacklisted. Willard’s medium is accessible and powerfully historicizes relations of power between Indigenous people’s with both industry and state from over a century ago.

Concluding Thoughts
When I think back to the day I walked through the Charmilles shopping centre in Geneva and first saw Besnier’s exhibit, the language I had to describe what was going on was
‘cultural appropriation.’ Since that time I have peeled back layers and layers to understand the complex power relations and discursive practices at work in such encounters. My understanding about incidents like that at the Charmilles shopping centre have shifted from ‘cultural appropriation’ to one of how power operates to produce knowledge. This knowledge is intimately bound up in white, modern subject formation and material processes of colonialism such as land dispossession. Nearing the end of this process, I had the chance to informally discuss my thesis with a group of people at a conference from the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Amongst the diverse ages and perspectives of these people, I discovered that the majority of them have read Karl May’s *Winnetou* books. We had lively conversations and debates about the images of Indians in popular culture in this part of the world. I realized more conversations like these are needed to break some of the myths about Indigenous people that people hold dear. While I have begun to unpack my burning questions around these Indian figures in Switzerland, what remains to be explored are avenues for education and advocacy in Europe needed to further unravel colonial processes. The question of how representations of Indians impact other Indigenous movements in Europe itself is also a critical question that I have not been able to fully explore in this thesis.

If colonialism is both a symbolic and material process, where the ways power works to produce knowledge about Indigenous people facilitates and informs land theft and physical violence to Indigenous bodies, then so too must strategies for decolonization be multifaceted to work symbolically and materially. I have outlined international cooperation between Indigenous peoples and movements and the work of artists as potential sites for decolonization. I have highlighted that ‘playing Indian’ and the
representations of Indigenous people I have examined in my case studies are forms of violence in a world where Indigenous people continue to struggle for their political and territorial integrity. As the figurative Indian is also deeply embedded in European neoliberal subjectivities, the process of decolonization is not limited to Indigenous people; rather it requires a much wider process for European identities to dislodge themselves from the logic of colonial violence and for European economies to reconcile their dependence on contested Indigenous land. The figurative Indian is a discursive tool with implications for self-determination struggles in both North America and Europe.


Young, Alan. 2007. “Foreign Investment in Canada: To be Feared Or Welcomed?” CMA Management 81.8: 50-51.