

Diamonds as Development: Suffering for Opportunity in the Canadian North

by

Lindsay Alexandra Bell

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Lindsay A. Bell 2013

Diamonds as Development: Suffering for Opportunity in Canada's North

Lindsay Alexandra Bell

Doctor of Philosophy

Humanities and Social Science and Social Justice Education
University of Toronto

2013

Abstract

Despite the repeated collapse of mining towns and sites in the Great Slave Lake region, most residents embrace new resource projects as possibilities for creating viable futures. Situated at the intersection of socio-cultural and linguistic anthropology, this ethnographic investigation of the Canadian diamond boom of the 2000s illustrates how imagining stable livelihoods despite a record of impermanence and crises depends on integrating and reframing past failures with present aspirations for “the good life”. At the height of the diamond boom in 2007, future imaginaries were largely associated with high wage job creation in the rapidly expanding industrial sector. Based on 18 months of fieldwork among those said to benefit most from new industrial development: the Aboriginal under/unemployed, this dissertation’s ethnographic attention is on job training programs and employment interventions that promised local residents new futures. The fieldwork coincided with the global financial crisis and almost none of the 90 students followed through the research secured work in the industry at the conclusion of their training. Nevertheless, people continue to maintain faith in a future linked to resource development.

Capturing people’s everyday re-makings of tomorrow in uncertain times, this dissertation reveals that while employment in global extractive industries is unable to provide economic security to those who seek it, its promises are productive for four reasons. First, they (re)define the natural world as ‘opportunities for work’. Second, the specific techniques of industry and statecraft that surround mining (impact and benefit agreements, and socio-economic monitoring) transform

everyday events of difference and inequality into catastrophes which render industrial development sensible even urgent. Third, they orient public sentiment towards a “future anterior,” a form of temporal longing that I argue impedes a deep reading of the historical present and participates in a politics of deferral. Fourth, they rely on and reproduce a chronotopically constrained public debate on natural resource development.

Acknowledgments

The long process of a PhD involves the work of many. I gratefully acknowledge the long list of those who have helped me along the way and take full responsibility for any of my dissertation's shortcomings. First, I am indebted to my supervisor, Monica Heller. I was determined to study with Monica for my PhD after reading one of her books in my Master's program. Fortunately for me, scholarly output is only a fraction of her gifts. As soon as I arrived to the program, Monica integrated me into her research team and took me seriously as a scholar. She set up an innumerable amount of opportunities for me to grow as a field worker, analyst, writer and colleague. She has invested countless hours into this project and patiently tried to show me how much I know. By way of example, she set the bar high for how to mentor, teach and research. Merci!

My doctoral committee was exceptional in every regard. Bonnie McElhinny provided insightful, supportive feedback at critical moments. Throughout my training, Bonnie's work and mentorship reminded me to ask/answer difficult questions while giving me room to find my way. Gavin Smith's cheerful appraisals of my writing were poignant and pushed me to be precise in my historical pursuits. Tania Li gave me much to think about moving forward and provided generous mentorship throughout. Elizabeth Povinelli was the perfect external examiner. She provided enough criticism to show me how to grow as a scholar and enough encouragement to motivate me to take the next steps.

Merci aux membres du Centre de recherches en éducation franco-ontarienne pour avoir m'accueilli pendant mes années à OISE. Mary Richards, Emanuel daSilva and Mireille McLaughlin were the first people I met at OISE and were the ones that taught me how to do this thing called fieldwork. They still teach me a lot of things and I am glad we keep in touch.

The department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto has been extremely generous in taking me in as a disciplinary migrant. My participation in the department meant I became part of a cohort of brilliant women whose support was invaluable. Sincere thanks to Sharon Kelly, Kori Allen, Laura Sikstrom, Jessica Taylor, Chantelle Falconer, and Martha Fanjoy... I am looking forward to saying "I knew you when...".

Faculty in the department of Anthropology have also been unduly generous. Andrea Muehlebach, Chris Krupa and Bianca Dahl all provided guidance as I navigated the final stages of PhD-ing. I was privileged to be included in the department's dissertation writing workshop with talented peers. Many thanks to faculty discussants, Andrew Gilbert, Michael Lambek and Girish Daswani, who all helped me find confidence in my project and take authority in my voice.

I was fortunate to find support and mentorship for my research and writing from faculty at other institutions. Kirk Dombrowski, whose northern work I admire, kindly answered an email of mine in 2006 and subsequently invested much time and effort into my thinking and writing. Conversations with Alexandre Duchêne, Gerry Sider, Ananth Aiyer, Kendra Coulter, Winnie Lem and Pauline Gardiner-Barber all helped me make my work more coherent and sort out what really matters.

My approach to writing was heavily shaped by two fiction authors who I had the pleasure of studying with over the last few years. Cordelia Strube made it clear that something is always at stake and readers need to know right away what that is. Anna Camilleri gave me 'creative license' to show up to the practice of writing every day. Gen Scott, long time friend and now writer-on-the-move, read many drafts of this work and various applications. I am grateful that I was given the privilege of reading her exemplary writing and benefitting from her feedback on my work.

A group of friends/scholars who I admire supported me in every way imaginable. Olga Federenko was a gracious writing partner and powerful role model in all domains. Zoe Wool cheered me on, cheered me up and introduced me to ideas that changed the way I see the world: pretty incredible. Khadija Coxon is a by-proxy anthropologist whose insights on the world are nothing short of brilliant. I am grateful for our long walks and long conversations. Joshua Milton Moses is an advice giver extraordinaire and someone willing to talk northern stuff with me at any time. Engagements with Joshua Walker, Arie Molema, Tom Schilling, and Krista Maxwell were instrumental to the shaping of my arguments. Jesse Jackson, Amy Hondronicols, and Sarah Phillips were at the perfect distance from my field to help me stay real and stay interested in my project. Stephanie Collins is as reliable as a friend could be. I am grateful for every coffee, text message and cottage weekend we have shared. Finally, Evelyn McMullen and Iryna Ivanova listened and listened and listened until I began to hear myself.

Friends in Hay River like Sophie Call, Patrick Poisson, Lisa Ruggles, and Trisha Rhymes were supportive in all that I was up to while in the North. Ken Latour facilitated much of this work by allowing me to work with students at Aurora College and by having extensive discussions about what anthropology and life might be about. Finally, the ‘jazzercisers’ were a wonderful group of women who humored my passion for pop music and group fitness. Many of them are friends. Many were willing to help me in any way they could.

One of the highlights of PhD process has been teaching the gifted undergraduates at the University of Toronto. In my final year of writing, students in ANT365, *Native America and the State*, and ANT353, *The Politics of Indigeneity*, were astute interlocutors who forced me to be clear in my thinking. I benefitted tremendously from the editorial help of three talented students who will most certainly end up with their own graduate degrees in anthropology. Thank you to Melissa Hope, Rachel Levine and Tenley Gilmore.

My family has proven to be an endless well of care and support. In particular, my sister Ashton Osmak’s unexplained and unwavering confidence in my abilities is genuinely appreciated. My grandmother Luba Osmak’s kind words and votes of confidence were easy to take to heart because they are always delivered with such intensity and sincerity. My mother, Janice Bell, has contributed to this work in countless ways. Practical things like dog sitting, laundry doing and air mile contributions aside, my mother has done everything in her power to see this through to the finish line. Most importantly, she encouraged consistent hard work and never doubted my capabilities. She made certain I became ‘the boss of my own self’ and pursued the things that were best for me.

Lastly, and most importantly, field work only works because people very generously agree to talk to you and include you in their lives. I am sincerely indebted to the people whose stories I tell here. For their privacy, I don’t name them but they doubt know who they are. I wish I could offer them more than my thanks. Not only were they insightful, but they made me laugh and taught me to lighten up.

Funding for this project was generously provided through the School of Graduate Studies’ Edward W. Nuffield Graduate Fellowship, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada’s Northern Scientific Training Program, and the province of Ontario’s Graduate Scholar Program.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	iv
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
1 Diamonds as Development: Suffering for Opportunity in the Canadian North.....	1
1.1 From Suffering to Opportunity	2
1.2 Chronotopic Constraint: Tracing Mining’s Effects	6
1.3 Telling Diamond Stories: From Single Commodity to Discursive Fields	8
1.4 Relational Approaches to Ethnicity & Indigeneity	11
1.5 The Center of the Field: (Re)locating Hay River.....	14
1.6 In search of diamond opportunities.....	24
1.7 Authenticity in an Industrialized North	27
1.8 Mining Opportunities.....	30
1.9 Researcher Locations	35
1.10Conclusion	37
2 The Production of Race, Locality and State in the Northwest Territories: Hope or Destiny?.	39
2.1 Crossings: An introduction	39
2.2 Destiny Comes and Goes	43
2.3 Canadian Stories: Merchant Capital and the Making of Difference 1670-1850	44
2.4 In Search of Hope: The Race of Uneven Development Between 1850 and 1900	50
2.5 Making and Breaking ‘Treaty’ Indians: Enclosure of The Great Slave Lake Region 1900-1950	57
2.6 Possible Political Worlds: (Re)Making Land Treaties in the Great Slave Lake Region 1970-1990	65
2.7 Modernity, Mobility and Morality: 1990-Present.....	69

2.8	Conclusion	71
3	Ethical Object, Ethical Nation: The Global and Local Context of Canadian Diamonds	74
3.1	Introduction	74
3.2	Defining Diamonds' Fifth 'C'	75
3.3	Diamonds 101	77
3.4	Telling Diamond Stories: Arctic and African Imaginaries	79
3.5	Pure Ice: The Races and Scales of a Global Commodity	81
3.6	A New Economy, A New Lifestyle?	90
3.7	Conclusion	98
4	"That's Not the Real Hay River!": Authenticity, Authority and Canadian Political Economy	100
4.1	"I am probably not what you are looking for"	100
4.2	David and Cindy: Moving In, Moving Up, Moving On	104
4.3	Billy and the Eastern Reserve Army of Labour	105
4.4	Grateful Gary: How Sub-Contracts Deflate Wages and Keep Housing Costs High	107
4.5	Michelle: "Forget the future!"	109
4.6	Marion: Uneven Conditions of Care Work	110
4.7	"We became servants, but we were well-treated"	111
4.8	Chris: Why 'Here' Can Never Be Home	113
4.9	Conclusion: On Authenticity and Authority	114
5	Turning Diamonds into Development: The Dialectic of Suffering & Opportunity	118
5.1	Introduction	118
5.2	Picturing Northern Poverty: Representation, Problematization and Structures of Expectation in Canadian Public Culture	122
5.3	The Immediacy of Unmarked Suffering	132
5.4	Rendering Suffering/Opportunity Technical I: Tools of the Trade	135
5.5	Rendering Suffering/Opportunity Technical II: Communities and Diamonds	139

5.6 Conclusion: On Having Something to Say on Suffering	144
6 Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideology and Vocational Training in Canada’s Diamond Basin.....	147
6.1 Introduction.....	147
6.2 “A Long Way to Go”: The Problematization of Rural Underemployment in the NWT	149
6.3 Neoliberalizing Northern Education: The Case of the Resource Training Circle	152
6.4 Course Design and Delivery	156
6.5 It’s all about attitude! Responsibilizing bodies and minds	159
6.6 Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideologies in Northern Vocational Training	167
6.7 Phase I: Regulating the Talking-Self	170
6.8 Phase II: Flipping the Script and Missing the Point	176
6.9 Conclusion: When the Road Doesn’t Reach the Destination	178
7 Conclusion: What Ought to be Done	180
7.1 Introduction.....	180
7.2 “Nothing but problems” and Canadian Multicultural Nationalism	182
7.3 Technically speaking	186
7.4 Politics without Guarantees	190
Bibliography	193
Copyright Acknowledgements.....	207

List of Tables

Table 1: Names and Brief Histories of Northern Canadian Diamond Mines	85
Table 2: Measured variables in socio-economic impact assessments.....	141
Table 3: Overview of Underground Mine Training Program.....	157

List of Figures

Figure 1: Hay River town sign, Author, 2008	15
Figure 2: High Rise and Inukshuk, Hay River, NT, Author, 2009	16
Figure 3: Map of Hay River, Avalon Travel, 2007.....	17
Figure 4: Rusting Tug Boat in Hay River, NWT, Photo by Author 2009	40
Figure 5: Map of the numbered Treaties of Canada	56
Figure 6: Map showing the Territory ceded under Treaty 8,	61
Figure 7: Flag on Franklin Avenue, Yellowknife, NT, Author, 2008	91
Figure 8: Museum display of how diamonds are formed and harvested.	93
Figure 9: First panel in a historical timeline of the city of Yellowknife.....	94

1 Diamonds as Development: Suffering for Opportunity in the Canadian North

Since 2002, I have lived and worked, on and off, in parts of the circumpolar North America that are in close proximity to large-scale mining projects (first diamonds in Canada, then copper and gold in Alaska, now back in Canada). At the same time, these are places where evidence of differentially distributed social harm is apparent. Northern rural populations have, on average, lower life expectancies and live on lower household incomes than their fellow southern citizens. Given this background, I am often asked: “Is mining good or bad for Aboriginal people?” Mining’s possible ‘goodness’ generally indexes imagined jobs and business contract opportunities. Natural resource development’s ‘badness’ stems from concerns about loss of ‘tradition’, destruction of the environment, and the dislocation of existing social relations.

Thus, mining, and the industrialization of the circumpolar world more generally, are often portrayed as either straightforward losses of local traditions and culture, or gains couched in terms of modernization and development. These polarized positions came to the fore in local and national debates in the mid-1990s when diamondiferous deposits were confirmed under a patch of tundra in Canada’s Northwest Territories. With two industrial mines coming online by the early 2000s, natural resources in general, and diamonds in particular, were discussed as either a cure to diminish Aboriginal poverty, or as a curse that would extend the history of colonialism and exploitation. What the curse/cure debates overlook are the intricate ways in which the people most directly affected by mining projects, both Aboriginal and not, orient to the promises, fulfilled and not, of resource development, and how, in turn, these promises shape what kinds of imagined futures are possible. Through fieldwork in urbanizing communities in the Northwest Territories, I illustrate how the curse/cure dichotomy obscures the myriad ways that local, national and international subjects have worked within and against the currents of industrial development over the last century.

This dissertation loosely addresses the ‘is mining good or bad?’ question, but moves beyond it to investigate all that such a question implies. In part, I address this question at face value,

specifically as it relates to questions of training and work, because as a former teacher in the region I was surprised by the narrow educational choices northern citizens were offered compared to non-northern Canadians. I wanted to know how, if and by whom new education and training opportunities were being accessed. To these ends, a large part of my work was following the delivery of the most widely publicized and celebrated state-industry initiative in Aboriginal employment in Canada. The program aimed to place Aboriginal residents in high paying jobs in the diamond industry. Three of the program's participants, David, Destiny and Ruth, animate the dissertation's arguments. I will introduce them in a moment.

Over the course of researching and writing, I became clear that directly addressing the issue of mining's ability to provide opportunities in the form of work and training were only part of my work. I began to see the importance of piecing together a narrative that necessarily unraveled the 'good or bad' question. I needed to make strange, if you will, the viewing of social harm through the prism of diamonds (or any resource for that matter). I was concerned with situating and broadening the terms of debate with respect to natural resource extraction in northern Canada. Essentially, I wanted to investigate why these two things (mining and indigenous life) get pulled into this kind of question. Why now? Through ethnography and history, *Diamonds as Development: Suffering for Opportunity in the Canadian North* illustrates the limits and possibilities of wedding these concerns together. Specifically, I argue that the configuration of diamonds-as-development takes the contradiction of unequal distribution of social harm in a liberal-settler society like Canada and renders it productive. The discursive demands of rural resource development create what I call the 'dialectic of suffering and opportunity'. While racialized socio-economic inequality enables development interventions by the state, industry and indigenous para-state actors, these same signs of suffering threaten to delegitimize these same institutions and processes. Through the diamonds-as-development paradigm, natural resource extraction is legitimized even while it is threatened to be undermined. Allow me to elaborate what I mean ethnographically.

1.1 From Suffering to Opportunity

Over the winter holidays of 2008, I was home in Toronto on a break from the 'field' (the 'field' meaning the NWT). I was hurriedly holiday shopping at a local mall when I realized respite from

dissertation-work could not be counted on. I was in a retail chain jewelry store looking for a gift for a confirmation I was attending when I went back north. As the salesman tried to help me choose from a rotating Plexiglas cabinet of gold crosses, I mentioned I was buying the gift to take back to the Northwest Territories. His eyes grew wide with excitement, “we have your diamonds!” he said, shuttling me away from the case of golden crosses to the middle of the store. In a frameless glass box, loose piles of sparkling stones slept on black velvet. In the background, the iconic red maple leaf knit together two words printed in bold white letters: CANADIAN DIAMONDS.

“Hmm. Yes. The diamonds...”, I hesitated.

Sensing my skepticism, he interjected, “Are you an environmentalist or something?”

As a woman social scientist interested in mining, I was used to being under suspicion of being a ‘greenie’, “No, it’s just that I write about the social impacts of the resource development in the north, and, well...”

“Yeah, well and what?” Now his tone was hurried and abrupt. He continued, “I hear there’s nothing but problems up there. The diamond industry makes a lot of jobs for the Native people. What’s wrong with that?”

The phrase “nothing but problems” is a casual, albeit powerful, quality of life assessment. Such assessments evoke ideas about human suffering that equate ethnicity (in this case Nativeness) with a host of ambiguous social problems. It then makes sense of these problems by bracketing them off and understanding them as in the process of resolution. The resolution in progress, or said differently, the future which we are to orient Others to, is wage work in the primary sector.

Quality of life assessments like “nothing but problems” suffused almost all accounts of, and interactions about, the north that I have had over the last ten years. I am often asked about addictions, isolation, suicide, “cultural loss” and other markers of deteriorating life. “What a tragedy” some say, or “that must be tough” or “it makes sense that you work there because there are so many problems.” As I elaborate in chapter five, national headlines and news stories often

confirm an overall sense of failure in the quality of life – or the ability of local people to craft a ‘good life’ – north of the 60th parallel. But failure, as Povinelli (2011) reminds us, “is not an ideal form floating outside social space. Failure is instead a socially mediated term for assessing the social world” (p.23). In the case of diamond development, ‘failure’ achieves very important ends.

Concern over the quality of life of Others (e.g. “nothing but problems”) is not just a matter of talk and/or representation. Cultural representations of human suffering shape how issues of inequality will (or will not) be addressed (Kleinman, Das & Lock, 1997).¹ Contemporary representations of suffering and failure in Canada must be understood as being part of a longer public concern for indigenous ‘Others.’ As scholars such as Cowlshaw (2003) and Povinelli (2008) have made clear, liberal diasporic states² like Canada, New Zealand, and Australia often consider the conditions of their national indigenous populations as a “major touchstone in [their] moral standing in international arenas” (Cowlshaw, 2003: 103). A distinctive element of Canadian national identity is the worry about Aboriginal populations and their injuries. This concern involves not only Aboriginal people, but non-Aboriginal citizens as well. These concerns and angst ensure that crucial meanings of Canadianness and Aboriginality “exist in fraught and unstable relation to each other” (Cowlshaw, 2003:106).

Ultimately, public concerns become the programs and policies that affect people’s day-to-day lives, for better or for worse. They become the ethical foundation of what Tania Li (2007) calls “the will to improve”. In her book of the same title, Li looks at schemes for improvement directed at rural populations in Indonesia. Her efforts are not aimed at producing an analysis that can improve improvement strategies; rather, she charts a course to understand the rationale of improvement schemes, what they aim to do and their effects as they intersect with broader

¹Representations of suffering are, in a sense, translations. They aim to take the multiple and complicated relationships, processes and dynamics that work to create the ‘everyday,’ and then they represent them in pieces and parts (Kleinman & Kleinman, 1997).

² Following Povinelli (2002), liberal diaspora is meant to “gesture at the colonial and postcolonial subjective, institutional, and discursive identifications, dispersions and elaborations of the enlightenment idea that society should be organized on the basis of rational, mutual understanding” (6). Liberal diasporic states include Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand as examples.

processes. Similarly, this dissertation does not aim to elaborate how natural resources can improve the human condition in Canada's north. Rather, I elaborate the political economy of contemporary improvement schemes and chronicle the effects of natural resources as development both for the people who are the targets of these schemes, notably the indigenous under and unemployed, but also for those left outside of their scope, chiefly the non-indigenous working class.

According to Li (2007) the will to improve requires two key practices to translate ethical aspirations into explicit programs. The first is 'problematization', meaning identifying deficiencies to be remedied. In order for diamonds to be understood as fostering 'development,' Northern Canada, and more specifically, its indigenous population, must be deemed 'underdeveloped.' Part of the work of this dissertation is investigating the *problematization* of 'the north,' and more specifically, rural poverty. In chapter five, I show how issues of larger structural inequalities are commonly framed as deficiencies in individual employment and/or mental health. In the process, these deficiencies are racialized as being particularly 'Aboriginal.' This sets the stage for interventions (job training programs, individual counseling) which bolster support for benevolent industrial development. I provide an ethnographic example of one such program in chapter six.

When a range of complex social and historical issues are reframed as simply a matter of employment – or, less simply, as a matter of failed mental states – they anticipate specific, limited, and limiting types of interventions. The most common are those that either a) facilitate individual access to wage work in the primary sector (e.g. job training programs and priority employment regulations) or b) provide mental health services (individual counseling). In some cases, like the pre-requisite course for vocational certifications at the heart of chapter six, they involve both.

The second key practice needed to translate ethical aspirations into explicit programs is what Rose (1999), calls 'rendering technical' (Foucault, 1991; Dean, 1999; Ferguson, 1999; Li, 2007). Rendering technical involves a set of practices concerned with representing "the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specifiable limits and particular characteristics...defining boundaries, rendering that within them visible, assembling information about that which is

included in devising techniques to mobilize the forces and entities revealed” (Rose as summarized in Li, 2007, p. 7).

In chapter five, *Turning Diamonds into Development: The Dialectic of Suffering & Opportunity*, I examine the two key practices identified by Li. I explore the narration of the north in Canadian public culture. I analyze nationally circulated concerns over northern Indigenous life to first describe the *problematization* of ‘the north’, and more specifically rural poverty. Next, looking at the chief state-industry instruments used to assess indigenous quality of life, and the ‘ethics’ of mining more generally, I examine how the issue of rural poverty is *rendered technical* (Foucault, 1991; Dean, 1999; Ferguson 1999; Li 2007) in relation to natural resource projects. The problematization of northern poverty, and the ways in which it is rendered technical, is a process that inflects and inflicts what we might call chronotopic constraint. It places both spatial and temporal limits on how we understand Canadian resource projects.

1.2 Chronotopic Constraint: Tracing Mining’s Effects

A chronotope involves the construction of space and time in and through texts in such a way that is never unmediated or natural but always ideological and historically specific (Bakhtin, 1981). In the case of Canadian resource politics, this involves the constitution of racialized subjects and landscapes, as race has been central to the division of both property and labour. Chronotopic constraint in this case refers to two issues. On the one hand, it refers to the ways in which the structures of expectation of resource extraction invite a relatively limited historical understanding of (Canadian) capitalism in general and resource exploitation in particular. On the other, chronotopic constraint refers to the ways in which these structures of expectation place spatial limits on where we understand these projects to have effects. These three dimensional constraints are what I am arguing make the issues that concern national publics (resource wealth, indigenous poverty) harder rather than easier to understand.

The first analytic constraint is *spatial*. Northern development schemes (notably natural resource development) presuppose that *natural resource extraction exclusively concerns the immediate population*. This forecloses the possibility of holding the local, national, regional and global in the same analytic frame. As I discuss in chapters two and four, industrial mining relies on

transnational formations of capital and labour. In fact, relations between existing populations and in-migrants are essential to understanding social organization in the area.

The second analytic constraint is *temporal*. Diamonds-as-development presupposes that *individual resource projects are appropriate units of analyses*, or said differently; individual mining companies are the most relevant targets of scrutiny. This forecloses a deep, contextually specific reading of the embeddedness of single projects in a much longer history of capitalist transformation in the area. It makes readings of northern resource developments, as Piper notes, “all too often historically blind”, as if the North were “a blank canvas on which only current and future development will leave its mark” (2009: 2). The Great Slave Lake, otherwise known as ‘the diamond basin’, is not unfamiliar with resource extraction. The list of primary commodities that have left the Northwest Territories for global markets is long: fur (1800-1930), oil (1920-present), uranium (1930-1950), gold (1930-2000), fish (1940-1950) lead and zinc (1950-1990) and now diamonds (2000-present) among others.

The third analytic constraint is *racial/ethnic*. Northern development discourse presupposes that *indigeneity is outside of history*, thus foreclosing an understanding of the making and unmaking of communities in relation to history and political economy. As Eric Wolf suggests, it is crucial to begin our enquiry by understanding “[local] communities as outcomes and determinants of historical processes; intimately connected with changes in the wider political and economic field” (2001: 161). Using ethnographic and archival data, chapter two chronicles the role of racial categories of personhood in the harnessing of diverse human energies to secure profits from the literal capture of nature in the Great Slave Lake Basin. It is a history of the uneasy relationship between race/ethnicity, citizenship and state-capital formation in the Northwest Territories. Its aim is to show, through ethnography and history, the limits of analytically using indigeneity as an a priori, apolitical category of belonging.

There is a final constraint which is much more difficult to narrate and therefore I hesitate to formally name it. Perhaps it can be summarized as affective constraint. Neither the concept of ‘suffering,’ nor the concept of ‘opportunity,’ wholly captures the making of everyday life in the Northwest Territories. My interlocutors certainly face challenges in their day-to-day efforts to get by. None, however, experience distress in the catastrophic types of ways elaborated in

national public culture (see chapter five). Even those with objective measures of “nothing but problems” (alcohol use, insecure housing and domestic violence) experience suffering in rather ordinary and routine ways, as these elements have structured the better part of their life trajectories. The objective for me is not simply to describe these experiences of everyday difficulties, but rather to try to explain how everyday obstacles and distress articulate within and against larger forms of difference and inequality in order to show how relations of inequality are reproduced in part through routinization of violence (Das, 2007).

1.3 Telling Diamond Stories: From Single Commodity to Discursive Fields

Perhaps more than any other mineral, diamonds have attracted the attention of many storytellers (Falls, 2005, 2011). It might seem, at first blush, that this is another diamond story. My hope is that it is and isn't. Yet, despite a literature that suggests a focus on a single commodity can be productive,³ as I worked through the research process, I found myself unable to stay uniquely focused on telling a diamond story. Driven by a desire to work beyond the constraints I outlined in the last section, I found I had to un-anchor diamonds from their single-commodity setting, and put their development into historical material relation with other types of local and global political economic shifts. What follows is not a story about diamonds-as-object. Rather, diamonds are the prism through which the necessary relations of social reproduction are made visible. Throughout the dissertation, the gems come in and out of focus to allow a wider range of relations to become visible.

Gemstone quality diamonds are distinguished from other stones by the way in which they refract light. Specifically, they are known for the slowness with which light passes through them. Light travels at 186 000 miles per second in a vacuum. Due to their atomic density, light passes through a diamond at about half that speed. As light travels through a diamond it is dispersed.

³ It is true that an anthropological focus on single commodities provides windows into the large-scale processes affecting peoples' lives (Haugerud, Stone and Little, 2000). Marxian commodity analyses have detailed the particular ways in which the relations of commodity production and consumption reinforce, reshape, and reproduce class differences. From sugar (Mintz, 1985), to coffee (Roseberry, 1996), to gold (Aiyer, 2004) to tuna (Bestor 2004), single commodity studies have been useful in analyzing articulations of the global and the local and in documenting their consequences.

Dispersion is the scientific term for the breaking up of white light into its spectral colors so that they are individually visible to the human eye.

Taking cues from the physical properties of the diamond, I shine an investigative light on resource extraction in Northern Canada. Ethnographic and historical methods slow down that light in such a way that makes visible the parts (race, culture, class, capital, property, labour, mobility, belonging) of the whole of social reproduction. In disentangling these threads, we see more clearly their individual qualities, but also their important relations to each other.

When white light breaks into spectral colors, we perceive each color as an isolated individual thing in the world. Nevertheless, each color remains a relation. We perceive them in relation to one another and as a consequence of the qualities of the stones through which they pass (e.g. cut and clarity), and in relation to the environments in which they are perceived (e.g. lighting). The lesson I take from diamonds then, is that the things we perceive as objects are in fact made up of related parts, which are always in motion and dependant on their social-material contexts. This is, of course, an extended metaphor for dialectics – the theoretical approach that informs my work.

According to Ollman (2003), “dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the common sense notion of ‘thing’ (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notions of ‘process’ (which contains its history and possible futures) and ‘relation’ (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations)” (2003: 13). At every possible juncture, I have tried to favour relations over objects. In privileging relations over discrete objects, conditions, or groups of people, methodological space is made for those movements of populations essential to social reproduction under changing modes of capitalism (Ollman, 2003).

Marxist social scientists believe that the capitalist mode of production is constituted by constant struggles over how to organize and use both labor and nature. Labor and nature are the primary means through which surplus value is produced. The over-exploitation of labor and /nature yields sets of antagonisms. These social antagonisms, or struggles, are what produce historical change. A key piece of dialectical social science is the search for contradictions. Contradictions are

elements in a system whose relationships are necessary to one another but inherently at odds, eventually leading to crisis, fracture and collapse.

The contradiction identified by my work, and which I explore throughout the dissertation, is the relationship between assessments of indigenous life and natural resource extraction. I argue that, what I am calling the dialectic of suffering and opportunity sustains resource development even as it threatens to undermine it. I set my work against two existing anthropological studies of Canadian diamond development. Bielawski (2003) and Gibson (2008) have written thorough accounts of different aspects of northern diamond development. Bielawski focused on industry-community negotiations before development, and Gibson documented Aboriginal workers' experiences in the mines. What these two pieces share, and what they have in common with most social science directed towards public policy, is their investigation of how diamond development impacts local people. This framing of the question positions natural resource development and the kinds of changes it brings as things that are external to the people (i.e., what happens *to* them). Where my approach diverges is in its insistence that change is always a part of what things are, (even things like 'local' populations) and change happens both within and against existing sets of social relations (Dombrowski, 2001).

If the point is to understand diamonds not as an object, but rather as a means to see sets of relations, how then does one organize the research process? What becomes relevant data? My focus hereafter is on diamonds as a discursive field. Foucault (1977/1984) developed the concept of the discursive field as part of his attempt to understand the relationship between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power. Discursive fields give meaning to and organize social institutions and processes. They contain a number of competing and contradictory discourses with varying degrees of power. Diamonds are a discursive field in that they give meaning to ideas about property, ownership, belonging, the state, capital, citizens and so on. To treat diamonds as a discursive field is to not simply focus on the production of diamonds (e.g. standing in the mines and observing the labour process). The discursive field of diamonds cannot be located in a single space (a town, a mine). Rather, multiple spaces and scales of enquiry needed to be brought together to get a handle on how natural resource extraction works in the way that it does. This involved a focus on four key elements: 1) Canadian public culture, 2)

industry discourse, 3) global political economy (past and present) and 4) everyday life in a resource town.

1.4 Relational Approaches to Ethnicity & Indigeneity

Where my decision to take a relational approach is most visible, is in the way in which I address questions of ethnicity and Indigeneity. The appearance of state sanctioned ethnic categories alongside an emphasis on employment opportunities in Northern resource policy is where I began my enquiry⁴. Social scientific studies carried out in the diamond basin, and other areas marked Indigenous in Canada, suffer from what Brubaker (2004) calls “groupism” that is, the tendency to take bounded groups as fundamental units of analysis, and basic constituents of the social world (p.2; see also Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:228). Given Canada’s particular investment in ethnic and linguistic difference as terrains for the construction of social justice, there is a vast amount of research which takes minority “communities” as given (in the case of francophones see Bouchard et al. 2006; Landry & Beaudin 2003; Landry & Bourhis 1997; for examples among Aboriginal populations see Dorais 1994, 1996, 2005; Darnell 2004; 2006). Yet seldom mentioned are the class influences and processes that underlie much of the ethnic/ethnolinguistic inequalities involved (Heller, 2011, Rolf, 1999, Ali & Grabb, 1998, Li, 1992, 2000). With this in mind, my project was designed to reject identities and categories as ontologically given (Cooper, 2005) and instead aimed to account for how categories of personhood get tied to political economy. The approach taken in this dissertation is drawn from Brubaker’s (2004) “ethnicity without groups” model. As he explains in his introduction,

⁴ The institutionalization of certain ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic categories in Canada has a long history. The modernizing ideology of the nation as a linguistically and culturally homogeneous group prompted the early Canadian state to reject self-assertion from ethno-cultural and ethno-linguistic minority social movements aimed at contesting their subordination in Canada’s “vertical mosaic” (Porter 1965). Yet, so pervasive are nationalist ideas, French Canada (in the 1960’s) and to a lesser extent Aboriginal groups (in the 1970’s) reconfigured their relationship to the dominant national identity mainly through state sanctioned institutions (schools, health care, legal systems), preserving the state’s legitimizing (hegemonic) discourse by enacting the national ideology on which it is based (Heller 2002, 2003, 2005; Heller & Labrie 2003; Heller & Boutet 2006; Patrick 2007). Relying on notions of fixed boundaries between languages, cultures and identities, and relative homogeneity within them, these movements have reproduced locally the very processes that brought them into being as “minority” groups in the first place (Duchêne & Heller 2007; Jaffe 2007; Phillips 2000). Recognition of this process has raised substantial debates in the literature and left unclear the extent to which these social movements succeed in producing alternative ideological or political grounds for resistance, or whether they simply re-arrange class inequalities along new lines (see debate in Hill 2002; Duchêne & Heller 2007; Heller 2011).

Bounded and solidary groups are one modality of ethnicity (and of social organization more generally). But they are only one modality. “Groupness” is a variable, not a constant; it cannot be pre-supposed. It varies not only across putative groups, but within them; it may wax and wane over time, peaking during exceptional- but unsustainable- moments of collective effervescence. Ethnicity does not require groupness. It works not only, or even especially, in and through bounded groups, but in and through categories, schemas, encounters, identifications, languages, stories, institutions, organizations and events. The study of ethnicity- even the study of ethnic conflict- should not, in short, be reduced to, or even centered on the study of ethnic groups (p.3-4)

In the case of Canadian diamond exploitation, both Bielawski’s and Gibson’s accounts favor a more traditional modernist approach which has fallen out of fashion in almost all contexts (for theorizing beyond such conceptions see Stoll, 2011, Starn, 2010, Li, 2010). The modernist approach takes up ethnic groups as bounded wholes erasing the kinds of social relations which bring into being the ethnopolitical entrepreneurs who are often at the center of anthropological accounts. This isn’t to suggest that ethnic sentiments aren’t authentic, or can’t be harnessed to try and make claims for basic rights like housing and safe drinking water. Nevertheless, I think it is worthwhile to raise the question: how does ethnicity/ Indigeneity work and for whom? Tania Li’s (2003, 2010) work on the role of indigeneity in the management of dispossession under capitalism in Indonesia provides an exceptional model of how to proceed analytically away from the ‘groupism’ that Brubaker describes.

Drawing on Hall (1996), Li suggests, it is useful to think of Indigeneity, or any kind of ethnic identity, as a position/positioning which is subject to the constant play of history, culture and power. Like everyone, ethnic minorities are subjected to the same kinds (or even more) political economic constraints which shape what types of political projects can and cannot be advanced. It is imperative then, to work at multiple levels of abstraction to produce a nuanced account of how and why things come to be such as they are. This isn’t to discount “groups”, nor does it entail an ontological or methodological individualism. To be sure, “the alternative to the substantialist idiom of bounded groups is not an idiom of individual choice, but rather (as Bourdieu never tired of emphasizing) a relational, processual, and dynamic analytical language” (Brubaker, 2004, p. 3). To these ends, the next chapter (chapter two) *The Production of Race, Locality and State in the Northwest Territories: Hope or Destiny?*, I look at how the intersection of race, locality and

class have always been unstable and track how “communities” have been produced and reconfigured both within and against resource imperatives.

The chapter picks up on the story of Destiny, a young Dene woman who enrolls in the training program described in chapter seven. As a member of the local Aboriginal band (or First Nation), Destiny is an example of those imagined to benefit from resource extraction development. Her situation remains steadily precarious despite her success in the program. Weaving in the history of capital in the region, I illustrate how resource extraction in Northern Canada simultaneously depends on and produces incommensurate forms of locality, mobility and racialized suffering.

To be clear, I am not seeking to excise “ethnic groups” from Canadian studies (I couldn’t if I tried), rather I am hoping to open up ways of understanding the multiple ways in which ethnicity works. In a multi-cultural context, this approach seems particularly necessary. These are by no means novel ideas or concepts. Eric Wolf (2001) made clear that “in place of separate, static, clearly bounded units...we must now deal with fields of relationships within which cultural sets are put together and dismantled” (p. 314; see also Wolf, 1999, Hobsbawm, 1990). Anthropologists working from a historical-material perspective have pursued such lines of enquiry (for North American examples see Heller, 2011, Biolsi 2007, Dombrowski 2001, Sider 2003; for Indonesia see Li, 2000, and New Zealand see Rata, 2010).⁵ The limits of ethno-national claims in liberal democratic societies are becoming too acute to ignore, perhaps explaining why such an approach is gaining prominence (Starn 2010, Cattelino 2010).

In the context of North American state-indigenous relations, Gerald Sider’s work on the Lumbee and Tuscarora of North Carolina (2003a) and on the fisheries of Newfoundland (2003b) provided the vocabulary for understanding the ways in which states simultaneously seek to assimilate and differentiate its citizenry. Rather than taken for granted cultural distance, the term

⁵ In the particular case of resource economies, Kirk Dombrowski’s (2001) work in Southeast Alaska provided an excellent example of how economic change produces new forms of internal differentiation. His concept of the “praxis of Indigenism” (2008) aptly illustrated how the U.S government used the notion of “indigenous” to alter its own relationships to “nonindigenous” national populations in order to simultaneously improve market conditions for the exploitations of natural resources (timber) and to reduce the responsibilities of the welfare state.

‘differentiation’ turns us towards process with a simultaneous focus on fractures and contradictions, rather than strictly believing in existing coherence (Sider and Smith 1997:10). Differentiation can be imposed or chosen. In the chapter that follows I provide examples of both.

Historical material anthropology has sought to hold “culture and history in relation to one another in the context of a reflection on the political economy of uneven development,” (Roseberry 1994:ix; Wolf 1982; Hobsbawm 1959). In lieu of a traditional ethnohistory of the Diamond Basin (Krech III, 1984), specifically of the Slavey-Dene, Beaver (Dane-zaa) or Métis people of the Hay and Peace River regions or the Chipewyan and Cree people of the eastern South Slave Lake and River regions, the next chapter offers an account of the relationship between racial categories of personhood and political economy. This is because I am mindful of postcolonial scholars’ criticisms that productions of history which constitute a group as a ‘them’ are types of ‘orientalisms’ that tell us as much or more about their producers as they do about the people, places and times being written about (Guha, 1988; Spivak, 1988). Finally, and perhaps most critically, none of the people in this region lived in isolation from each other. As McCormack (2010) has explained, “to speak of ‘the Cree’ for example, is problematic. Such artificial analytic boundaries imply an idealized homogeneity that misrepresents real-life complexity, cultural and otherwise” (16). To these ends, I narrate this dissertation for the pluri-ethnic, urbanizing community of Hay River. The town and its residents both inform and encapsulate the dissertation’s larger arguments.

1.5 The Center of the Field: (Re)locating Hay River

The work I present here is based in part on 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Canada’s diamond basin and includes direct observation of job training and recruitment efforts primarily in the transportation town of Hay River, but also in the capital city of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife. Hay River is located about 400km from the diamond mines. Although a handful of communities are physically closer to the fly-in only mines, Hay River is broadly considered to be in the ‘diamond basin’. In the early 2000s’, the existing town sign was taken down and the town logo was updated with a diamond. Because of its distance from the mines, it could be argued that it’s not the best place to study natural resource extraction. In this section, I make the opposite case. I show how a multi-ethnic urbanizing town is particularly revealing of how resource extraction shapes and is shaped by local history, power and culture. I introduce three residents,

David, Ruth and Destiny who were looking for work in the diamond industry in 2008 when I began my research. Their stories are told across the dissertation, as their trajectories help to show how and why ‘diamonds as development’ is ill configured.



Figure 1: Hay River town sign, Author, 2008

Two structures mark the center of a sub-arctic transportation town on the south shore of the Great Slave Lake in Canada’s Northwest Territories (Hay River, population 4000). The first is an eight foot inukshuk. The second is the ‘tallest residential building’ in the Territory, the Mackenzie Place High Rise (see figure 2). Inukshuit are stone cairns once used as navigational markers on arctic landscapes that otherwise held few distinctive features. They often symbolize permanent connection to place, landscape intimacy, and reference Canada’s northernmost ethno-cultural group: the Inuit. The High Rise, with its broken windows and its frequent visits from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, represents problems attributed to frontier economies; poverty, transience, addiction, and crime. At the same time, the High Rise is often the first stop for those who move into town to look for work. For most of the 2000s, the region has been in a ‘boom’ cycle of resource extraction (of diamonds) and exploration (for lead, zinc, tungsten and others). The High Rise houses multiple aspirations for finding new futures, perhaps even fortune.

Over the course of my year in the Northwest Territories, Hay River in general and the High Rise in particular became my personal center for knowing about everyday northern life, Canadian class dynamics, processes of signification, and relations of inequality that were and are indeed very real. From the perspective of my eighth floor apartment, and through my interactions with

High Risers, I had a distinct vantage point from which crucial components of Canadian political economy, present and past, came into view. It is a place from which the story of the evolving Canadian state takes a decidedly different form than the master narratives which divide Aboriginal from not, traditional from modern, environment from development.



Figure 2: High Rise and Inukshuk, Hay River, NT, Author, 2009

I anchored this introduction with the image and the high rise/ Inukshuk because it at once answers and unravels the question ‘is mining as development a means of addressing social harm?’ Immediately, we see that ‘development’ projects and resource ambitions have been there before. I want it to be clear that the relationship between political economy and categories of personhood have a longer history that necessarily includes more elements than the single project, and a single ethnic concern, or a single town. While extractive capital involves ‘northernness’ and ‘Aboriginality’, it isn’t completely defined by these things. A history and tour of contemporary Hay River will flesh out what I mean here.

The High Rise is in the center of Hay River’s “New Town ” (figure 3). The Hay River divides the area into two main parts, ‘town’ and ‘the reserve.’ A second distinguishing feature of the landscape is a branch of the river – referred to as the West Channel – that parts from the Hay River and creates an island just off the lake’s shore. This area is known today as Vale Island or

as ‘Old Town’. The original Hay River settlement was on the east bank along the lake.⁶ Today, the population is concentrated on the west bank, away from the lake in ‘New Town.’

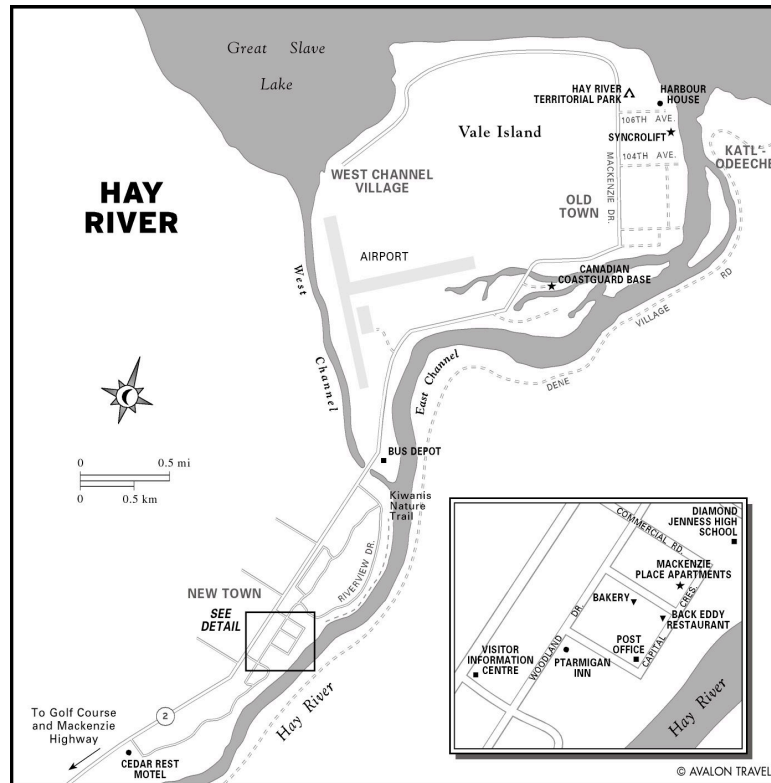


Figure 3: Map of Hay River, Avalon Travel, 2007

It is useful to understand the details of the growth of the Hay River settlement from east bank to Vale Island and then subsequently southwards to ‘New Town.’ Motivated by anticipated resource booms, several previous attempts by federal officials to relocate the town consistently failed. Rather than making ‘new’ Hay Rivers, the settlement antagonistically spread out, dividing people, places, and activities. The traces of these movements shed light on the industrialization of the sub arctic, which superseded the historically dominant fur trade after the 1920s, and significantly reshaped social and physical landscapes.

The fur trade (described at length in chapter two) provided the necessary pre-conditions for industrial mining in the Great Slave Lake region insofar as it established transportation networks

⁶ Now this region is referred to as ‘Old Indian Village’ or Dene Village. A small wooden Catholic church and graveyard are all that remain there today.

and labour processes that helped get resources in and out of the region. Before the late 1930s, the resources of the Northwest were accessible only by waterway. The major trade route included two portages at Fort Smith. A major part of the labour process involved procuring fuel for transport (fish for dog teams, wood for steam ships) and loading and unloading freight. Native and Métis populations were essential to these tasks. At Hay River, cording wood for fuel to sell to the Hudson's Bay Transportation Company had become part of many people's livelihood strategies. As wood sources on the east bank were depleted, the west bank began to be cleared. The HBC's main ship, the *SS Distributor* (which supplied all the goods to the trade posts up the Mackenzie River) began docking on the west bank for easier access to fuel sources.

The 1920s saw increased activity on the waterways as fur prices climbed, and mineral prospecting once again picked up. As Piper (2009) explains, the increased numbers of non Native trappers put a strain on the resource base. It became harder for local trappers to maintain livelihoods as certain diet staples (notably caribou) became scarce. What is more, the 1920s saw significant Native population decline due to multiple epidemics. As the *SS Distributor* travelled up the Mackenzie River, it spread influenza among many of the smaller trapping communities. Approximately one in ten people died in the summer of 1928, and certain communities, like Fort Providence to the east of Hay River, lost up to 20% of their population. Smaller settlements of less than 30 people were decimated altogether. These sites were some of the richest in terms of fishing potential and were later taken up by incoming industrial fishers. The dispossession and hardship of trapping families led to increased state interventions, notably mandatory schooling. Up to the 1920s, mandatory schooling was not enforced in the Northwest. By the 1930s, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began fining parents who did not comply with schooling legislation. At Hay River, the number of deaths was relatively small (under five). With this said, the transformations associated with industrialization had just begun.

Due to increased freighting demands in the region (particularly those associated with new uranium mining ventures on Great Bear Lake to the north) there was increased pressure by mining companies on the state to have permanent road and rail access to the region. Up to this point, goods came down the Mackenzie River and went east towards Fort Smith, then were portaged over land at Fort Fitzgerald and again transported by water to Fort McMurray. In the 1930s, a tractor trail was plowed from Grimshaw, Alberta, to Hay River. This provided direct

access to the new commercial center of Edmonton, and essentially cut out Fort Smith and the eastern communities from their key role in transportation. This set up the future history of Hay River as the ‘hub of the north.’

The new road was used for more than just goods. In-migrants began arriving in large numbers. Over-fishing of the Great Lakes in the central provinces of Canada, and increased difficulties associated with family farming in the prairies, paved the way for substantial in-migration to the Northwest. The new road, cleared land, and untapped fish stocks (at least by non-Aboriginal commercial standards) made Hay River a top choice for the underemployed or unemployed. Before the arrival of non-native commercial fishermen to the region, fish had been essential to both missionaries and fur producers. Fish was the major staple of both groups’ diets (Piper, 2009, p. 171-172). The Anglican Mission at Hay River was aptly named St. Peter’s after the patron saint of fish. Whereas in the late 1800s, fish was commonly described as being ‘gifted’ by ‘Indians’ to missionaries, in the 1920s it had become a commodity, with certain Native or Métis families specializing in fish production (including freezing, drying and smoking). When the mission school at Hay River grew substantially with support from the federal government after Treaty 8, a significant local market for fish was established. Through to the 1930s, St Peter’s mission purchased its fish from Métis and ‘Indian’ families. These groups found substantial demand for the product around the region, as lake fish are much more desirable in terms of taste than river fish (Piper, 2009, p. 172).

As discussed in chapter two, the arrival of non-Native fishermen with easier access to capital and equipment displaced some of the Native commercial fishing. It also created a market for Native wage labour. Many members of those communities, who had suffered substantial losses during the epidemics, arrived at Hay River to work in the growing fishing industry. The industry was set up on the west bank. By 1940, the state began to survey and sell lots on Vale Island. A federal day school was set up on the west bank, as the Anglican residential school had been relocated to a community in the Mackenzie Delta to the North.

The Hudson’s Bay Company moved to Vale Island in 1948, marking the end of the east bank’s commercial importance. New fishing families had higher incomes, and the HBC moved into more retailing and away from fur trading. The price of furs at this point was extremely low. To

make clear the rapidity of the transformation, in 1941 there were 15 whites recorded as living in Hay River. These would have been primarily missionaries and a pair of traders. By 1946, there were 33 whites on the east bank, and 324 white ‘residents’ and ‘900 transients’ on Vale Island. The population, which had held steadily at approximately 100, was now well over a thousand.

Between 1940 and 1960, people moved back and forth between both sides. Both whites and indigenous people lived on either side. Inter-racial marriage was common. Investment in infrastructure by the state was only directed to the west side as that was seen as the sight for making a ‘modern’ northern town. The structures on the east bank were increasingly in disrepair. In newspaper reports from that time, there were many public comments about ‘burning down the disease-sodden Indian village’.⁷ Tuberculosis was common at this time, and was believed to be an inherently Indian condition.

State investments between the 1940s and 1960s were not necessarily aimed at facilitating commercial fishing, although they did so inadvertently. As recent work that joins environmental and military history has shown (Farish & Lackenbauer, 2009; Lackenbauer & Farish, 2007) the Cold War gave northern Canada new kinds of military significance. In the High Arctic, the Distant Early Warning system (DEW line; a string of radar stations across northern Canada and Alaska) was built. In Hay River, an airstrip was built on Vale Island by the US military in the 1940s. This was part of the incomplete Canol (short for Canadian Oil) defense project of World War Two. The project was, in part, a pipeline from Norman Wells, NWT to Whitehorse, Yukon. A second pipeline was to run south to Alberta. The airstrip was built to assist with defense project constructions by allowing materials to be imported by air, thus avoiding having to wait for lake and river ice to melt for transportation. When military objectives were more or less abandoned or relocated by the US military in the 1950s due to cost issues and changed priorities, these same infrastructures allowed Hay River to grow as a ‘transportation hub’. By 1949, the tractor trail from Alberta had become more of a road with phone lines having been laid along trail and goods making it in and out in less time than ever before.

⁷ Tapwe (local newspaper), various issues between 1962-1972. Part of the collection at the Circumpolar Library at the University of Alberta.

The high-modernist urban planning that swept many parts of the globe during the middle decades of the 20th century (Scott, 2008) found its way to different arctic and sub arctic locales, Hay River being but one example. Farish and Lackenbauer (2009) have traced the connections between modernization theory and Cold War militarism in the communities of Inuvik (NWT) and Frobisher Bay (later renamed Iqaluit, NU). They explain how federal officials during these years “proposed ambitious urban models designed to simultaneously overcome the hostility of the northern environment and catapult native northerners into conditions of modern living” (p. 517).

Modern planning became the priority for Hay River after a 1963 flood damaged many of the homes and much of the infrastructure on Vale Island. During that time, new kinds of state planners (human geographers) were sent to study the region, and to help plan for a new town site (Zarchikoff, 1975). For the state, Vale Island was desirable for its industrial development potential. It was imagined as being a shipyard for increased mineral exploration and development, and not as a residential area.

Northern mining and mineral development found new vigor in 1958, with the election of a Conservative government. The new Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, had a ‘Northern Vision’, prioritizing transportation and communication access to the region for industrial development, which led to his government’s “Roads to Resources” policies (Isard, 2010). The plan was abandoned by the 1960s when Diefenbaker failed to be reelected during a financial crisis. His liberal successor reined in northern infrastructure expenses. Nevertheless, some of the Northern Vision initiatives made their mark on the region, notably the 1964 development of the Mackenzie Northern Rail line, which was intended to serve the new lead and zinc mining town of Pine Point, only 70km east of Hay River.

Under this new economic order, in which Hay River became an industrial hub, Vale Island residents were to be relocated to ‘New Town.’ Initially, new lots were offered to Vale Island residents as straight exchanges, however the cost of servicing new lots and taxes made them unaffordable to many residents. Essentially, the creation of ‘New Town’ divided the settler population by class position. ‘New Town’ was nicknamed ‘Snob Hill’ during those first decades, but little of this antagonism is known today. The reaction to the high cost of new lots, as well as

population growth, led to the creation of smaller, less expensive lots in 'New Town'. The handful of large landholders in town are settlers who acquired these lots upon original sale.

The 1963 flood had also damaged the settlements on the east bank (then called Indian Village). A small social housing development for Treaty Indians was meant to encourage all people to move to the west side. These homes proved to be unpopular, as they were small in size and not on the waterfront. The other major issue was that few couples were both 'Treaty' Indians and therefore did not qualify for subsidized housing.

By 1970, an aspiring photojournalist described Hay River this way,

Tugboats and barges, freight trains and bush planes, trucks and bulldozers. That's Hay River, Northwest Territories. Man's country. Transportation hub of the north. Doorway to the western Arctic. End of steel for the CN's Great Slave Railway. Beginning of the Mackenzie River's trans-shipment lifeline. Hustle and Bustle.

"Its also a town racked with the gaw-damdest growing pains," says mayor Don Stewart. We've grown up so fast from a little Indian village to an up and coming boom town we don't know which direction we are heading" (Tasky, 1971, p.np)

The development of 'New Town' was not a happy story of progress, nor were these natural growing pains. These were class-based conflicts, shot through with racial tensions, that were indicative of the capacity for everyday people to make a living in a region that was the object of interest of property holding elites (external and local). Newspapers from the time report many complaints over costs and the unfair assignment of key pieces of property to non-local developers. Existing small business owners on Vale Island could scarcely afford lots in New Town. While many tried to stay open in Old Town, as in-migrants came in, more of the business activity moved to New Town. Today, there are only a handful of industrial businesses in Old Town. There are residential lots remaining, and many people fondly call Old Town 'home'. However, this part of town is not serviced in the same way (e.g. there is no underground plumbing) and there are annual threats of flooding. This spatial divide remains to this day highly classed, with working class people living primarily in Old Town and professional classes living in the newest subdivisions of New Town. Vale Island was partially zoned for industrial development. The rail yard and shipping headquarters for the Northern Transportation Company Limited are located there, along with a few other shipping and construction related businesses.

During the planning of ‘New Town,’ a Toronto-based developer bought one of the key downtown lots.⁸ Based on British-imported designs increasingly common in Toronto in the 1960s, the developer designed and built the Mackenzie Place High Rise. A new pipeline project was rumored to be in the works, and this building would accommodate the influx of labour. It was meant to showcase the north as a place with potential to be modern, a place where non-indigenous people could live with city comforts. Unlike other modernization schemes across the arctic and subarctic which were aimed at the indigenous population, the High Rise was aimed at attracting a working-middle class who were not necessarily yet in town. ‘Modern’ features of the town’s development were, and are to this day, essential to drawing labour north. As discussed in chapter two, the pipeline never came to be. The High Rise has never been full, and like many buildings of its generation, it has become ‘un-modern.’

In chapter four, I turn to a series of interviews with High Rise residents to see what light they can shed on Canada’s uneven development. What connects the history I have recounted here to the present is the co-mingling of multiple economic projects and the ways in which they can be at one point mutually conducive to one another, and then later antagonistic. Fishing, for example was originally supportive of fur trapping and mineral prospecting. A local market for fish allowed local groups to continue to organize their own work processes and gave them alternative means of acquiring goods than being solely reliant on furs. The integration of fishing into global markets after the 1940s eventually put commercial fishing families at odds with large-scale transportation development on Vale Island. At the same time, growth in the mining sector through the 1940s and 1980s brought enough new people into town that a full-scale resistance to a “New Town” could not be realized. This is one of the major points of interest with regards to possible northern social movements: how (or are) ‘newcomers’ to stake claims in what the future of a place might be? What is lost when the only vehicle for politics is the politics of residency (whether Aboriginal or settler)? While the High Rise and the Inukshuk present themselves as

⁸ As had been the case since the arrival of missionaries, most of the wage work in Hay River was in construction and infrastructure development. While direct resource work often gets much of the academic attention, the important role local labour plays in constructing state and capital’s future visions cannot be underestimated. The most consistent work available to this day remains in construction and transportation. This work is sporadic, dangerous and largely unregulated.

distinct symbols with separate semiotic duties, both were built in the latter half of the 1970s, the previous boom decade for the region. Three local gold mines saw record profits when the end of Bretton Woods translated into fast-climbing gold prices.⁹ Besides the gold boom, more ‘wealth’ was imagined to be on its way. A proposed oil pipeline travelling through the territory would bring arctic oil to southern markets. During these years, Hay River was completely redeveloped in preparation for what was imagined to be en route.

The High Rise and Inukshuk were built to index configurations of time and space outside of the present. Side by side, the Inukshuk pointed to a distant past, while the High Rise marked the way to a ‘modern’ future. Simultaneously, ‘modern-in-the-making’ and ‘ethnically traditional,’ Hay River, like much of the Canadian north, is often talked about in terms of these temporal polarities, always reaching out and away to some other time, never fully being a kind of acceptable present. While the two structures of the High Rise and the Inukshuk suggest distinct divides between past and future, tradition and modern, nature and development, Aboriginal and migrant, the space between them erodes in the daily life of the town.

1.6 In search of diamond opportunities

I moved into the High Rise to learn about labour mobility on the one hand, and to observe job Aboriginal training programs on the other. These two objectives became less distinct as time went on. The day I moved into the High Rise, my boxes and suitcases filled the small tiled entryway. The building’s name, ‘*Mackenzie Place*’, is written in brown and gold cursive lettering above the front door. Like many things in the area, it was named after an 18th century Scottish explorer. Names never seem to stick around here and most people call the building ‘the High Rise’. On the buzzer panel, small white plastic letters and numbers have been pieced together to list the house rules: NO SMOKING IN FRONT. NO DOGS. NO HOT3L ROOM. The second door is kept locked. I was going through the many pockets of my parka looking for my keys when Cindy, the building owner’s girlfriend, saw me and let me in.

⁹ At the beginning of the 1970s, the gold rate was at US\$ 35. Ten years later the price stood at US\$ 870 per ounce.

“Holy, you got a lot of stuff! Let me get my son David to help you.” Cindy puts down the mop she is carrying and hurries around the corner shouting “David! Come help this university woman with her stuff!” I try and assure her I can manage, but she insists, “Its fine, he’s not doing nothing anyhow. He is going back to school soon though. He has a real good opportunity coming up. He is going to be taking an underground mining class at the college here. There’s a lot of good jobs up at those diamond mines, you know.”

David wears baggy jeans and a backwards red New York Yankees hat. On the side of his neck is a small tattoo whose green ink has weathered in a way that makes the symbol undecipherable. He drags a large, stubborn-wheeled metal cart to the door and piles my stuff on the wire bed, “eighth floor, right?”

In the elevator, my questions about his upcoming mining course are met with one-word answers. I ask him if he is from town. “Me? Am I *really* from shit hole? No way. I am from La Ronge, Saskatchewan”. Laughing, he adds, “some other shit hole!”

Destiny didn’t travel far to move into the High Rise apartment next to mine yet she speaks like she is worlds away from her life on the reserve. “I’m never going back,” she says, “why would I want to be stuck over there?” As the Hay River winds its way north to the Great Slave Lake, it divides the community in parts (see figure 5). On the east bank is the Katlodeeche First Nation (known locally as ‘the reserve’). On the west bank is town of Hay River. The area’s residents and commercial activity are concentrated on the town side. In winter, a plowed ice road lets vehicles cross quickly from one side to the other. The all-season bridge is the town’s southern boundary. In warmer weather, it takes about 25 minutes by car to make the 14km trip around and across. Taxi fare is 50\$ each way. Without vehicle access or sufficient resources, being ‘stuck on the reserve’ can be taken literally.

Destiny is 23 years old when she moves into to the unit beside mine. She is excited about her first apartment. She hangs 5x7 photographs of family and friends in glass clip frames on the wall. She carefully tacks up posters of deceased hip-hop artist Tu-Pac Shakur and rearranges her few pieces of furniture almost weekly. Her apartment smells of bleach and hairspray. We share a love of hip-hop music and herbal teas and get along very well. Our apartments are joined by two

small balconies. We spend countless hours standing on the cold cement, smoking if either of us bought cigarettes that week. We lean on the iron railings looking out over the industrial area and watch the trucks roll around the town's main square just below us.

"I got this apartment because I am going back to school," she tells me. "I was just sick of all the partying and shit at my mom's. I just had it. With going to school I get my own place. I am gonna take real good care of it, like, keep it real clean and stuff." She takes out her ponytail and reties her hair using the October sun's glare on her window as a mirror. She flips up the hood on her sweatshirt. "What are you taking at school?" I ask. "Um, like, mining, or something like that."

Ruth and her husband recently moved out of the High Rise and into a trailer they purchased. Owning a home in the region is expensive and many families live in doublewide mobile homes on rented lots. Ruth hasn't yet gotten the internet set up in their new home and so she goes to the library every day to use the public computers. Even though the library is only a few blocks from the trailer court, Ruth drives her car over after dropping off her husband at his latest construction site. With daily winter temperatures well below -30 degrees Celsius, almost everyone in Hay River drives short distances. Ruth uses the internet to get news from back home in New Brunswick and to do her daily job search.

A new poster has been put on the corkboard in the library's coat room. Its glossy finish and large size make it stand out from the other notices printed on standard computer paper. "DO YOU WANNA BE A ROCKER!?", the poster asks. Ruth puts on the glasses she keeps on a string around her neck and leans in to read the small type below a picture of yellow bulldozer. "Earn 100k/year, Operate State of the Art Equipment, Work in a Growing Industry." Ruth puts her boots back on and heads towards the local community college.

The front foyer of the four room community college is lined with windows that let in the receding October sunlight, staining the room a muted grey-blue. Ruth waits for the secretary to

finish with another student before making her enquiry, “I saw the underground diamond mining course advertised. I was wondering if I could sign up?”¹⁰

The secretary takes a moment to consider Ruth’s fair skin and blue eyes. “The course is part of an Aboriginal employment initiative,” she explains. Ruth starts riffling through her large black purse, “I’m status. I got my card in here somewhere!” The secretary doesn’t wait for Ruth to find her government issued Indian Status card, “Just leave me your phone number. We aren’t sure when it will be starting, hopefully in the New Year”. Ruth writes down her information. Laughing, she says, “I am almost 50, so I suppose I ain’t in no rush!”

On the first day of the pre-requisite class for the mining program, Ruth wears a jean jacket and curls her hair. “I’m guessing there’s going to be a lot of young ones in the class,” she tells me. Derek, the instructor, wears a Harley Davidson t-shirt and faded blue jeans. He sits on the desk at the front of the room and introduces himself. “I’m not going to lie,” he tells the class, “this is going to be tough. But,” he says hopping off the desk, “you stick with this training, you are looking at a future making 100 grand a year working in the diamond industry”. Ruth shakes her head in disbelief, “If we start making *that* kind of money, we are set for life!”

1.7 Authenticity in an Industrialized North

The High Rise/ Inukshuk is the organizing metaphor for the dissertation. It is also the vantage point from which I narrate my investigation of the intersection of resource development and quality of life concerns. As the transportation hub of the north, Hay River is a vital staging area for labour and goods coming and going from the region. The paved highway connecting north from south and the only rail line end here. Hay River is also the marine shipping headquarters for the arctic. This has earned it the nickname the ‘hub of the north.’ Many residents, directly or indirectly, have helped take twelve billion dollars of diamonds to market. What is more, Hay

¹⁰ A note about my use of quotations: throughout the dissertation I have rendered my observations from my field notes and interviews into narrative prose. These quotations are intended to communicate the sentiment of events rather than a precise recounting. I have, to the best of my abilities, tried to keep as close to people’s own accounts and words as I can. When relevant, I use direct transcription from recorded interviews. This is noted by the transcript being indented from the text and does not make use of quotation marks. In those cases, my use of ellipsis (...) indicates places of transcripts which I have omitted for clarity and brevity.

River is a catchment town for populations that are shed from smaller nearby Aboriginal communities. These smaller communities were, and continue to be, the objects of much social scientific enquiry. They are often thought of as ‘the real’ north.¹¹

More often than not, in casual conversations with scholars of arctic or sub-arctic spaces, the peri-urban town of Hay River is derided as ‘not the real north.’ Similarly, when I told anyone I was in town for research and living in the High Rise I was told, “that’s not the *real* Hay River!” How can spaces, like a transportation community so crucial to social reproduction, be considered “not the real” north? How can a good segment of the population not be considered “not the real” Hay River? As will become apparent in chapter six, David and Ruth, who are at once migrant and aboriginal, will be deemed not *real* northerners. Destiny, on the other hand, embodies the kinds of differences that will be read by educational institutions as *too* aboriginal, leading to the impossibility of diamond opportunities for her. The broader question I am raising is how and why are some spaces and people considered to be authentically representative of something larger, and others not? Diamonds-as-development helps shape who can and cannot be legitimately be the ‘real’. In defining more and more people outside the boundaries of the ‘real’, the legitimacy of extractive economy is easier to legitimize.

This notion of ‘the real’ is one that most social scientists grapple with in one way or another. We all, in our own way, attempt to make knowledge about the ‘real’ world. Questions of ontology are ones sometimes addressed explicitly or implicitly in research design and execution and there

¹¹ My understanding that, for ‘southern’ publics, certain places and people of the north are more ‘authentic’ than others predated this work. It was a lesson that began when I worked as a schoolteacher in the Northwest Territories between 2002 and 2004. My first teaching assignment was in a French language elementary school in the high arctic in Aklavik, a small island village of 600. When I would return home to Ontario, family and friends were incredibly curious to know what it was *really* like ‘up there.’ Even though there are countless representations of northern communities on television, in literature and film, there is a sense that media does not capture all the details that would constitute an entire ‘real’ place. My stories about local life from my first year were met with much interest. Enthusiastic listeners would love to hear how I fell asleep most nights to distant sounds of dog teams barking, or how muskrat hunting was part of the school curriculum, and that we regularly ate caribou given to us by local friends. After one year, I moved to take a job in the community of Hay River. From that point on, much of what I offered in the way of stories was far less exotic: women trying to lose weight, men tinkering with cars, people trying to get and keep work, couples working through marriage woes, adolescents hoping to get out of town some day. All of these stories seemed a little lackluster compared to what I was able to report before. I was often told by friends back home that I no longer lived in the real north.

is no consensus across or within disciplines as to what the right way of proceeding is. This dilemma of the ‘real’ is perhaps particularly acute for ethnographers, who, by trade, study and write ‘the real’ in its crudest form: everyday life. The notion of representing the real, and all of the trouble such a task requires, has engendered many creative and admirable adaptations to the project of anthropological representation (Ghosh, 1994; Stewart, 1996, 2007). Here I don’t purport to capture the whole sum of the ‘real’. Rather, I take concern with those things, people, places, ways of being-in-the-world which are somehow evaluated as ‘*not* the real’.

I take this point further in chapter four, “*That’s Not the Real Hay River!*”: *Authenticity, Authority and Canadian Political Economy*, when I focus on the types of people, histories, and relations that lie beyond the analytic constraints identified earlier in the introduction. It is based on the trajectories of David and other residents of the High Rise you will meet. Although High-Risers may not self-identify as being part of a coherent cultural whole, they were extremely insightful with respect to questions of political economy. Their life trajectories were revealing as to the types of conjunctures that bring together a labour supply ‘just in time’ for resource booms and busts. This chapter presents their individual stories with an aim of tying them together in order to understand the political economy of Canadian resource extraction. Some of the tenants were from as far away as the Philippines. Others were from the maritime and Atlantic Provinces of Canada. Others still had only moved from the other side of the river. These movements provide a vantage point from which to understand larger questions of social reproduction.

The conclusion I draw is that the apparent historyless-ness and placeless-ness of the High Rise, Hay River, and my interlocutors –, like those in the many other pluri-ethnic peri-urban centers that pepper the Canadian north – are in fact crucial parts of the history of Canada itself. The inability of peri-urban towns and people to not stand in for ‘the real’ north is essential to the legitimacy of natural resource developments. While these spaces reproduce and depend on social and economic inequalities, their effacement keeps the focus on problems of ‘Aboriginal development’, rather than on the contradictions of capitalism.

1.8 Mining Opportunities

Against the backdrop on Hay River's High Rise and Inukshuk, Ruth, Destiny and David's aspirations for a future in mining are part of a much larger picture. In Canada, the promotion of careers in mining for Aboriginal persons is part and parcel of national policy and public culture. Across rural and northern Canada, much like in Australia's northern Territories, natural resources are increasingly held up as 'the answer' to what Povinelli (2008) aptly describes as "the unequal distribution of life and death in democratic orders" (510). Increasingly, access to the 'good life' is said to be found by raising Aboriginal participation in resource industries as workers. At the time of diamond discovery and development, the mining industry was experiencing a self-described 'labour-crisis' and so the timing was perfect for encouraging northern Aboriginal people to work in the industry (as if many weren't already).

The labour crisis wasn't simply an opportunity for Aboriginal Canadians, it was of grave concern to the industry. In May of 2007 I joined over 5000 mining and energy industry enthusiasts in Montreal for the Canadian Institute of Mining's annual meeting. The technical program's newly added "Challenge of Sustainability" stream included a half-day session on Human Resources Issues. The panelists' overarching message was one of crisis; if Canada was going to keep its competitiveness in the mining sector, state and industry would need to work together to recruit, retain and retrain 'talent' from within and outside of Canada's borders.

The conference speakers drew primarily on a 2005 report which heralded a labour gap of 81,000 workers over the upcoming ten year period (MITAC, 2005).¹² When the study was released, the economic growth in mining revenues were twice that of the remaining Canadian economy. High prices in minerals, particularly diamonds led to an aggressive state-industry public relations campaign to circulate the discourse of crisis to potential labour pools; specifically, women, disabled persons, persons recently laid off from adjacent industries (e.g. forestry) and Aboriginal people. These populations are statistically underrepresented in the official national labour force, or primary sector. These are also populations thought to be particularly amenable to work in mining.

¹² In the report, the labour crisis was attributed to an aging workforce and outdated perceptions about careers in mining (e.g. requiring brute force, unsafe, insecure, non-professional).

When the most recent census (2011) reiterated that there was a shortage of labour in resource-related industries and surplus of Aboriginal persons receiving income assistance, popular accounts proclaimed that this co-occurrence (resource wealth and Aboriginal underemployment) could “present an opportunity for the country’s First Nations to secure for themselves a future less dependent on welfare and hand-outs” (Iverson, 2012). The powerful assumption here is that Aboriginal people are impeding national economic well-being. My argument is the opposite. They are vital to it. There is the more obvious issue of dispossession of land which underwrites the entire project of imperialism and nation-making (Gordon, 2010), but that is not my primary concern here. Rather, the question to be examined is when, how and why does natural resource extraction come to be tied to aspirations to improve both a region and some of its population.

For some social scientists (Hitch, 2005; Kwiatkowski & Ooi, 2003), the diamond mining industry in the NWT is considered one of the most advanced in the world in terms of working with Aboriginal groups to share benefits from mining (NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines, 2005). In the early 2000s, the region’s training and employment efforts were promoted as templates for other Aboriginal communities located in proximity to potential resource projects. Increasingly, developments in the Canadian north are held up as international models and exported to other zones of extraction (Africa, Latin America). In fact, during the write up of my work I was contacted by a ‘social responsibility officer’ working for a Canadian mining company in Ecuador. He wanted my expertise on how to reproduce Canada’s exceptional mining conditions in his home country. It seemed critical to me at this juncture to design an anthropological investigation which took a step back to ask, what are the key terms of debate with respect to resource extraction and to ask how do they define what can and cannot be known about their social consequences?

In Chapter three *Ethical Object, Ethical Nation: The Global Context of Canadian Diamonds* I explain how, in the early 2000s, Canadian diamonds became legible both as ethical and national objects to both consumers and local, national and transnational publics. Against the backdrop of “African blood diamonds” in the early 2000s, sub-arctic stones emerged as ‘clean, conflict-free’ alternatives. The ethical attributes of northern diamonds hinged on two claims, first, that they were simply *not* African, and second, that mining would bring development to those places and

people seen to be on the margins of the nation, both geographically and socio-economically. This relied on, on the one hand, Canadian diamond's deracialization and nationalization (pure white stones) on global scales, while on the other, their (re)racialization on local scales (good for Aboriginal development).

The formulation of diamonds-as-opportunity follows some of the major discursive frames of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), now a global standard, has been both celebrated and forcefully critiqued. Yet, as Dinah Rajak (2011) points out, either/or interpretations of CSR are weak in the sense that they account for very little of what these initiatives do or do not do on the ground. In her recent ethnography *In Good Company: An Anatomy of Corporate Social Responsibility*, Rajak argues that CSR cannot simply be understood as either “magic bullet to poverty” or the “smooth surface of corporate power” (12). To dismiss CSR, or its national iterations, too quickly as smokescreens for neoliberalism that can be effectively blown away by critique misses an opportunity to understand how state and corporate power interact with local histories and struggles and how, in the process, social relations are (re)shaped.¹³

For most people living in the NWT there is a relative acceptance or ambivalence towards CSR-style discourses. There are, of course, strong opponents too. Yet, to be seen as “against development” in the larger towns is to jeopardize one's ability to relate to the majority of people. Local investments in resource futures cannot be explained as simply a result of the savvy marketing skills of the world's largest mining firms, or local naiveté. CSR-style measures found strong resonance with existing ideologies of national reform, namely, a new era of indigenous self-government, welfare retrenchment and northern economic development. In framing diamond mining at local and national levels as an ‘empowerment’ project for Aboriginal ‘communities’, diamond development became a source of national pride, rather than cause for global concern (environmental, humanitarian or otherwise). The century-long resource imperative in the region has been renewed.

¹³ Drawing on the case of platinum mining in South Africa, Rajak situates present day CSR in a longer history of corporate philanthropy. She shows how the long history of the Anglo-American Corporation in the same region made it particularly well-suited to projecting itself as a key collaborator in the delivery of the “new South African dream” (27).

CSR initiatives often take on the qualities of global development work more generally. They can include the provision of health care, education, housing and other infrastructure projects.¹⁴ Often times, they are seen as more efficient than states at bringing ‘development.’ In the Northwest Territories, CSR-style initiatives have largely foregrounded provisions of work and training through two key political-legal apparatuses: Impact Benefit Agreements and Socio-Economic monitoring (described in detail in chapters three and five). These instruments decide and define who, what and where will have what kind of relationship to the mining project. They are the translational link between public discourses of ‘nothing but problems’ and the on-the-ground solutions of the job training that David, Destiny and Ruth are optimistic about when I first meet them in 2008.¹⁵ Ultimately, these policies are the lynch pins that turn diamonds, a global commodity, into development, a means to improve the quality of life for those in their proximity.

Proving or discrediting the moral claims made by CSR campaigns, or debating the effectiveness or sensitivity of their measures is not the sole aim of my analysis. As we will see, the claims are rather easily discredited and their measures proven infective. By and large, they are failures, even by their own standards. As I will explore throughout the dissertation, job training programs produce few ‘regular’ workers. The fieldwork I carried out in Canada’s diamond basin coincided with the global financial crisis (2008-2009). Only one of the 90 students in the program secured work in the diamond industry immediately after graduation. Destiny, David and Ruth will not be hired on graduation day as promised. During this same period, many people, Aboriginal and not, working in the mines, or for exploration related companies, lost their jobs.

As suggested by the anthropological intervention by James Ferguson on development in Lesotho (1994), and reinforced by Tania Li’s (2007) discussion of ‘schemes for improvement’ in Indonesia, asking if such programs have ‘failed’ assumes that the problem of

¹⁴ In South Africa for example, Rajak (2011) details how CSR initiatives included strong HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs for employees.

¹⁵ These can also include corporate contributions to highly visible infrastructure projects, like an ice hockey arena in Yellowknife. These are tax-deductible charitable ‘gifts’ given on top of more regulated commitments to employment and priority business contracts for locally owned enterprises.

‘underdevelopment’ takes a particular narrative arc. Better, they suggest, is asking what do these programs do? So, what is it that CSR measures and Canadian diamond development ‘do’?

While employment in global extractive industries is unable to provide economic security to those who seek it, state and industry’s promises are productive for four reasons. First, they (re)define the natural world as ‘opportunities for work’. Second, the specific techniques of industry and statecraft that surround mining (impact and benefit agreements, and socio-economic monitoring) transform everyday events of difference and inequality into catastrophes which render industrial development sensible even urgent. Third, they orient public sentiment towards a “future anterior” (Povinelli, 2008, 2011), a form of temporal longing that I argue impedes a deep reading of the historical present and participates in a politics of deferral. Fourth, they rely on and reproduce a chronotopically constrained public debate on natural resource development.

Yet, if employment and training are said to be the major public benefits of Canadian mining projects and are said to address human suffering, then it is essential to return to the practical matter of trying to understand how and by whom these benefits are accessed. In chapter six, *Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideology & Vocational Training in Canada’s Diamond Basin*, I provide an ethnographic account of the promotion and delivery of David, Destiny and Ruth’s employment training program which straddled the boom and bust of Canadian diamonds. Bringing together tools from linguistic anthropology and political economy, this chapter looks at the importance of “soft skills” in the preparation of would-be workers for the job market. I argue that an emphasis on ‘soft skills’ inadvertently neutralizes powerful ideas about race and socio-economic exclusion.

Following the trajectories of a total of ten adult trainees, the chapter begins with a promise to students that if they present the right attitude and stick with the training they will be “set for life”. Through a focus on their two-week “soft skills” prerequisite, I describe the expected embodied linguistic performance of “the right attitude”. Personality tests, learning style inventories and communication style quizzes provided students with acceptable ways of knowing and expressing themselves as “confident” and “responsible”. In sum, students were asked to talk about the self as highly managed. Although four completed the full certificate, none of the students secured a job at the program’s end due to the mine’s restructuring during the 2008

financial crisis. In the context of resource dependent regions like the diamond basin, this chapter argues that the promotion of “responsible talk”, rather than being a neutral employment skill, is crucial to the management of the (im)permanence of resource extraction. By promoting types of talk which eschew student critique and concerns, the instability of resource economies are turned back onto student’s psychological states, reinforcing the public assessments of the failure of indigenous life which I described above and elaborate in chapter five.

1.9 Researcher Locations

Before undertaking the research I was no stranger to the promises of diamond development. I moved to Hay River from a small high arctic village to take a position at a French language school in 2003. When I arrived in Hay River, it did not take long to learn about the growing diamond industry and the ways in which I was expected to orient to it as an opportunity for my individual gain. Many of the school parents strongly encouraged me and my former partner to purchase property. Diamond production was picking up and the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline was being debated again. “You can’t lose!” they said. There was a sense among middle-class property holders that a boom was on the way. Indeed it was. The small home we purchased that year was sold two years later to pay for my graduate education in Alaska. The house has been twice re-sold in the subsequent five years, with each successive owner making a small profit.

Rental rates and the cost of living in the Northwest Territories are very high when compared to other parts of Canada. To subsidize my fieldwork, I took on two significant forms of employment and worked roughly 20 hours a week. First, I held a part-time contract as an elementary school teacher in the French language school where I had worked prior to going to graduate school in 2004. This involved teaching daily from 8:30-10:15 and full days on Friday. I taught fourth-grade English and led the visual art program for grades one through nine.

My second job was teaching dance-aerobics, or “Jazzercise,” three nights a week. It was a program I initiated knowing there were few options for indoor women’s fitness outside of curling, hockey and swimming. The program grew to be quite popular; some nights I would have close to fifty women sweating, singing and moving to top-40 hits. I had a group of twenty or so women who were extremely dedicated. The self-identified “hard-cores” grew to be friends, and had great insight into the dynamics of this small town and into broader issues of race, gender,

and class, —much of which will be insufficiently addressed here due to constraints of time, space and coherence.

Having worked at the Francophone School meant I knew almost none of the town's lower income families before starting the research. Like in other parts of Anglophone Canada, French language education tends to draw middle class families (Heller, 1999). Nevertheless, working in the school provided me with a wide network of contacts. These contacts made getting access to certain industries and agencies easier. It also meant that when I decided to start my small business teaching aerobics, it immediately found support from many of the school's moms. Many anthropologists struggle in the field with never being able to shed the label "anthropologist." This was never my struggle. I was, no matter what I did, "the jazzercise lady." It was often difficult for me to steer conversations towards my stated research interests and away from topics like weight loss and nutrition. This was exacerbated by my perceived urbanity, which was accorded a lot of symbolic capital in this town. A large part of performing class distinction in these northern towns is the ability to shop 'in the south' and purchase brand names which were not available locally like Lululemon, – a brand of yoga clothing that became very popular over the course of my stay.

Given my perceived urbaneness, my interest in the High Rise was peculiar to many residents. Destiny would fall over laughing telling me "you are like the Carrie Bradshaw¹⁶ of Hay River... only you write about the High Rise and not sex! Now, who is gonna want to read that!?" I had to learn how to explain to both High Risers and non-High Risers what moving into the building afforded me. The best way, in some cases, was to say I was studying labour migration. In a town like Hay River, this makes sense to almost everyone, as it is a town that understands itself as being made up of many transients. Interestingly, recent census data puts over 85% of the population has been at the same address for the past five years. Given this high ratio of long term residents, why then might Hay River be considered 'not the real' north?

¹⁶ Carrie Bradshaw is a TV character from the HBO series *Sex and the City*. Played by Sarah Jessica Parker, Carrie is a newspaper columnist who writes about the (mis)adventures of her all-female clique as they look for love in New York City.

1.10 Conclusion

Today, images of Inukshuit have come to symbolize the north. Their semiotic capacities occasionally expand to signify Canada more generally. Suffused with competing significations, Inukshuit are widely circulated and perform a host of semiotic duties, most having to do with claims to land and configurations of national identity (Fletcher, 2009). For example, the logo for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games was a multicolored inukshuk named Ilanaaq. Ilanaaq, Inuktitut for ‘friend’, was said to be “a representation of hope, friendship and an external expression of the hospitality of a nation that warmly welcomes the people of the world with open arms” (VANOC, 2005).¹⁷ Almost immediately following the 2005 press release introducing Ilanaaq to the Canadian public, debates in popular media sprung up about the appropriateness of this choice. Not ‘native’ to Vancouver, there was concern over who ‘owned’ the rights to this symbol. The question was one of appropriation, as it had been the Inuit, Canada’s most northern residents, who had been the original Inukshuit builders. The debates quietly fizzled away, never making it through the rigorous thought processes that may have generated either a substantial critique of racialized inequalities or careful theory of the relationship between symbols and social reproduction.

Unlike the Inukshuk, the High Rise has not come to symbolize the north in the Canadian imagination. In less than forty years, the building has gone from symbolizing possible futures to all too present in the town’s square. Although the outline of the High Rise is visible well before anything else on the horizon when approaching Hay River by air, few people would direct a visitor’s attention to the building. Local elites claim it is an epicentre of drug activity and complain about the owner’s failure to contribute to the town’s beautification efforts.

I returned to the High Rise/ Inukshuk image over and over when thinking through my work because I was struck by how they were generally apprehended as individual objects. Any

¹⁷Ilanaaq was designed five years in advance in order to make the Vancouver Olympics one of the most recognized marks in the world. Brand ‘Canada’ is highly exportable. Its success depends on ideas of cultural and geographic distinction as well as inclusive politics. See Boykoff ‘s (2011) article in the *New Left Review* for a summary of the anti-Olympics campaigns.

photographs or rendering of either are exclusively of one or the other (a google image search can confirm this). Somehow their relationship and their shared moment of emergence are resistant to representation. It's either one or the other; either a connection to the past or the problems of the present. My sense after a year in the High Rise and Hay River was that there was something to be gained from interrogating these disparate temporalities and the ways in which they push at the core contradiction of liberal multiculturalism; specifically differentiated citizenships.

Differentiated citizenships (differential positionings in relation to rights, benefits, protections; Sider, 2003) are a crucial feature of modern states for legitimizing unequal divisions of labour and resources, yet they cannot be fully managed or produced by the state itself. Differentiated citizenships and inequalities that come to be named race or gender (for example) become harnessable vulnerabilities that simultaneously “produce, or deeply participate in the production of enduring inequalities” while allowing the state to claim that it has one set of rules that apply to all (p. xv). Natural resource development fails to improve the human condition because it depends on existing forms of difference, both institutionalized and not to be productive (e.g. race, class, gender, and locality). The reproduction of difference isn't a task industry takes on directly, it doesn't need to. Rather, forms of statecraft (citizenship) and local forms of inequality support are consistently made harnessable to development through public culture. In the next chapter, we will see how this works on the ground.

2 The Production of Race, Locality and State in the Northwest Territories: Hope or Destiny?

If the expansion and consolidation of state power simply undermined, homogenized, and ultimately destroyed the distinctive societies and ethnic groups in its grasp, as various acculturation or melting pot theories would have it, the world would have long ago run out of its diverse ways of life, a supply presumably created at the dawn of time. To the contrary, state power must not only destroy but also generate cultural differentiation—and do so not only between different nation states, and between states and their political and economic colonies, but in the center of its grasp as well. The historical career of ethnic peoples can thus be understood in the context of forces that both give a people a birth and simultaneously seek to take their lives.
Gerald Sider, 1987

2.1 Crossings: An introduction

A single highway travels north from Edmonton, Alberta. Crossing the 60th parallel, the highway is the only road into Canada's Northwest Territories. Driving north, prairies give way to taiga, and eventually slim black spruce trees part, giving way to the lake side transportation town of Hay River, population 4000. Through town, scenes of industrial abandonment pepper the landscape; rusting river boats, crushed empty fuel barrels, assorted airplane parts, and housing units dragged into town from a neighboring mining community that was abandoned in the late 1980s when the price of lead/zinc fell.

The Canadian north, much like the circumpolar world more generally, is often thought of as cold, distant and isolated. Yet the highway reveals, and allows for, crossings and connections that underwrite genealogies of place and pace. Next to the highway is the only rail line to cross to the northern border. Tracks, pavement and river all run parallel as if in a race to the shore of the Great Slave Lake. Transportation towns or 'hubs' like Hay River were/are central to the industrialization of northern Canada. The primary sector, a foundation of Canada's political economy, depends on and produces multiple mobilities. In and through towns like Hay River are the vital crossings of labour, capital and goods that shape everyday life for local people while facilitating the extraction of vast amounts of natural resources for global markets. Yet, state-industry assessment measures and pay-outs linked to mining development excluded the town of Hay River.



Figure 4: Rusting Tug Boat in Hay River, NWT, Photo by Author 2009

These same assessments work on a project by project basis. As I argued in the introduction, this approach inflicts a kind of chronotopic constraint on how political economic and social change can be understood. It forecloses a deep, contextually specific reading of the embeddedness of single projects in a much longer history of capitalist transformation in the area. These same measures also make use of static notions of ‘community’ thereby foreclosing an understanding of the making and unmaking of communities in relation to history and political economy.

By contrast, this chapter chronicles the role of racial categories of personhood in the harnessing of diverse human energies to secure profits from the literal capture of nature in the Great Slave Lake Basin. It is a “history of the present” (Roseberry, 1994) that tracks the uneasy relationship between race/ethnicity, citizenship and state-capital formation in the Northwest Territories.

In this chapter, I anchor my discussion around the transformation of the Hay River area. I take a particular focus on crossings. That is, movements between places, conceptual and lived categories, sense of belonging/exclusion that both produce and extinguish possibilities for being.

I provide a chorological account of capitalist development in the region interspersed with the “crossings” of two people who are at once aboriginal and mobile, two terms often thought of as oppositional in the Canadian imaginary. The first is a young woman I will call Destiny,¹⁸ the second is a late 19th century Hudson’s Bay Company employee named John Hope.

Though seldom garnering the attention of anthropologists and other social scientists, ‘hubs’ like Hay River and their constitutive crossings provide a unique vantage point for talking about northern life and as I want to explore here, how life is endured. My aim is to take seriously the structuring effects of historical materialism while maintaining an ethnographic sensibility that respects the less than easy to describe cleavages where most of social life falls.

The narrative begins in the present in section 2.3, *Destiny Comes and Goes*. Destiny is a young Dene woman I worked with throughout my time in Hay River. As mentioned in the introduction, she was my neighbor in the High Rise and a student in the training course described in chapter six. Being from Hay River, Destiny is an example of those imagined to benefit most from resource extraction. Her story opens in the coming section with her ‘taking off’ from Hay River. It then unfolds over the subsequent sections to make clear the ways in which the past bears on the present.

Destiny’s crossings are difficult ones. They are illustrative of the unequal distributions of social harm, resources and respect in Canada. To be clear, I do not highlight Destiny’s crossings with ambitions of individual empathy which often mark representations of ‘northern life’ in Canadian public culture (see chapter five). Rather, I recount Destiny’s movements and the workings of this transportation town as productive contradictions. In dialectical social theory, contradictions are elements in a system whose relationships are necessary to one another but inherently at odds. My argument is that crossings, like the ones I describe here, both constitute and undermine large scale resource extraction in a liberal-settler state like Canada. The narrative of Destiny’s crossings is an attempt to describe “the ways people actually experience the regulatory ideals of liberal life” (Povinelli, 2002, p. 12). Specifically, how differentiated citizenships, both

¹⁸ This is a pseudonym that was chosen by her in our discussions of my work.

institutionalized ones and not, are (dis)orienting to both the people that inhabit them, and the system that produces them.

My enquiry into the history of capital in the region begins in earnest in section 2.4, *Canadian Stories: Merchant Capital and the Making of Difference 1670-1850*. In it, I provide a description of original forms of merchant capital, specifically the fur trade. I focus my attention on the important role that ethnic difference played in forming necessary social bonds for exchange and in attempting to regulate prices.

In section 2.5, *In Search of Hope: The Race of Uneven Development Between 1850 and 1900*, I look at the uneven development of capitalism in relation to early state formation. I use the trajectory of a Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) translator, John Hope, to show how ethnicity and locality are neither interchangeable nor constant. I explore the early Hay River as an increasingly pluri-ethnic and pluri-lingual space. Based on what can only be described as an 'archival accident' (or my daily daydream to write historical fiction), Hope's presence in the writings of colonial officials challenged what I understood about race and labour at the turn of the century. Specifically, the uneven (de)indianization of Aboriginal subjects across northern North America.

Section 2.6, *Making and Breaking 'Treaty' Indians: Enclosure of The Great Slave Lake Region 1900-1950*, describes Treaty 8: the political process that fixed ethnic groups in place in order to enable new forms of capital to colonize northwards. During this time, the HBC shifted its economic emphasis from furs to land sales and retailing, and decreased its role in sustaining fur producers. With the advancement of mining capital, trapper groups that were economically marginalized sought a treaty with the state to guarantee livelihoods. This process reinforced ethnic boundaries that had previously been blurred. Nevertheless, new forms of social organization emerged that formed the basis of the political projects I describe in section 2.7, *Possible Political Worlds: (Re)Making Land Treaties in the Great Slave Lake Region 1950-1990*. This epoch saw the rise of extensive social movements, many of which were domesticated through the turn to the liberal multiculturalism, more specifically its laws of recognition (Povinelli, 2002).

According to Povinelli (2002) in contrast to colonial forms of domination, multi-cultural domination works by inspiring subaltern and minority subjects to identify with the impossible object of an authentic self-identity (a domesticated, non-conflicted ‘traditional’ form of sociality) (p.6). In the ten years since the publication of her seminal work *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*, demands to demonstrate sufficient cultural difference are, as I hope to show, increasingly difficult for people to meet. I argue, the very same laws that recognized difference, threatened the political-economic basis on which such differences were made (c.f. Dombrowski, 2002).

Section 2.8, *Modernity, Mobility, and Morality: 1990-Present* shows how “a new recognition of subaltern worth remains inflected by the conditional (as long as they are not repugnant; that is, as long as they are not, at heart, not-us and as long as real economic resources are not at stake)” (Povinelli 2002, p.17). By looking at moral assessments of Destiny’s crossings, I aim to show how, regardless of an ethos of tolerance, encounters with certain kinds of differences force a red line to be drawn across which difference cannot proceed (Povinelli 2011, p.31). Destiny’s ‘taking off’ aims to deal with the impossible demands and conditions of regimes of recognition, yet subjects her to more of its disciplinary measures.

By way of conclusion, section 2.9 analytically assembles the stories of Destiny and John Hope in order to show how resource extraction in Northern Canada simultaneously depends on and produces incommensurate forms of locality, mobility, and racialized suffering. This uneasiness, or incommensurability, sets the stage for, even if erased by, policies aimed at managing the ‘impacts and benefits’ of resource extraction on local populations.

2.2 Destiny Comes and Goes

When I first met 23-year-old Destiny in 2008, she was enrolled in a pre-requisite program for a certificate in underground diamond mining at the local community college. At that time, two of the NWT’s diamond mines had exhausted open pit sources and were supposed to move to underground methods of harvest to extend the mine’s ‘lifecycle’. This shift in production techniques (see chapter three) was promoted as yet another opportunity for local labour, specifically Aboriginal labour, to benefit from diamond mining. Destiny’s course was the first step in a long and somewhat complicated training process which promised local people jobs making \$100,000 a year (Bell, 2010, chapter six). It was the kind of program imagined to address

issues of social dislocation which have come to define the North in Canadian popular culture (chapter five). It was, by all accounts, part of the national ‘will to improve’ (Li, 2007).

Mid-way through the delivery of the program, the two operating diamond mines (Rio Tinto and BHP) went into “maintenance mode” and a third site (DeBeer’s) stalled its opening. Production essentially stopped to minimize labour costs and to control the supply of stones to market during the financial crisis. Additional cost-saving measures included reducing funds allocated to training. Destiny’s future life as a miner ended before it had started. This unfulfilled career path did not seem to surprise or trouble her much. When retracted program funding essentially pushed her out of the program, Destiny’s major concern was housing.

I came to know Destiny rather well over the course of my fieldwork. As mentioned in the introduction, she moved into the apartment next to mine before starting school. We both lived in the High Rise, a place known as equal parts opportunity and suffering. Destiny was receiving a housing subsidy from the territorial government for being in school. No schooling, no housing.

Knowing her housing was in jeopardy, I asked her what she planned to do. We stood out on the cold cement of our attached balconies looking out over the town’s industrial area for a few moments before she answered, “I’m thinking about taking off”.¹⁹ The next day she stood on the side of the highway until someone she knew picked her up. She crossed south to northern Alberta to the reservation where her on again off again boyfriend. After a couple of weeks, she called to ask me to lend her some money for a bus ticket to come back. I picked her up at the Greyhound station. She was bruised all over and thought she may be pregnant.

2.3 Canadian Stories: Merchant Capital and the Making of Difference 1670-1850

As a child growing up in Toronto, I learned that the story of Canada begins with the fur trade. In school we were taught about the mighty beaver. It was the animal that made both our country and beautiful hats for well-to-do people on London’s high streets. I never could quite picture it. I thought the beaver was an unbecomingly pudgy creature, and, despite all the talk about its

¹⁹ I had heard the expression ‘taking off’ when I worked as a teacher in the high arctic. Students, usually from low income, less well connected families, would, if threatened (by peers or teachers) retaliate with “I’m taking off”.

outstanding work ethic, I thought it seemed rather lazy; its life seemed to consist solely of building a home only to crawl in and sleep for a season. *We* were not even allowed to rest our heads on our desks. I could not fathom that a spiky-furred animal might even make for an attractive hat. Picturing the raccoon hat worn by Davey Crockett, I spent a lot of time wondering how the beaver's large tail would not be a nuisance to the wearer. I knew little about the processing of furs, and all of my questions about our national animal, and thus national history, got me in trouble with the teacher. I did not need all of these details, she said, all I needed to know was the fur trade is how Canada started; it was the 'first contact' between Europeans and Natives.

Capitalist development in the Great Slave Lake region does, by and large, begin with the fur trade. I was a little hesitant to begin this 'history' section with the fur trade as it has become an "entrenched field of study in Canadian history, so universalizing that [it] appears to have been the [sole] preoccupation of Aboriginal as well as non-Aboriginal participants" (McCormack, 2010, p.25 drawing on Jennifer Brown 1993). I do not start with the fur trade to reinforce my childhood understandings of an economic order that produced a nation; rather, I am interested here in what June Nash (1981) termed the "paradigm of integration of all people and cultures within a world *system*" (p. 393, emphasis original, as cited in McCormack, 2010, p. 25).²⁰

Prior to the fur trade, the people of the Great Slave Lake and Peace River regions had a use-oriented or domestic mode of production. The primary goal of production was family survival. Asch (1979, 1977) details this mode of production for the Mackenzie River Dene who live just north of Hay River, and McCormack (2010) provides a summary of its relevance to the wider region. In brief, small kin groups or Bands (roughly 25-50 people) produced goods for their own use. These groups were broadly egalitarian, with primary divisions of work being based on age, and to a much lesser extent, gender. Local bands would be tied together into regional bands in

²⁰ To these ends, I am relying loosely on the concept of "mode of production" as developed by Eric Wolf. For Wolf (1982), mode of production is not just a system of technology, nor a stage or type of society, but a heuristic tool used to focus on "strategic" relationships of power and wealth. It includes the social, and not merely the economic. The inclusive term "social reproduction" includes the reproduction of the relations and social institutions necessary to sustaining capitalism.

order to maintain social and political connections that afforded safety in times of resource scarcity (Helm, 1968).

The area where the Hay River meets the Great Slave Lake provided ample fishing opportunities for domestic production that later articulated with capitalist production. It was a winter gathering site for multiple local bands and was the basis of a regional band that, according to Helm (1968), was at the outset not socially cohesive but through intensification of trade would become so in the 1900s.

The fur trade began in eastern Canada in the mid- 1600s and travelled westward and northward as sources were depleted. In 1670, the Crown awarded the Hudson's Bay Company exclusive commercial rights the territory known as "Rupert's Land" via royal proclamation. The HBC-dominated fur trade was a form of original accumulation that facilitated capital growth by and for London's emerging securities market. Up to roughly 1800, this worked well for capitalists. The Hudson's Bay Company Incorporated paid shareholders dividends of 60-70% between 1690 and 1800. When the depression of 1857 hit, dividends fell below 10% (Hudson's Bay Company, 1866). Declining profits coupled with new interests in industrial agriculture, the trade was of decreasing importance to British capitalists.

Even with the declining economic significance of the fur trade in imperialist projects, the trade held substantial consequences for its participants. As Wolf (1982) explains, the fur trade "deranged [sic] accustomed social relations and cultural habits, it prompted the formation of new responses- both internally, in the daily life of human populations, and externally in relations among them...It led to the decimation of whole populations and the displacement of others to new habitats" (p. 161). Again, as Wolf (1982) has shown, "many of the Indian 'nations' or 'tribes' later recognized as distinct ethnic identities by government agents or by anthropologists took shape in response to the spread of the fur trade itself, a process which the native Americans were as much active participants as the traders, missionaries, or soldiers of the encroaching Europeans" (p. 194). This is certainly the case for the region under consideration here. Those

communities around the west and south shores of the Great Slave Lake, now known as Slavey²¹ (formally Slave or Hare and sometimes Beaver), were once smaller extended kin groups living further east and south and were pushed northwards by groups who had a longer engagement with the fur trade as middlemen. As the search for furs moved north and west, groups were displaced by armed middlemen.

When direct trade began in the region between 1820-1870, the shift from domestic production to increased capitalist production was not a foregone conclusion. When traders arrived, the assumption was that all ‘Indians’ were trappers. The labour process of fur trapping needed “Indians” to do certain tasks and those tasks were in turn indianized. While the bands in the region were skilled hunters and gatherers, the materials sought after by capital were not the ones they had used in great quantity in domestic forms of production. Local populations possessed the kinds of knowledge and skills adaptable to this type of labour. However, they did not necessarily want to or have to participate, particularly not on terms they did not deem beneficial.

The imperial fur trade was a form of merchant capital. Merchant capital is defined by the purchase of commodities from communities that control and supervise their own production. Domination is at the point of exchange, rather than the point of production. For fur traders, controlling labour without controlling production was not self-evident. Fur traders had to offer manufactured goods that were of interest to trappers and at prices they deemed fair. If perceived to be given unfair terms of trade, groups would travel elsewhere. Labour’s mobility proved to be both essential to merchant capital (as they needed people to travel for furs) even as it threatened to undermine it (groups could trade at a rival post). Also, a consistent interest in producing furs by trappers was not guaranteed. Trade officials often described local populations as ‘lazy.’ I understand this as a testament to the inability to fully harness productive labour. For example, at

²¹ The name collective name ‘Slave’ was the English translation of the Cree word for Slave. Embroiled in the fur trade around the Hudson’s Bay, the Cree named groups and regions (e.g. Great Slave Lake) with the same term which was then translated by traders. To what extent Cree populations enslaved these groups is unclear (Asch, 1978), however it is certain that they retained furs from them by both trade and theft. Despite their being new terms in use to describe these groups (Sahtu for north Slavey, and Deh Cho for south Slavey), many people still identify with the term Slavey. For example, Destiny would use both “Slavey Indian” and “Dene” to describe herself. Dene is the broader northern Athabaskan word for person that is increasingly used throughout the NWT.

Hay River fishing provided a strong subsistence base. In the journals of HBC traders this was cause for many complaints about the Indians being content to 'just' fish. A trading post at Hay River opened and closed multiple times owing to the difficulties in harnessing human energies for merchant capital.

Trading posts necessarily became spaces laden with social bonds that could draw labour back on a consistent basis. This was achieved in part by the advancement of credit in the form of goods, or foodstuffs in the event of a particular season of scarcity. It was also achieved by giving gifts or advances to 'chiefs' or 'head traders.' This practice favored smaller bands and led to new forms of power within groups. Merchant capital can, and did, encourage emergence of leaders and domination within production (Sider, 2003). This detail will become significant when we look at the institutionalization of Indian 'Bands' vis-à-vis the state in 1899/1900.

Another challenge to drawing local populations into capitalist production was that the main activities of domestic production, specifically caribou hunting and fishing, were in many ways at odds with fur production as locations of these raw materials were all different. Fur traders increasingly tried to convert populations away from these activities by advancing food, guns, ammunition, traps, cloth, blankets, liquor and tobacco. Items that could facilitate domestic production (e.g. fish nets, twine for net-making) were restricted from being traded. Advances of food staples such as flour, lard and tea led to a decline in autonomous hunting activities of the trapping population.

Ethnic difference was another piece that was central to organizing the labour process. Perceived differences between groups helped fur trade officials establish where to set up a trading post and build alliances that would ensure the return of trappers to particular locales which had given them advances. While there was a general sense that all Indians could be willing trappers, there was a lot of work done on the part of trade officials to identify ethnic groups (eg. Slavey, Beaver, Cree). In fact, it would not be until the onset of Canadian state making that the diversity of different groups would be subsumed under the label 'Indian.' For traders, knowing existing social relations and conflicts allowed them to build alliances and restrict mobility of trade (e.g. allowing only certain ethnic groups to trade at particular posts) and ultimately helped to keep costs down and minimize resistance from labour (Krech III, 1983).

Thinking back to my childhood conception of Canadian history, I was provided an account of ‘contact’, more specifically ‘cultural contact’ that relies on “a model of the world as a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls” (Wolf, 1982, p. 6). As Comaroff and Comaroff (1992) have noted, “the historic encounter between two social worlds...is always dialectical; that is, each works to transform the other, even as they are being joined in a new order of relations” (p. 97).²²

It has only been in recent years that this kind of dialectical approach has been applied in earnest to Indigenous–settler relations in Canada, and more specifically to the fur trade. Most famously, and controversially, is Richard White’s (1991/2011) *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. White’s concept of “middle ground” is an attempt to step outside of simple Indian-white relations and discuss how when Europeans and Indians met they constructed a common, mutually comprehensible world creating new systems of exchange and meaning. As Wolf explains, “until the end of the eighteenth century...Native American groups were sought as allies by rival European powers...The Indians were still independent military and political agents-“nations,” in the parlance of the time whose support had to be gained with supplies of goods” (1982, p.193) . As a result the exchange of goods and services between Indians and Europeans resembled the giving of gifts more than an exchange of commodities (White, 2011, p.469). The term ‘middle ground’ is picked up in McCormack’s (2010) historical sketch of Fort Chipewyan, a community not far from Hay River which was pulled into the fur trade’s orbit twenty years before Hay River would be. While there was during this early fur era some degree of freedom on the part of groups to move to capitalist mode of production, or not, the intensifying relation between producer and merchant meant that producers were increasingly tied to the very agents and systems who would later undermine their chance of

²² To recount precisely what this may have looked like in my field region would have been a doctoral project in and of itself. The best source for such a description is McCormack’s (2010) *We Like to be Free in this Country: Fort Chipewyan and the Shaping of Canadian History 1788-1920*. Francis and Morantz’s (1982) *Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in James Bay 1600-1870* is also a good source for a depiction of Native American peoples as active and intelligent decision-makers in matters affecting the rate and extent of change within their own cultures.

survival. This “double-bind” (Wolf, 1982, p. 174) would have devastating consequences when the price of furs bottomed out.

Maintaining a fur economy required much more, and varied, types of work than simply trapping. Of particular importance was the procurement of food for posts and transportation. Food production was particularly worthwhile for groups like the Slavey, whose livelihoods already included fishing. In the early 1800s starvation of post managers was a real threat. A large part of their job was to secure adequate supplies for winter. A site close to today’s Hay River was in the 1860s a post designated exclusively for producing fish for nearby Fort Simpson. It remains unclear where the labour came from for this endeavor, but generally production of food was taken up by post staff in attempts to channel local labour to fur production. When the fur trade was later liberalized, “free traders” would come to replace some of the existing indigenized labour. For now, the dependence on Indigenous labour was the most cost effective labour supply. The ethnic composition of the post staff is a point I return to shortly.

Fur trapping demanded ‘indianized’ labour, however toward the mid to late 1800s Catholic and Protestant missionaries began turning up in the region. As was the case with the broader North American context, there was a growing political and moral field which demanded and rewarded a de-indianization of the broader class category, particularly in those regions where fur trapping was no longer a possible livelihood due to resource depletion. In the next section, I use the story of John Hope to elaborate the economic and governmental unevenness of capitalist development. Although racialized at birth as an ‘indian boy’ he is subsequently de-indianized through an upbringing in the Anglican church.

2.4 In Search of Hope: The Race of Uneven Development Between 1850 and 1900

I first encountered the name John Hope in the back of a former Hudson’s Bay building turned museum in Hay River in 2009. In the diary of the 1870 post master, I read a rather cross reporting that Hope and another man were responsible for a fire on New Year’s Eve. The fire destroyed one of two buildings at the fledgling Hay River post. I found myself imagining a small wooden building in flames. I could hear clearly the crackling sounds ringing through January

night air. Temperatures are usually -40c at that time of year. The stillness of extreme cold is the most vivid memory I have of living in the high arctic years ago. It brings a haunting feeling, a reminder of how vulnerable you are in relation to matters of weather and isolation. Trying to snap out of my desires to write historical fiction, I initially left the matter of Hope aside and continued to take notes.

Soon after, I found an 1870 account book where Hope was listed as one of eight waged employees. I could see from cross referencing with other account books that Hope had to use his earnings to replace what he lost in the fire, essentially making him an indentured servant. A second list of names was of ‘Indians’ who received trade goods either for furs or for labour rendered (navigational assistance, providing meat and fish). At the top of the list was a ‘headman’ by the name of ‘Britton,’ Destiny’s family name.²³

Hope’s occupation was listed as ‘interpreter’. Paid bilingualism among HBC employees was out of the ordinary and now Hope had earned my full attention. Translation was usually left to men of the church or to Indigenous traders. The number of Indigenous languages in the region is a debate which is better left to other authors (see, e.g., Rice, 1990), although the region is considered Athabascan (Dene) territory; in general Cree, Chipewyan, English and French were the dominant languages of trade (McCormack, 2010).

Using archival sources from Hay River and the Hudson’s Bay archive in Winnipeg, I pieced together Hope’s path to and from Hay River, and found his movements revealing of the complicated ways in which race and political economy articulated between roughly 1825 and 1900. John Hope was baptized an ‘Indian boy’ by Reverend J. West at the Red River settlement in 1825 (HBC, 2002). In part of the region that is now Manitoba, the Red River settlement was a colonization project started in 1811 after many Scottish people were made destitute through the

²³ Given the relatively small population, I chose family pseudonyms which are uncommon to the area, but which have similar qualities in terms of ethno-national origin. For example, here I use the family name ‘Britton’ for Destiny. Like her own family name, this name is originally from Warwickshire, England and was popular during the 1800s when her family would have been given the name by traders. Most Anglophone names given to ‘Indians’ in the region were usually Scottish (Norn) or Gaelic names, as the Hudson’s Bay Company drew its workers from the Orkney Islands and the Scottish Highlands.

Highland enclosures. Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk, established the colony for landless Scots. The HBC, which had acquired the land through imperial seizure, sold the tract to Selkirk for two reasons. First, it was way to have local agricultural development that could feed its workers; second, parcels could be offered to its labourers upon retirement. This was an incentive strategy meant to deal with the difficulty the HBC had in attracting and retaining workers for the trade posts. Beyond the much needed ‘Indian’ trappers, the process demanded transportation, infrastructure building and maintenance, food production, trading, and accounting. As Burley (1997) explains, the strategy of providing land as an incentive backfired as many men took their plots early and refused to return to work.

Red River was never a wide-open empty space. Rather, it was an area that had long been occupied by trappers working for HBC rival the Northwest Company. Their armed resistance to Selkirk’s presence laid the foundation for the collective identity known as Métis, which remains an important part of the Canadian political legal fabric today. At the same time, ongoing violence left children without families who ended up in the care of the church.

As a child, Hope showed great promise in his ability to read and write in English. Reverend West selected Hope and three other boys to become missionaries to their own people. Much disliked by the HBC officials and retirees who felt that West spent too much time “doting on the Indians”, the Reverend was dismissed after two years of service (Scott, 2005). The other two prodigies were given their own missions before West returned to England. Young Hope eventually joined the Hudson’s Bay Company as an ‘honorable servant’ in the parlance of the time (HBC, 2002).

Hope’s status as a Christian evaded the term ‘Indian’ in reports written about his service. In the notebooks of his superiors and colleagues he was never racialized. My discovery of his shifting status came with the location of his birth record, and later from census data of 1881, which both labeled him “Indian,” the former by birth, the latter as ‘nationality.’ Like many mission workers in the mid nineteenth century, converted Indians (sometimes) lost the distinction of the racialized category in daily practice; however, when it came to state institutions, the racializing boundary remained salient.

While the HBC had been in pursuit of fur since roughly 1670, by the time Hope was born its monopoly on the trade was in jeopardy. Fur sources were depleting in and around Hudson's Bay. The company's desire to move inland in search of more furs and to cut off rival traders placed new demands on the company's labour. The HBC had difficulty in convincing their existing post staff to move away from the single season work around the bay which had characterized the industry up until that point, to the lengthier, more dangerous contracts which involved travel to the northwest (Burley, 1997). The response around the 1820s was to hire "Canadian" labour, which, given that the Canadian state did not yet exist, largely meant the descendants of French settlers or Métis trappers who had worked for the rival Northwest Company, which merged with the HBC in 1821. Hope was hired in 1863 to help paddle large canoes Northwest into the Mackenzie District. By 1868, Hope had arrived on the south shore of the Great Slave Lake. He helped to establish the Hay River Fort (roughly the same place where later Destiny and I will turn up one hundred and forty years later).

While Hope was busy helping to navigate and change the local landscape, important political economic changes were underway, both near and far. First, the Crown sold the HBC to a group of British financiers whose priorities would shift and split from furs to industrial development. Canadian confederation occurred in 1867, but the nascent nation state would not acquire the land where Hope was (the Northwestern Territory) until the Hudson's Bay Company sold it to Canada in 1870. Envious and fearful of the US's rising industrial production, together the new Dominion and British finance capital worked together to expand Canada from east to west, drawing western resources eastwards for the expansion of industrial centers based in Ontario and Quebec.

The class relations between colony and metropole were not simply defined by Indian-White relations. The people who had become 'Canadians' were equally ethnicized and held in low esteem by British capitalists. In 1866, shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company gathered to review a report put together by "one of themselves." Written in the style of an extended letter, the report used terms of direct address, asking members: *A Million- Shall We Take It?* The question was in reference to the sale of the Northwestern Territory and Rupert's Land (figure 5) to the potential Dominion of Canada. These two regions had been up to this point controlled by the HBC.

The Americans, as before observed, understand the theory and practice of colonization and the all-important results and consequences of it, far better than any other people. On all these points the Canadians are most unfortunately backward. Even as I [a shareholder] write, a paragraph meets my eye in a London journal, copied from a leading Toronto newspaper, in which the idea of giving the “extravagant” sum of a Million to the “Hudson’s Bay people” is most earnestly deprecated. The miserable peddlers in Canada have the smallest ideas of enterprize [sic] and advancement. With one of the largest and finest territories in America at their feet, the Canadians remain almost a stagnant people—numbering in both their provinces and territories a population inferior in number to the single state of New York, and scarcely greater than that of the recently populated State of Ohio. The Canadians are spiritless and poor: and, as too often happens with poverty-stricken people, they are insanely jealous of everyone richer than themselves or who is likely to do better (HBC 1866, p. 34-35).

The far Northwest was not part of national project during the early years of confederation. The focus was on agricultural development that was thought to be ill suited to northern soils and temperatures. As such, the region above the ‘fertile belt’ (roughly the 200 km north of the US border) was seen as undevelopable, and northern populations were said to be ‘better left as Indians’ (Coates, 1993). Throughout Hope’s years of service, the new Canadian state remained disinterested in fully incorporating the northern regions into its political and economic landscape. It sought to avoid the high costs (notably in the form of infrastructure for health and education) of extending citizenship rights northwards, and therefore support for the reproduction of northern populations was left largely to the church and remaining trade activity.

With declining interest in furs, the Hay River Fort closed in 1873 and Hope was promoted to postmaster at nearby Fort Simpson. That same year marked the beginning of “the long depression,” the first international financial crisis, which ended Britain’s exclusive claims to industrial dominance. In efforts to recapture some of their losses, expedited plans for development in new and former colonies began. In Canada, this primarily meant rail development through the borrowing of British capital. Across mid-western Canada there was the outstanding issue of unconverted Indigenous populations who were without the economic basis which had sustained them (fur and game), and who were increasingly either dying or causing civil ‘unrest’, both of which challenged the legitimacy of the new state (Kalant, 2004; Kulchyski, 2005, 2007).

The post-confederation numbered Treaty system (1871-1921) was meant to address both issues (Figure 6). Numbered treaties were used by the Canadian state to serially extinguish significant (though not all) Aboriginal claims to land title in exchange for economic and social support from the federal government, essentially swapping claims (and often use of land/resources) for quasi-incorporation into the Canadian nation state and a modicum of political and legal standing. Treaties ceded Aboriginal title to land and significant subsoil rights in exchange for recurring payments and welfare provisions of education and health services/care to Aboriginal residents in the region (Coates & Morrison, 1986a, 1986b; Fumoleau, 2004). The eleven Treaties cover most of central and Northwestern Canada. Each included different terms, as we will see. Some provided farming tools to heads of kin groups, others (in the case of the Northern Treaties 8 and 11) included guarantees of hunting and fishing rights. While Hope moved from post to post in the Mackenzie District between 1871 and 1877, the political landscape to the south changed significantly, with Treaties one to seven settling lands covering much of what are Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and southern Alberta.

Hope married an 'Indian' woman from Fort Simpson and together they had a son. When Hope retired from the company in 1883, he headed south to the newly formed province of Saskatchewan. He returned to the Church of England that had schooled him long ago. In his final years he served as a Sunday school teacher at the newly instituted vocational residential school for Indians in Battleford. His knowledge of Cree and his allegiance to the Church made him an asset to the first state initiated venture into Indian education: residential vocational training. While much has been written on residential schooling in Canada, few have remarked that the earliest ventures were specifically vocational schools organized around anticipated national economic priorities. In the next chapter I show diamond developments made longstanding methods of colonial rule (trades education) seem 'new'.

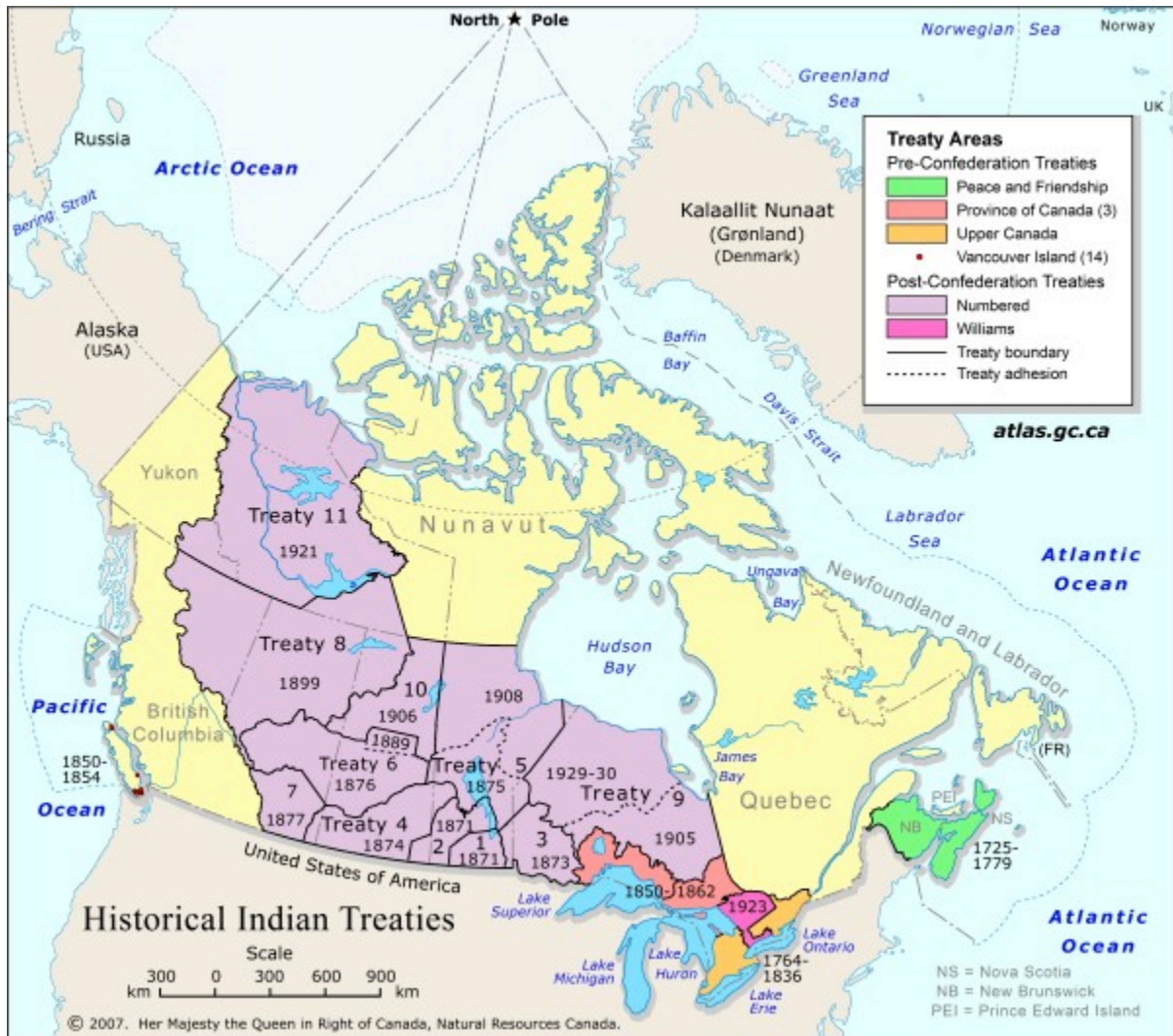


Figure 5: Map of the numbered Treaties of Canada

Two years before Hope's arrival to Battleford, the small town had been the site of largest mass hanging in Canadian history. Eight 'Indians' were brought to death over their resistance to unfair terms of Treaty 6. The children at Canada's first Indian vocational school were brought out to watch the deaths. In the Prairie Provinces and eastern Canada, the project of assimilationist Canada was underway. The distinctions between tribes and nations that had been so important to both trade and empire making were slowly being replaced with a single category: Indian.

2.5 Making and Breaking ‘Treaty’ Indians: Enclosure of The Great Slave Lake Region 1900-1950

When the mining program did not come through for her, Destiny “took off”. When she came back she began working as a housekeeper in a local hotel. As she progressed through her pregnancy, she would return home with swollen feet and with scarcely enough to pay her rent. Housing in the NWT is characterized by high prices and overcrowding. In Hay River, limited availability alongside a continuous stream of middle class in-migrants for public sector work creates a steady demand for rental housing, which translated into high prices. Jobs in education and health care are part of the basic services of the community and are seldom in jeopardy. As a result, when the primary sector declines, the regional economy slows but the rental market remains stable. For those unable to capture a high wage position in the primary or public sectors, rent becomes a barrier to remaining in town, even for those indigenous to the place.

By April in the Northwest Territories everyone is grateful for warmer temperatures. Starting at 10 degrees Celsius, school children play outside without their outer jackets. Melting snow makes for muddy springs. Everyone keeps an eye on the river, placing bets on when ‘break up’ will happen. With the change in weather, Destiny and I return to spending countless hours standing on our balconies. We lean on the iron railings and watch cars and trucks roll around the town’s main square below. We trade stories about what we did that day and watch to see who is driving around. “There goes my auntie,” she’d say, pointing to a beat-up green minivan. I would ask her about the job she landed cleaning hotel rooms and she would offer to have her boyfriend explain to me how to skin a moose. We each had our own ideas of what my anthropology should be.

Hanging out would often lead to “going for a ride”. I had acquired a truck from a friend and we were now mobile. We usually went for slushies at The Rooster, the 24hr convenience store. Sometimes she or I had a more definite destination and dragged the other along. One weekend in May, she asked me if I would drive her to the reserve. She announced that it was Treaty Day. “What’s Treaty day?” I asked. She pursed her lips and looked up the way she always did when I asked her to explicate her common sense to me. She rushed out an answer, “I don’t know. It’s like, I’m Treaty 8. This area... land claims... YOU know. So, like, anyways, on Treaty Day, we go into the recreation complex, sign a book and get 5 bucks.” Destiny and I drive around to the

other side only to find that we are too late. The book has been closed for this year. The recreation complex was empty and Destiny was out of luck.

* * *

In this section, I show how the social formations of the early fur trade era ('bands' and increasingly cohesive regional groups) set up the conditions for ethnic based politics from the 1930s to today. After Hope's departure, the old HBC post building was taken up by an 'Indian chief' who had been encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church to settle in the area. A year later, in 1893, at the request of the chief, an Anglican mission was established. Free traders from central Canada and the United States began to set up small posts in the region in attempts to compete with the HBC. Encouraging competing churches and trading posts to settle in the same area was a way for local Indigenous trappers to secure better terms of trade and more consistent access to goods, which made trapping and fishing easier.

As the twentieth century approached, population changes would bring social and economic shifts. Prior to 1900, Hay River consisted of two small missions, and several extended Slavey kin groups. The total population never exceeded eighty persons, of which five to ten were church officials and traders, while the remaining seventy were Slavey groups whose encampments were at the mouth of the river where fish were abundant (Zarchikoff, 1975). Within the Anglican Church, there were a number of 'Native helpers.' These were converted indigenous individuals from the neighboring communities of Fort Resolution or Fort Chipewyan where direct trade and missions began much earlier. Intermarriage between male 'Native helpers' and female 'Indians' was common as was marriage between non-indigenous churchmen and female 'Native helpers'. Native helpers were often translators, and eventually missionaries in their own right.

The turn of the twentieth century brought gold and mineral rushes, and prospectors began passing through the Hay River Fort on their way to stake their claims. The mission's guest book of 1898 lists one hundred and twenty visitors in a single summer season. It was after the rise in "visitors" that the Anglican Reverend T.J. Marsh noted that the Indians at Hay River had begun to take an interest in learning English, saying "the Indians now began to think it would be a good thing to learn English and were as eager to learn as they were backward before" (Ladies'

Auxiliary, n.d., p. 24). I take this as an index of the awareness on the part of the local Indigenous population of the ways in which the arrival of more free traders and trappers might undermine their livelihoods based on domestic and capitalist production.

In the initial years of the mission, Marsh had noted that “the Indians demanded exorbitant wages for their labour” (Ladies’ Auxiliary, n.d., p. 15). However, their demands dropped after passersby who were stuck due to weather often exchanged labour for food and shelter. While I cannot be sure, it would seem from the reports from the early mission, that local populations did not see their labour power as a commodity. In his diary, the Reverend remarked that often the ‘Indians’ would take pity on him and offer him fish and refuse payment. Fish, at least at this time, was thought of more as a gift than it was as a commodity. This would change when a local/regional market for fish would emerge.

Cultivating Christians and citizens in colonial Canada, like elsewhere, produced oddly mixed results. From the Hay River mission diary it was observed that converting the Indians at Hay River was a challenge, and that they would only engage with their Christian neighbors on their terms. One missionary in 1894 remarked, “If she showed them pictures or told them a story they would listen, but if she began to talk to them of sin they would tell her they never sinned. They seemed to have no feeling of need for a Saviour. It seemed like trying to break down a thick stone wall with a few pebbles. They could make no impression as far as spiritual things were concerned, though the Indians improved in other ways” (Ladies' Auxiliary, n.d., p. 14).

Throughout the long depression of 1873-1896, church missions in sparsely populated places like the Canadian North received smaller amounts of financial support from their parent institutions. The mission school that was established at Hay River opened with seven students from neighboring posts in 1895. The Indigenous groups around Hay River largely ignored schooling. Pupils for the school were, instead, drawn from converted families from around the region, notably the communities further east and south which had had longer direct contact with missionaries. With barely enough food to feed the boarding pupils, Marsh regularly received fish from the Indians, who found his attempts to be self-sufficient through gardening to be futile (Ladies’ Auxiliary, n.d.). The school could not expand until it received further financial support

from the state, as church sources were few. It is under these conditions that we can understand why the church would be involved in facilitating the Treaty process I am going to describe here.

In the early fur trade, the HBC had an interest in providing goods that would enable the reproduction of their labour force. This included provisions in seasons of scarcity of occasional medicines and advances in means of production. At the turn of the twentieth century, the costs associated with reproducing this labour were thought to be the responsibility of the state. Although the HBC had sold off a large part of their land holdings, it remained the largest private landholder in Canada. After 1880, its economic focus turned to selling farmlands and retailing. Attention to the fur trade was minimal and expenditures were significantly reduced. Producers found themselves without access to the means of production, and were increasingly impoverished.

Church officials put pressure on the state to extend the numbered Treaties northwards to assist with relief for impoverished trappers. At the same time this would financially secure mission projects as the state gave authority to established missions to run schools and hospitals through to the 1930s. For groups in the region, assurance was needed that the influx of prospectors would not interfere with existing livelihoods. Increased in-migration was increasingly marginalizing both Indians and ‘half breeds,’ by raising competition over resources and by introducing diseases. With the encouragement of church leaders, some Indigenous populations were willing to sign a Treaty, as it was seen a means to secure access to hunting and fishing rights (Fumoleau, 2004).

With increased mineral activity in the area, a Treaty was suggested by the Northwest Mounted Police who observed “the Indians occupying the proposed line of route from Edmonton to Pelly River... as well as the Beaver Indians of the Peace and Nelson Rivers, and the Sicamas and Nihames Indians, were inclined to be turbulent and were liable to give trouble to isolated parties of miners or traders who might be regarded by the Indians as interfering with what they considered their vested rights” (Duhamel, 1966, p. 3). By 1899, the state sought to confirm the boundaries of Treaty 8, which initially was not going to extend to the Great Slave Lake (Figure 8).



**Figure 6: Map showing the Territory ceded under Treaty 8,
Department of Indian Affairs, 1900**

The Treaty was in essence a governmental project. It aimed to define which landscapes were useful and for what purposes. Treaties 1-7 were organized for agriculture. Treaty 8 was organized to allow for mining and prospecting, but was not immediately to be thought of as suitable for non-Indian settlement. While 1-7 had confined indigenous groups to reservations, the same did not exactly apply in the Treaty 8 territory. From the Treaty, we see that the provision of possible future collective land holding is seen as “for their protection.” This future promise of reserved lands becomes important in Hay River in the 1970s. I quote from the treaty at length to make clear that settlement in the region was underdetermined at this juncture.

The Indians are given the option of taking reserves or land in severalty... As the extent of the country treated for made it impossible to define reserves or holdings, and as the Indians were not prepared to make selections, we confined ourselves to an undertaking to have reserves and holdings set apart in the future, and the Indians were satisfied with the promise that this would be done when required. There is no immediate necessity for the general laying out of reserves or the allotting of land. It will be quite time enough to do this as advancing settlement makes necessary the surveying of the land. Indeed, the

Indians were generally averse to being placed on reserves. It would have been impossible to make a treaty if we had not assured them that there was no intention of confining them to reserves. We had to very clearly explain to them that the provision for reserves and allotments of land were made for their protection, and to secure to them in perpetuity a fair portion of the land ceded, in the event of settlement advancing. (Duhamel, 1966, p. 7)

The Treaty process divided northern populations into different legal categories in ways that would have profound results. ‘Bands’ could be treated as groups, while ‘Half-breeds’ were treated individually. As Coates and Morrison (1986) and McCormack (2010) explain, one important effect of Treaties 8 and 11 on the mixed-blood people was to create and emphasize divisions between them and the Indian population, a division that had been blurred until that point.

According to the treaty, Indians were to become Treaty Indians. This involved “a one-time payment of thirty-two dollars per chief, twenty-two dollars per headman, and twelve dollars per person was to be made, and an annual payment of twenty-five dollars per chief, fifteen dollars per headman, and five dollars per person”²⁴ (Coates & Morrison, 1986, p. 16). This is precisely the five dollars that Destiny I went looking for that afternoon in May.

For others in the region there were two options. First, ‘half-breeds’ were to become Métis and would have their rights extinguished in return for a scrip payment of \$240 per capita (Coates and Morrison, 1986, p. 16). Second, significant portions of the region’s population found themselves redefined as outside the treaty process altogether, which proved rather serious when the price of furs bottomed out in the 1920s and state aid became essential in maintaining life.

Recall that the formation of smaller family groups was shaped by the demands of fur production. The debt system, smaller social formations and the type of commodity production at the posts of the Northwest meant that forms of capital could not accumulate among trapper-families the way it had among Pacific coastal populations like the Kwakiutl (Wolf, 1999). There were distinct state policies that made it particularly difficult for wealth to accumulate for local peoples. For

²⁴ Additional provisions included: a suit of clothing was to be given the chief and headman every three years, and medals and flags when the treaty was signed. Schools were to be provided as the government deemed necessary. Agricultural tools were to be provided, and fifty dollars worth of hunting and fishing equipment to each family after the treaty was signed. Hunting and fishing equipment to the value of three dollars was to be provided to each family annually (Coates and Morrison 1986, p.18).

example, when signing the Treaty, the agent noted that “the chief of the Chipewyans of Fort Chipewyan asked that the Government should undertake to have a railway built into the country, as the cost of goods which the Indians require would be thereby cheapened and the prosperity of the country enhanced. He was told that the Commissioners had no authority to make any statement in the matter further than to say that his desire would be made known to the Government” (Duhamel, 1966, p. 6). To this day, the high cost of goods continues to place a serious financial burden on rural northern households.

Treaty making guaranteed fishing and hunting rights for subsistence purposes.

...it is safe to say that so long as the fur-bearing animals remain, the great bulk of the Indians will continue to hunt and to trap.... We assured them that the treaty would not lead to any forced interference with their mode of life, that it did not open the way to the imposition of any tax, and that there was no fear of enforced military service. (Duhamel, 1966, p. 6)

The restriction of understanding hunting and fishing as a local ‘mode of life’ rather than as connected to global economic practice would come with consequences. Whereas prior to 1900 there were approximately one hundred and forty non-Indigenous people in the entire region, by 1911 there were over five hundred. Between 1900 and 1925, five independent traders set up at Hay River. Raw fur production in the area reached a high point in 1927. A supporting fishing industry developed, largely run by in-migrants from the Prairie Provinces who had overfished lakes to the south. Piper (2009) explains how “Treaty Indians” who had long provided fish to settlers could not compete with commercial fisherman who had access to the capital and equipment that made large-scale fishing easier. As the population would grow with the second fur boom (early 1920s) and a mineral boom of the late 1920s, terms of the Treaty would bar “Treaty Indians” from commercial licenses and loans at a time when competition over fish and game resources was high.

Like Treaties 1 through 7 in the south, which produced their own contradictions, the terms of Treaty 8 would come into conflict with the changing political economy. As a form of enclosure, Treaty-making took land that had been commonly used and made it property available for two partially incommensurable uses: subsistence and furs for "Treaty Indians" and mineral

extraction/exploitation for state and capital. The former depended on limited amounts of immigration, whereas the latter spurred a surge in the population. In this way, fixing populations within a system that depends on, and produces, mobility, as I elaborate below, was not without consequence.

Hay River at the turn of the twentieth century, much like Hay River today, was never a site of direct resource extraction. Its growth between 1900 and 1930 was a result of newly-built lake ports that served as fueling stations for steamers heading up the Mackenzie River in search of furs. Hay River became the midpoint of the renewed fur trade, which boomed in the 1920s with demands for luxury products on American markets. A small industry of providing lumber for steamboat fuel began. Between 1900 and 1925 there were five independent traders set up at Hay River. Raw fur production in the area reached a high point in 1927.

The 1920s brought prosperity to the region, but mostly to new and transient persons. Non-Indigenous trappers were given game-hunting licenses and game regulations were imposed that applied to all. Local groups began stirring over the violation of the terms of Treaty 8 that guaranteed hunting and fishing rights. The 1930s saw the forging of regional Indigenous identities, as collectively groups stood in opposition the encroachment of non-Indigenous trappers on their livelihoods. Many groups refused annual Treaty payments.

When the depression of the 1930s hit, Hay River's non-Indigenous population dropped substantially. Most traders left. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police were withdrawn. The school was closed. By 1937, the non-Indigenous population had dropped to sixteen in Hay River while the Indigenous population had grown to one hundred. This was rather remarkable, as there had been many epidemics (measles, tuberculosis), which had decimated nearby populations.

Treaty making was not simply achieved in the single year it is most commonly associated with, 1899. Rather, some people who had once elected not to take Treaty (either because they registered as Métis, or did not register at all), once faced with substantial economic and political hardship, lobbied the state to join Treaty to receive relief.

Forty-two Métis from Fort Resolution joined the Treaty in 1930. Bourget [the Indian agent] was confident that they did so of their own free will. The following year these Métis asked to have "one good old man, Jean-Marie Beaulieu as a head man." In later years, Beaulieu explained the treaty with quiet pragmatism: A [a Métis man] - took treaty; he was too poor.... The guys that wanted to take treaty did so because there were hard times in the summer, no jobs. But if you took treaty, you could get relief in the form of shells, shot, powder, so you could go out and hunt.... The Treaties got lots more help in relief, houses, than the Non-Treaties got. The Non-Treaties didn't get any. A total of one hundred and sixty-four Métis were admitted to Indian Band lists in the Northwest Territories between the years 1930 and 1943. (Fumoleau, 2004, p. 34-35)

With the retraction of state and capital from this part of the frontier, local populations were without some of the goods they had come to depend on. Non-Indigenous trappers did not leave the area altogether; rather mineral projects (gold and uranium) drew them further north to Yellowknife and Port Uranium. Northern resources that had been thought to be too expensive to extract became affordable once large amounts of labour were available to move northwards. The onset of industrial mining meant more labour moved north and stayed north. The Territorial capital of Yellowknife came into existence in these years. Between the 1930s and the 1970s, increasing racialized disparities in health and wealth that were linked to the non-enforcement of Treaty 8, and specifically the state's inability to guarantee rights while subsidizing state-capital's interests, paved the way for new social and political formations. I turn now to a discussion of these forms.

2.6 Possible Political Worlds: (Re)Making Land Treaties in the Great Slave Lake Region 1970-1990

When I started teaching in the most northerly district of the NWT, I had been warned that there was "high transience" between communities. Students and parents would simply "take off." It was sometimes implied by teachers that it was a failure on the part of parents to "get it together." From Destiny, I started to learn how 'taking off' is just the opposite: it is a way of getting it together.

The first time Destiny "took off" she was fifteen years old. Her grandfather, Bertie Britton had died the week before. Bertie had been elected chief in the late 1970s. He was part of the political organization that brought the Hay River reserve into being (see figure 9). For Bertie, a reservation was a way to respect the past and carve a future for the people he was closest to. In

the 1970s, the town had announced that it would be relocating a few last ‘Treaty Indians’ away from the east bank to new housing on the west side of the settlement. The existing area consisted of a small wooden Catholic Church and graveyard. The plan was to cover the area in four feet of gravel to make a marshalling yard for a proposed pipeline project. Going back to the terms of Treaty 8, an emergent indigenous political group sought legal help through the federal Department of Indian Affairs and successfully achieved a reserve that enabled them then to obstruct this plan. In many ways, this reinforced the boundary between Treaty Indians and others. The reserve was enabled by federal Indian policy - a place of recognition - but left many native people living on the other side of the river defined outside the process.²⁵

Bertie lay in the hospital for two weeks before he passed away. Destiny visited with her grandfather almost every day she could ‘catch a ride’ from the reserve to the hospital in town. She and Bertie would tease each other in the way they always had. He was the primary care giver in their extended family and raised Destiny in, what she called, “the Dene way”.

“A week after grandpa died,” Destiny explained, “my cousin said, ‘let’s fuckin’ take off’ and I was like, ‘yeah, what’s the point of staying around here?’” Destiny and her cousin hitchhiked from Hay River southbound along the Mackenzie Highway to the reservation at Meander River, Alberta. The Mackenzie Highway was the first road that connected ‘north’ with ‘south’. It begins in Grimshaw, Alberta and runs 600km to Hay River. Before it was a road, it was a tractor trail, before it was a tractor trail it was the route Indigenous trappers took to trade at Fort Vermillion when there were no posts at Hay River or their prices/goods deemed insufficient.

Power derives in part from the ability to turn space into place (Harvey, 1989, p.213). At a first blush, the existence of a reservation might signal the marginalization of an ethnic group. Indeed, across the United States and Canada, the systematic seizure of lands and relocation of indigenous populations to reservations throughout 1850s-1930s accomplished precisely that. In the case of the Northwest Territories, the story is much more complicated. The Katlodeeche First Nation is the only reservation in the Northwest Territories. It formed in 1975, only a year after the High

²⁵ A smaller First Nation was established in 1993 in West Channel. These are people who were descendant of fishing families who had not taken Treaty. Locally, they are seen as “not real” or “taking advantage” of status.

Rise where Destiny and I now lived went up. The reservation was a political project whose social and economic pre-conditions can be traced to the mid 1800s. It was part of a struggle to define how local place would be positioned in the context of a ‘modernizing’ town. Hay River’s contemporary geography of difference is part of a longer transformation process. I chart that process here.

While the state ignored early protests regarding the terms of Treaties 8 and 11, the formation of the political movement of the Indian Brotherhood of the 1970s (based on the civil rights style movements in the United States, and influenced by Quebecois nationalism in Canada), coupled with the possibility of a Northern oil pipeline running through the Territory, meant that the state reached a discursive impasse. Its national history (colonialism, dispossession) was now a challenge to its social and economic future (cf. Povinelli, 2002 p.18). The ethnic division between Indian groups and Métis were now points for political mobilization in the interest of reclaiming land rights. The Brotherhood (later renamed the Dene Nation) rejected the categories of Métis, non-status, and Treaty Indian—which were argued to be imposed categories meant to impede solidarity. In July 1975, the Dene Nation passed the Dene Declaration, which at once affirmed solidarity across these groups and their right to self-determination (Erasmus, 1977). Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, Dene Nation Leader George Erasmus adopted a nationalist framework for political mobilization, and continued to underscore the danger of fragmenting policies and lobbying the state on behalf of the larger region. The group was able to place pipeline development on hold for ten years, in order to allow for new land claim agreements to be settled.

The Dene Nation was successful in bringing Indigenous social and economic inequalities to the forefront of the Canadian imagination. Through the 1960s and 1970s, national cohesion in Anglophone Canada had been achieved, in large part, through the turn to a liberal multi-cultural paradigm- a paradigm of integration of immigrant and indigenous populations into national narratives based on their distinctiveness or cultural difference. The realignment of national identity during this time was understood as paramount to the success of the nation’s economic productivity under the liberal leadership of Pierre Trudeau (cf. Povinelli 2002, p.18). What made Aboriginal resistance effective was the support in garnered from non-indigenous Canadians. Much like other liberal diasporas, Australia in particular (Povinelli, 2002), there is a common

sentiment among Canadian citizens that decreased harm comes through increased understanding of difference. The inclusive-seeming logic of liberalism held substantial public appeal. Yet, there were still substantial limits on what, or who would be recognized and in turn how resources would be distributed.

In 1978, Métis and Dene rejected the land claims proposal suggested by the state. At this point, funding for negotiations between the people of the NWT was suspended. The challenge of solidarity across seventy thousand square kilometers now aggravated, the Dene Nation struggled to try to adequately represent the full region. After another rejected proposal, the federal government proclaimed that they would no longer negotiate with the entire Dene Nation; they would only be negotiating regionally with smaller groups. Internal divisions within the Dene Nation grew increasingly acute. Their neighbors to the North, the Inuvialuit (who had never been included in the numbered treaty system), had reached a settlement in 1984. The newly formed Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and its shareholders began to receive dividend payments from oil and gas explorations.

By 1993 the fragments began to break away, with the groups whose unsettled claim areas stretched along the Mackenzie Valley Gas corridor withdrawing from the Dene Nation. The shift to regional representation unsettled the politics of 'Indian-ness' and regional solidarities—at once according more autonomy to Aboriginal groups while at the same time politicizing their respective differences with one another. These processes made land claims dependent on and exacerbated differences between groups, many of whom had up to that point identified more closely with a local community than with a linguistic or cultural nation. Likewise, the economic stakes of large-scale resource allocations drove wedges within groups according to the sorts of internal inequalities that had long beset Aboriginal peoples (see also Dombrowski, 2008). The transformation was pronounced: some of the same leaders who had been members of the Indian Brotherhood in the 1970s had by the 1990s re-invented themselves as industry consultants, and many have been instrumental in pushing through development projects similar to those they once adamantly opposed. By recounting such turns of events, I do not seek to place blame on Aboriginal leadership. Rather, the point of an inquiry into the politics of history in the area is to show how regimes of recognition in and against labour migration and extraction have made such transformations sensible and acceptable to large segments of the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal

population, and how and when alternative configurations of history and future development are lost in the process.

To summarize, changing demands of capital engender different forms of migration, which existing populations deal with in a number of ways, ranging from indifference to collaboration to resistance. A key Indigenous strategy for securing livelihood was to forge a regional identity based on securing access to the means of production. The terms of that access, however, placed them in a different relationship to rights than other citizens (notably, prohibited them from commercial practices), which, with increased in-migration, would prove to undermine their ability to reproduce themselves in the same way. To overcome this, they sought a second form of formal identification as fixed populations vis-à-vis the state. At the same time, many individuals and families sought other means of reproduction (mobility towards resource projects, participation in the Canadian army during the two World Wars, or mobility to schools and cities where the Canadian project of assimilation would continue). Others stayed and invested in local differences as a means to seek equality in a state, which had now spread liberal values of democracy to its frontiers.

2.7 Modernity, Mobility and Morality: 1990-Present

One morning I was headed back to the High Rise when I crossed paths with Destiny, who seemed to be headed in the same direction. Having overheard her alarm clock an hour earlier and her boyfriend's plea for her to get moving so as not to be late for work, I was confused by her going in the opposite direction from the hotel where she worked. "Did they cancel your shift?" I asked. She turned to me and I could see her eyes were red. She pushed the tears off to the side and told me she had been 'suspended' for drinking.

Having spent the better part of her four days off with me driving around Northern Alberta during my attempts to interview seasonal and migrant labour working in forestry and gas exploration, I was very confused. "How is that possible?" I asked. "They got a fax with my picture on it. It said, 'This woman is pregnant. Do not to serve her alcohol. She has been drinking her whole pregnancy.' In the picture is me with a puppy I had for only a few months when I was 15. My grandpa had just passed away. The only one with that picture is my mother."

Destiny was scheduled to appear in court over charges she had laid against her mother a year ago for stabbing her during a squabble. The fax had been sent to all of the restaurants and bars in town. After her Thursday shift, Destiny had gone to the hotel bar/restaurant to have a ginger ale with friends. Her manager coupled his memory of her in the bar with the fax and determined, despite her claims to the contrary, that she had been drinking alcohol.

Now unable to hold off the tears, Destiny raised her voice, “I might as well fucking drink this whole pay cheque,” she says, waiving the envelope she has in her hand. “It’s not even enough to pay my rent and everyone thinks I drink anyhow.” We start walking again and I tried to comfort her. “You don’t have to prove them right,” I say. As it turned out, proving them wrong would be difficult. I explained to her that you actually cannot be let go for off-duty behaviors an employer deems immoral. “But I didn’t drink! And [the manager] says I can’t come back until I confess.”

I started by calling the employment standards bureau of the NWT. In order to file a complaint, Destiny would have had to be fired. Suspensions are an approved practice, even when their duration is unspecified and are a result of behaviors not specified as part of the employment criteria. Employers have the right to suspend an employee three times before they must be released.

Seeing that there were no institutional means to address the issue, I called the hotel to speak to the manager. “I can’t stand the idea of someone pregnant drinking in my bar,” he said. “It doesn’t matter what you can or cannot stand,” I informed him, “your moral values are not part of the labour code and you have no evidence that she consumed alcohol.” A little taken aback by my reluctance to share his moral stance, he quickly shifted his story of her suspension to be about her ‘performance’ and ‘attitude.’ “You did not bring up either of those matters with her this morning,” I told him. He agreed to let her return to work, provided she come in and ‘apologize.’ She never went back.

Mining depends on and produces extensive amounts of migration, but not all movements are understood in the same way. For example, only 35 km east of Hay River is Pine Point. Pine Point is: a former lead/zinc mine that prompted the building of a ‘modern’ community in the late 1960s

and whose population reached 2000 in the 1980s. It was completely burned to the ground in 1996. When workers started to leave Pine Point, they were not seen as “taking off.” “Moving on” or “moving up” or “going home” are socially sanctioned ways of leaving a resource region of Canada. “Taking off,” on the other hand, works differently. From the perspective of middle class educators and employers in the region (indigenous and not) people who “take off” simply “don’t want to take responsibility for their problems” or are “always looking for the easy out.” These were precisely the assumed moral failures that the work readiness program Destiny was enrolled in aimed to address. Women who “take off” have their children taken by social services. These moral assessments of people’s migration could easily be taken as racism or something of the sort, as “taking off” is used almost exclusively by, and regarding, low-income, Aboriginal people. Some have made the culturalist claim that “taking off” is an indigenous practice, a continuation of hunter-gatherer lifestyles wherein movement, regional intermarriage and flexible social formations were all essential for securing livelihood during the early fur trade. I do not wish to make these arguments here.

The point I want to reinforce is that communities are constantly struggling within and against the periodicity of extractive industries, and that communities enforce individual mobility on people, even while industry tries to keep them in place. It is the intersection of communities and capital that move people in and out. These movements have the capacity to undermine the promises of natural resource development. However, through specific technologies of statecraft and by way of public culture, they also manage to legitimize it, even to render it urgent. “Taking off” is more than simply an individual or household strategy for survival used to deal with mining’s highs and lows. “Taking off” folds into larger historical processes of place/race making in the context of natural resource exploitation. “Taking off” renders productive the contradictions that emerge when racial categories of personhood (in this case those associated with Indigeneity/Aboriginality) get tied in their making and unmaking to specific, yet changing, dominant projects in the Canadian Northwest.

2.8 Conclusion

Despite ongoing inequalities, the dominant expectation persists that free market growth in the primary sector will bring socio-economic equality to Canada’s north by providing jobs for the local population and drawing north new labour who will use northern businesses and services.

When diamonds were discovered in the NWT in 1991, there was a renewed sense of possibility with respect to wealth being brought to the region. It is precisely this hope, this orientation to the future, that I am interested in. How are past failures discursively and affectively reconfigured into present aspirations for the “good life”?

Destiny eventually lost her apartment and now migrates back and forth between relatives’ homes on the reserve and her boyfriend’s home on a reservation in Alberta. The socio-economic agreements and assessments I discuss in chapter five draw our attention to the benefits enjoyed by the people employed in the mines. However, for the people without those same salaries (e.g. entry level service workers, seasonal workers) it is extremely difficult to reproduce their households, particularly if they are without the luxury of property or a second income.

In 2010, Destiny gave birth to a baby girl. She named her Cherish. “Because she is everything to me,” she explained. Destiny called me when Cherish was two months old because she was unsure about whether to register her with her own band in Hay River or with her partner’s band in oil-rich Alberta. She wanted to know which band I thought had more possibilities in terms of new resources prospects in the region. “I just want her to have a good future,” she said.

On several scales, mining depends on the movement of labour into and out of development regions to ensure forms of social regulation and economic productivity commensurate with global industry’s imperatives. Destiny and John Hope show us that while capital is adept at harnessing expended populations to these ends, it cannot single-handedly produce them. In addition to demand for unequally divided labour, capitalist expansion depends on establishing and maintaining sovereignty over areas to access raw resources. Establishing sovereignty and dividing labour pose a dialectical challenge to state and capital. The social process of differentiation aims to meet this dual challenge. The history between Hope and Destiny is meant to elaborate how citizenships and locality, as means of differentiation, are used by state, capital and social actors in different, and partially incompatible, ways. As a result, tensions arise, underlining a core contradiction of liberal citizenship, namely unequal inclusion.

The relationship between enclosure and differentiation is what is at stake here. Differentiation occurs at the nexus of economic imperatives, state power and existing differences (Cooper and

Stoler, 1997; Sider and Smith, 1997). Differentiated citizenships (differential positionings in relation to rights, benefits, protections; Sider, 2003) are a crucial feature of modern states for legitimizing unequal divisions of labour and/ resources, yet they cannot be fully managed or produced by the state itself. Differentiated citizenships and inequalities that come to be named race, or gender (for example) become harnessable vulnerabilities that simultaneously “produce, or deeply participate in the production of enduring inequalities” while allowing the state to claim that it has one set of rules that apply to all (p. xv).

John Hope’s baptized name signals the system is driven by law (in conjunction with the contingencies of capitalist political economy) on the one side, and his own hope and mobility on the other. The changes, which situate Destiny and John Hope within and against categories of Indigeneity, reveal how, in the first instance, states reproduce locality to maintain sovereignty and make resources available to capital. At the same time, however, to harvest those same resources and reproduce locality and labour at a cost attractive to state and capital, populations are circulated to and from frontier zones of extraction. The effects are that these populations increase local competition over resources that drive wages down and the cost of living up. The contradiction is that existing local populations need to increasingly rely on the state for social reproduction.

What sustains the working side of the equation is not status or cultural difference, as Destiny’s story points out—they are far too ambivalent and tainted concepts; but rather, it is hope that achieves this work. Hope is the idea that they might find a point of steadiness amid the wild ride of capitalism, which even the state cannot tame. But as Gramsci (1935/1971) makes clear, this is an individual hope, one for Destiny, Cherish, Hope and his wife, but not for “Indians” in general.²⁶

²⁶ Selections from this chapter were initially published in the edited collection, *21st Century Migration: Ethnography and Political Economy* edited by Winnie Lem and Pauline Gardiner-Barber (Bell, 2012). I am extremely grateful to both editors for their feedback on the many iterations of this piece.

3 Ethical Object, Ethical Nation: The Global and Local Context of Canadian Diamonds

3.1 Introduction

Large scale resource extraction projects, like diamond mining, often bring significant social and environmental changes to the immediate region. I have laid out some of those changes to the Great Slave Lake region in the last chapter. Change, real or anticipated, can cause quite a stir. It is able to garner disparate senses of optimism, apprehension and even anxiety. Once the presence of diamonds buried under the Canadian tundra was confirmed in the 1990s, the uneasy language of change flooded all genres of discourse. From every day talk, to local media, to academic research, all questions oriented to the notion of change. Whether changes to come were good, bad or complicated was debatable, and indeed hotly debated both locally and nationally. Would new mining projects bring economic prosperity, environmental destruction or both? Could these developments lay the foundation for a new era of Aboriginal rights? Could the legacies of colonialism be repeating themselves? All kinds of either/or scenarios came about many of which were spoken of in terms of obligation. Aboriginal people *should* benefit from mining. Environmental impacts *should* be assessed. Aboriginal culture *should* not be jeopardized.

By 2007, Canada's Northwest Territories became the third largest producer of diamonds by value in the world. The designation 'by value' reflects the ability of Canadian gems to fetch higher market prices than those marked as 'conflict' stones. This chapter traces the geopolitical and semiotic processes involved in creating the 'ethicality' of Canadian diamonds against the dual backdrop of a publicly criticized global industry and an uneasy national politics of internal colonialism. I ask, what is the relationship between the national and ethical? How is this relationship forged? What are the effects of these particular configurations?

To answer these questions, I look at how diamonds are narrated on local, national and global scales. I show how they are caught up in two complimentary scale-making projects. Anna Tsing (2005) defines scale as "the spatial dimensionality necessary for a particular kind of view, whether up close or from a distance, microscopic or planetary... [S]cale is not just a neutral frame for viewing the world; scale must be brought into being: proposed, practiced, and evaded,

as well as taken for granted. Scales are claimed and contested in cultural and political projects” (58). The ethicality of Canadian diamonds hinged on two claims. First, rather simply, they are not “African.” Second, diamond mining brings development to the Canadian arctic and empowers local (indigenous) peoples. Both of these involve particular scale-making projects and racialized geographies. On the one hand, Canadian diamonds were deracialized and nationalized as “pure white stones” on global scales. On the other hand, they were (re)racialized on local scales as good for Aboriginal development. In linking diamond development to national and local desires to ‘improve’ the indigenous population, the ‘ethicality’ of Canadian diamonds was doubled. Not only were arctic diamonds not African, but they were also a means for alleviating indigenous poverty and providing empowerment. The suffering of Others (far and near) was reconfigured in such a way that commodities (in this case diamonds) could be infused with, or deprived of, moral qualities and new forms of value were semiotically produced.

3.2 Defining Diamonds’ Fifth ‘C’

In 2001, the global NGO World Vision launched a human rights campaign to ‘bring clarity to the diamond sector’. What started in the late 1990s and proliferated through to the mid 2000s, was a movement to draw global attention to a relationship between African diamonds and armed conflicts in countries like Sierra Leone, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The campaigns asked consumers to help put an end to the circulation of what became shorthanded as ‘blood diamonds’. One prominent campaign suggested that the four C’s of diamond selection criteria (cut, color, clarity and carat) should be joined by a fifth.

Think of how much you pay for a diamond. One diamond alone can purchase many weapons. If you’re buying a diamond, don’t forget to ask about the fifth ‘C’—Does this diamond come from a conflict zone? And tell your friends to do likewise. Concerned consumers will help keep the industry honest” (Hart, 2001:187 in Grant and Taylor, 2004).

Campaigns like this one put the ethical onus on the buyer to ‘keep the industry honest’. The result was the production of a discursive space in which some diamonds could become part of a unique and fast growing commodity class: ethical commodities. James Carrier (2010) defines “ethical commodities” as material objects infused with value-producing moral attributes that can be assessed by the purchaser. In order for commodities to be understood as ‘ethical,’ they must

be rendered legible. That is, there must be a means by which a consumer can distinguish between objects with identical physical properties. This commodity class could be understood to be a part of what Žižek (2009) calls ‘cultural capitalism’ wherein the purchase of commodities is “neither on account of their utility nor as status symbols; we buy them to get the experience provided by them, we consume them in order to render our own lives pleasurable and meaningful” (p. 52-53). While diamonds continue to hold symbolic value as signs of wealth and romance, ‘clean diamonds’ allow purchasers to experience their consumption as moral and by extension, understand themselves as ethical subjects.

In the case of diamonds, the process of producing ethicality was reversed. Through ‘blood diamonds’ campaigns, ‘African’ stones were infused with qualities of immorality. The presence of these qualities, then, could be either confirmed or negated by a responsible consumer. When diamond mogul DeBeers became the target of many campaigns to raise awareness against conflict stones, their well-known advertising slogans proved particularly vulnerable to the critical adaptations that rendered certain stones ‘unethical.’ Ad spoofs like “diamonds are a guerilla’s best friend”²⁷ or “amputation is forever” were accompanied by gruesome images that evoked a “grammar of responsibility” (Barnet et al., 2011) that held the consumer in the particularly powerful subject position of disciplining the diamond industry generally, or the individual corporations specifically (but never the wider process of exploitation). As it would turn out, diamonds’ emergent grammar of responsibility coincided with, and was amplified by, a new site for procuring the precious stone: the Canadian arctic.

As work in critical geography has shown, ethical commodity registers emphasize some aspects of production while erasing others (Mutersbaugh, 2010; Carrier, 2010; Barnet et al., 2011). The emergence and marketing of Canadian diamonds is no exception. Seemingly disconnected from problems associated with African mining contexts, diamonds mined in Canada offered consumers a purchase that was seemingly free of conflict. Diamond development supporters in Canada felt the emerging industry was best placed to “secure a premium from the ‘peacefulness

²⁷ In her essay *Picturing Blood Diamonds*, Falls (2011) looks at these campaigns in detail. The major NGOs involved in picturing blood diamonds include Global Witness, Partnership Africa Canada and Amnesty International.

and integrity' of its mining context" (McCarthy, 2003 in Le Billon, 2006). Some of the most enthusiastic supporters went as far as to suggest that the fifth 'C' of diamond selection criteria should be "Canadian."

3.3 Diamonds 101

Before I move on to my analysis, it is important to understand some basic facts about diamonds and their methods of extraction. Diamonds are a carbon allotrope whose natural formation requires rather specific conditions, chiefly high pressure and low temperature. They form deep below the earth's surface and are carried upwards by deep-originating volcanic eruptions. The magma travelling up the volcanic pipe cools into igneous rock known as kimberlite or lamproite (Erlich & Hausel, 2002). Not all kimberlite pipes are necessarily diamondiferous. Prospectors rely on easier to spot indicator minerals such as (red) garnet, (black) ilmenite and (green) olivine, which tend to co-occur with diamonds. Primary source diamonds are those that are still embedded in kimberlite. Secondary source diamonds, often called alluvial diamonds, are those that have eroded out of their kimberlite or lamproite matrix, and accumulated because of water or wind action. These different sources dictate different harvest methods.

Alluvial diamond mining is the term used to describe the process through which diamonds are recovered from secondary sources such as deposits of sand, gravel or clay in riverbeds or shorelines. Large concentrations of alluvial diamond deposits are mined on an industrial basis. However, most alluvial diamond deposits are spread across huge geographic areas, which cannot be easily isolated and therefore are not mined industrially. These deposits are more available to artisanal or small-scale alluvial diamond digging. So-called conflict stones are generally mined in this way²⁸.

Primary source diamonds must be mined industrially and are significantly more capital intensive, but arguably less labour intensive. Diamonds from Canada are in this category. They are mined

²⁸ For a discussion, see De Boeck's (2008) essay "Diamonds without borders: a short history of diamond digging and smuggling on the border between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola (1980-2008)" and other essays in Vlassenroot & Van Bockstael (Eds.) *Artisanal Diamond Mining: Perspectives and Challenges* .

primarily using open pit or open cast methods. This process involves creating a large hole in the ground through the use of explosives. Heavy equipment digs out and collects ore, which is then taken to an on-site processing and recovery plant. This ore then passes through several machines that separate diamonds from other matter using a variety of chemical and technical methods. Once the ore is in the processing stage it is tracked by a handful of workers who observe the process via computer screens in an office. The division of labour combined with the intense security measures and procedures means that very few employees come into physical contact with the diamonds.

The value of diamonds mined using open pit methods is measured in carats per ton of material removed. This value is known to decrease with depth into the kimberlite pipe (Legrand, 1980). At a certain point, it may be profitable to move to a second type of harvesting method known as underground mining. This involves a similar process to the one described above, but rather than moving down into the earth, small tunnels are cut into the earth horizontally. Smaller equipment is used to remove mined ore in underground situations. Some of this equipment can be operated by remote control.

Thus, the majority of the labour process involved in arctic industrial diamond mining is driving and maintaining heavy equipment. The other piece, which is often overlooked is the work involved in reproducing labour. All three mine sites are remote. Low and middle level labour must stay on site for two-week rotations. This creates a significant amount of work cleaning, cooking and transporting workers around the site. Before arriving at the underground training course, David and Ruth (see introduction) worked as cooks in the mine's kitchens.

When mines are in production, they require between 400-1000 employees, over half of whom are considered to be 'unskilled' or 'semi-skilled.' A large portion of employment opportunities come in the mine's construction and reclamation phases. Many of the open pits are at the bottom of drained lakes. Contract firms are hired to begin the process of draining and damming waterways to prepare for the mineral extraction. Setting up the workers' camps and the processing facility are also a large part of the project. Two of the other underground mine trainees you will meet in chapter six helped build one of the mines under contract from a German engineering firm only to be put back on the labour market at the contract's termination.

The speed with which producers aim to go from discovery to production means that the labour process is divided in such a way that specialized teams can be flown in for specific tasks much faster than local labour could ever be trained. As the firms in operation are some of the world's largest, they have access to a substantial mobile labour pool who has taken their place in the corporations' global, Taylorized production process, flying from site to site repeating the same limited sets of tasks.

3.4 Telling Diamond Stories: Arctic and African Imaginaries

Perhaps more than any other mineral, diamonds have attracted the attention of many storytellers (Falls, 2005, 2011). Getting good stories (much like prospecting for minerals) depends, in part, on chance. When American science journalist Kevin Krajick arrived in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories in the summer of 1994, he was determined to get enough details to cover the story of a potentially huge diamond strike on the Canadian tundra. Krajick had been personally invited to come and see the remote claim site by Charles Fipke, one of two prospectors responsible for the strike. The reporter's trip north went from being a single visit for a single story to a five-year engagement with diamond discovery and development. He followed prospectors and scientists as they dug up samples on the tundra. He sat in corporate meetings where strike parcels were sold to global mining giants. He recorded squabbles between prospectors and their financiers. He followed legal disputes and attended grand opening receptions. His connection to the unfolding of events was so intimate that the reporter even captured the details of the dissolution of Fipke's marriage at the very moment when the prospector had become one of Canada's 100 wealthiest men. When it came to stories, Krajick had struck gold.

In 2001, his observations were published as a nonfiction novel: *Barren Lands: An Epic Search for Diamonds in the North American Arctic*. In the opening chapter, Krajick sets the scene in which his drama unfolds. The "barren lands" where the deposits were found are described as empty and unused. Next we meet the two quirky prospectors who serve as the main characters; Charles Fipke/Chuck," and Stewart Blusson/Stu. Very quickly we are taken from a description of the empty, unused landscape to Chuck and Stu fumbling about what they call "the property."

Casually mentioned is the unnamed Australian mining conglomerate funding their millings about.

What the American journalist offers in his account is paradigmatic of what others have called “frontier myths” (Slotkin, 1992; Furniss, 1999). These stories have been central to the writing of American and Canadian cultural history. The North American frontier myth is a story of unoccupied natural landscapes where resources are abundant and free for the taking. They tell of individuals of high moral and physical prowess moving to the nation’s edges to claim their rightful place in a social order where self-reliance, democracy and competition reign supreme. The moral landscape of the frontier is one of boundaries: the encounter between civilization and wilderness, man and nature, whites and Indians (Furniss, 1999, p.10). In these stories, those in search of fortune head north (or west) and are subsequently met with equal parts reward and tragedy. The frontier myth has been an object of critique on both sides of the border, with critics drawing attention to the kinds of people and relations these stories obscure, specifically indigenous populations and the multiple forms of domination settlement involved (Slotkin, 1973, 1986, 1992; Furniss, 1997, 1999).

The northern diamond rush was particularly well suited to the frontier myth’s storyline. It had all the right elements of the typical plot: eager and earnest prospectors meet global capital on uninhabited, treeless landscape in pursuit of a luxury commodity whose production and circulation has a notorious record of corruption, violence, and secrecy. At the time of the novel’s publication, non-fiction accounts of the diamond industry had just begun to be of interest to the general public. While Krajick was at the beginning of his diamond journey, journalist Janine Roberts (1994) was completing her first diamond story. The film, *Diamond Empire*, was a critical take on those who control the search for, and selling of, the precious stones. Interest in the conflict surrounding diamonds was on the rise.

More non-fiction accounts followed suit. This included Stefan Kanfer’s (1995) *The Last Empire: De Beers, Diamonds, and the World*, Matthew Hart’s (2001) *Diamond: A Journey to the Heart of an Obsession*, Greg Campbell’s (2004) *Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path Of the World's Most Precious Stones* (the basis for the Hollywood film by a similar title), Tom Zoellner’s (2007) *The Heartless Stone: A Journey Through the World of Diamonds, Deceit, and*

Desire and finally a second work by Roberts (2007) *Glitter & Greed: The Secret World of the Diamond Cartel*.

Unlike Krajick's upbeat *Barren Lands*, these pieces focused on the proscribed African diamonds and functioned as critiques of the industry. The growing interest in conflict diamonds meant there was a parallel market for stones that were presented as 'conflict-free. These accounts unwittingly helped to set up a sharp contrast between the bad (African/'blood' diamonds) and the good ('clean' and Canadian), just in the nick of time. DeBeers, the target of the majority of criticisms, became known as the 'one bad apple' of capitalism, and PR campaigns by mining giants Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton harnessed the chance to appear as the ethical alternatives in the Canadian north. Indeed, as I elaborate below, the tarnished image of the gemstone sparkled again.

As Falls (2011) has explained popular accounts about diamond mining frequently "mythologize charismatic figures like Cecil Rhodes [founder of DeBeers] while sanitizing conflicts, glossing over for example, the systematic exploitation of black sub-Saharan workers by white diamonders" (p.443). *Barren Lands* is guilty of the broad accusation. It focuses on two zany prospectors and glosses over long standing struggles for land and livelihood, and the use of racialized technologies of statecraft to conjoin mining to modernity and whiteness while fusing Indigeneity with untouched nature and a timeless past.

3.5 Pure Ice: The Races and Scales of a Global Commodity

Campaigns and exposés on issues shorthanded as "blood diamonds" took many forms: consumer-targeted ads, documentary films, non-fiction accounts, and a Hollywood blockbuster. In the television documentary *Diamond Road* (Pajuha & Becker, 2007), shoeless diamond diggers in Sierra Leone wade through murky waters in the small hopes that they might find a valuable stone. The documentary goes on to show that even if a diamond is found, the chain of exploitation is such that the digger receives little reward. Images of artisanal alluvial diggers gained prominence in the global diamond imaginary through visuals like these (Falls, 2011). For the Canadian diamond, the symbolic story is quite different. In this story, valuable resources are not the result of a complex process of labour and exchange: they are simply a product of nature.

Canadian diamond advertising images are always void of human presence²⁹. They use Arctic icons such as glaciers and polar bears to evoke imaginaries of the deep North, even if the mines are landlocked (meaning not near glaciers) and only 150km-400km outside of the capital city of Yellowknife in a bio-zone better described as taiga than tundra (meaning no polar bears). These are particularly striking when compared to the global ‘blood diamond’ awareness campaigns that include circulating images of hard-working artisanal African miners, like the ones followed throughout *Diamond Road*.

Brand ‘Canada’ was not effective simply because of its great physical distance from Africa, though issues of race and politics were evident throughout the branding. As the counter-image to African “darkness” (Ferguson, 2006), Canadian diamonds were marketed as “white stones” and “pure ice”. Whereas blood runs hot, ice runs cold. Ice occurs naturally, whereas blood is drawn in the realms of the socio-political. Most advertisements emphasized notions of whiteness and purity by drawing on images of untouched snowy northern landscapes and using slogans like “as pure and beautiful as the arctic itself” (Canada Diamonds, 2012).

By 2007, Canada was the third largest producer of diamonds by value in the world (GNWT, 2007). The designation ‘by value’ reflects the ability of Canadian gems to fetch higher market prices than those marked as conflict stones. Drawing on James Scott’s (1998) notion of legibility, Carrier (2010) explains that a key part of making objects legible (as ethical) depends on rendering them as instances of a conceptual category. The conceptual categories of ‘conflict’ and ‘conflict-free’ must be in place in order for “Canadian” to become an instance of either category³⁰. Because the notion of conflict was so tightly wedded to Africa in general – and Sierra Leone in particular – building a brand that capitalized on geographic distance between mining spaces proved initially quite effective.

²⁹ I do not reproduce images here due to copyright concerns.

³⁰ Carrier (2010), using basic principles of semiotics, adds that eventually the instance can come to replace the category itself. For instance, if packages of ‘ethical’ coffee have photographs of smiling small scale farmers, then eventually ‘ethical’ coffee *must* be produced by small scale farmers. This is problematic as it obscures matters like small scale farmer’s inability to meet production demand and relying on itinerant/migrant labour (West, 2012). This holds true in the Canadian case. National ‘ethical consumers’ often say “it’s Canadian” to index a morally superior, even if highly ambiguous, choice.

How can an object such as a diamond take on national qualities and by extension ethical ones? As Mutersbaugh and Lyon (2010) explain, legibility is most often achieved through certification practices meant to render ethical qualities visible to consumers. Consumers, by extension, become ethical arbiters. Processes of legibility can range from formal certifications, to loose associations through branding or celebrity endorsements. In the case of diamonds, industry criticisms were managed through the introduction, in 2003, of a supranational regulatory regime: the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS). The KPCS is a joint government, civil society, and industry initiative aimed at stemming the flow of rough diamonds used to finance wars through largely voluntary measures of certification.³¹ To ensure that diamonds would not suffer the same fate as furs after boycott campaigns of late 1980s, industry had to conjure up a way of neatly dividing and demarcating spaces by using labels such as ‘violent’ or ‘peaceful’, and ‘dirty’ or ‘clean.’ Similarly, stones could be understood as either ‘blood’ or ‘ice.’ Through the use of clearly coded language, the KPCS and Canadian advertising campaigns aimed to render the world legible as a moral map with distinct spaces of ‘good’ and ‘bad’. As Le Billon (2006) explains, these campaigns successfully separated ‘violent’ spaces of exploitation from ‘peaceful’ spaces of consumption, while achieving significant trade reforms in the diamond sector.

Diamonds mined in Canada are KPCS certified. However, attempts to inflate diamonds’ ethical value (at least for Canadian markets) is achieved by highlighting their country of origin (Canada) in promotional materials and sales interactions. In Capital Volume I, Marx (1867/1990) is concerned with how commodities tend to be presented or perceived in a peculiar way under capitalism. This method of representation ignores or denies the labour time entailed in the commodities’ production and (re)presentation to the would-be purchaser. He calls this “the fetishism of commodities and the secret thereof.” Although “Canadian” signals some attention to the labour power required to mine stones (it indicates that the diamonds are not the result of poor working conditions such as those endured by alluvial miners in Africa), it also obscures forms of

³¹ Questions of the effectiveness of KPCS are out of the scope of my interests here. Most assessments of its successes and limitations are discussed in NGO reports which largely contend that the KPCS is effective in some respects, but require more diligent application in others (Gobal Witness 2004, 2005; Amnesty International, 2006; Partnership Africa Canada 2006). See also van Dijk (2009).

labour involved in the process, such as cutting, polishing and setting. Even in the case of ethical commodities that make production (partially) transparent through certification processes, “fetishism,” broadly conceived, helps to maintain a focus on the general tendency to obscure the wide range of relations that bring objects to market (Carrier, 2010).

According to the “Canadian Diamond Code of Conduct” (2002), stones are said to be “Canadian” if they are mined in Canada. Cutting and polishing can, and does, happen abroad. In large part, stones are cut and polished in India or China, then taken to Belgium to be resold. While there was a heavily state subsidized attempt to set up a secondary industry in the NWT, almost all facilities were closed during the financial crisis. The majority of producers of finished so-called Canadian diamond jewelry keep their production process outside of Canada. I interviewed one of the leading producers of Canadian diamond jewelry who explained that the bulk of their pieces are made in Merida, Mexico. Only the occasional commissioned piece is manufactured in Toronto.

The production of Canadian diamonds largely happens beyond the country’s borders. More to the point – and as explained by Table 1– none of the companies currently in operation are Canadian-owned, although many are traded in the Toronto stock exchange. The majority of Canadian-owned mining extraction firms operate abroad. While many North American exploration capital firms invest at home, seldom do extraction firms pursue local projects. North America is unfavorable when compared to the “less developed” world (Tsing, 2005). Often complaining that Canadian regulatory regimes are too cumbersome, or inhospitable to free market logic, transnational mining corporations (TMCs) prefer those states which expedite time between discovery and production time. As Anna Tsing (1999, 2005) explains, “by the 1980s, the locus [of Canadian mining] had shifted from mining *in* Canada to mining *for* Canada,” or perhaps more precisely for Canadian capital markets (Tsing, 1999: 139). In nationalizing diamonds as Canadian products, large parts of the investment, production and circulation process are erased.

Project Name	Parent	Investment History	Major Milestones
Ekati	BHP Billiton	80% Anglo-Australian owned BHP is the largest company in Australia measured by market capitalization and the UK's 9 th largest corporation traded on the London stock exchange. 20% held by individual prospectors Charles Fipke and Stuart Blusson (see introduction)	Began production in 1998. Between 1998 and 2009, the mine has produced 45 million carats (8,000 kg) of diamonds. Production has been in decline since 2005.
Diavik	Rio Tinto/ Harry Winston	Rio Tinto started in 1873 as a Spanish copper mining firm. Now a British-Australian multinational mining and metals corporation run out of London and Melbourne. Harry Winston is a diamond retailer and subsidiary of rough stones trading corporation Aber diamonds.	Surveyed in 1992. Production began in 2003. "Planned" shut down in 2008 and 2009. Open pit operations largely exhausted.
Snap Lake	DeBeers	DeBeers was founded as a diamond mining corporation in 1871 by Cecil Rhodes in South Africa. DeBeers bought Snap Lake claim from Vancouver based joint venture firm Winspear resources in 2000.	Commercial production began in 2008. \$1.5 Billion in construction costs.
Guacho Kue	DeBeers	49% / 51% joint-venture between Toronto based Joint venture firm Mountain Province Diamonds Inc. and De Beers Canada Inc	Feasibility studies carried out in 2008 and 2009. Project currently in suspension.
Jericho	Tahera	Toronto based firm with substantial financial backing (\$35 million in loans) from Tiffany and Co.	In operation between 2006-2008. Filed for creditor protection in 2008. Bought by Vancouver based Shear Diamonds in 2010 who are processing stock piled ore.

Table 1: Names and Brief Histories of Northern Canadian Diamond Mines

To what extent have consumer targeted 'ethical' campaigns been successful? In her 2005 ethnographic study of middle-class diamond consumers in the United States (accounting for roughly 60% of the global consumer base for gemstone quality diamonds), Susan Falls found that 'ethical' issues rarely came to bare on purchasing decisions. This finding was similar to an Amnesty International (2006) survey of American jewelry retailers who said they rarely or never were asked about a stone's ethical qualities. In fact, Zales – owner of People's Jewelers in

Canada and the largest global distributor of diamond jewelry – only displays its ‘country of origin’ materials in Canada.³²

If changed consumer habits were not the outcome of the initiatives, then what was? The lasting effects of these campaigns have not been their intended ones (Le Billon, 2006). As Falls’ (2011) argues, while NGO critiques had a consumer targeted component, their object was to reform the industry at the macro level (not to curb consumer demand) and as a result they produced an unlikely ideological convergence between state and non-state players who, only apparently at odds, advanced parallel neoliberal agendas. While NGOs and retailer discourse appealed to ethical consumerism by helping people feel good about ‘clean’ stones, it ironically encouraged the existence of black markets by reproducing exclusionary ‘licit’ channels (Falls, 2011: 441).

New regulatory frameworks led to a number of negative outcomes for smaller producers. In their account of one application of KPCS sanctions, Hilson and Clifford (2010) explain how export sanctions falsely placed on Ghana in 2006 resulted in a chain of events that further marginalized the country’s small, but locally significant trade, triggering the collapse of several local industries, and perpetuating poverty in the town of Akwatia where stones are mined. Taylor and Mokhawa (2003) explain how the ‘blood diamonds’ campaign put Botswana on the offensive to persuade the diamond-buying public that its diamonds were ‘clean’ and legitimate. The Diamonds for Development project became one of the main planks of Botswana's foreign policy. However, a parallel NGO campaign around the issue of the San Bushmen emerged that linked diamonds to the removal of the San from their homes and in turn threatened Botswana’s capital, Gaborone's image as a producer of ‘clean’ diamonds. Solway (2009) has tracked the largely negative effects that these crosscutting campaigns have had in Botswana’s political and economic arenas.

According to Le Billon “the lasting effects of linking diamonds with violence may not be ethical consumption, but rather a stronger dystopian vision of Africa and legitimated position for large

³² A handful of smaller producers specialize in ‘ethical’ jewelry, the largest being San Francisco based ‘Brilliant Earth’.

‘reputable’ (western) companies over smaller local and regional operators” (2006: 794). The scale-making attributes of so-called conflict-free diamonds made ‘the good’ and ‘the bad’ distinct and legible global points, obscuring relationships between sites of production. In the process, artisanal methods were increasingly designated as corrupt and industrial processes as having better capacity to be rendered transparent and thus ethical.

For the global mining firms hoping to get approval for their projects in Canada, the newfound ‘reputability’ of large, corporate- owned firms proved useful. The first two corporations to advance claims were *not* DeBeers (they were Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton) and thus their reputability was easier to forward as most anti-conflict campaigns were directed at the long time monopole, and specific African states. New projects worked to distinguish themselves from DeBeers, which was positioned as the one ‘bad apple of capitalism’ and did so by developing a highly localized and patently ‘Canadian’ image. This involved building local offices on the main streets of Yellowknife (that remained largely empty) and by identifying mines by their subsidiary names rather than their parent companies. Aboriginal languages proved particularly useful here. For instance, BHP Billiton’s site was named “Ekati” which is a local Dene (Athabaskan) word meaning fat lake.

Consumer-directed advertisements oriented ethical concerns towards the diamonds’ country of origin and thus nationalized the diamonds from the Northwest Territories. In doing so, large parts of the production and circulation process were erased. This erasure, however, is only one aspect of what is at stake in the nationalization of diamonds. While the new-found ‘reputability’ of certain corporations made in-roads towards successful acquisition of mineral rights, it was second ethical claim that was made of diamonds that helped to bolster their support locally, nationally even internationally. Specifically, that diamonds would bring development to the region. In particular it would benefit the indigenous population which makes up 50% of the total population (40,000).

While ethical claims nationalized a particular commodity as Canadian, these same efforts and campaigns participate in *nationalizing* a region and population, which has, at several points, been at odds with national aims and narratives. The ethical nationalism of diamonds reinforced conceptions of state sovereignty and specific relationships to territory and citizenship which are

contested rather than simply given or existing. This section looks at how natural resource development aims to relieve the contradictions and tensions of Canadian state making, specifically differential citizenships and the reproduction of inequality in a liberal democracy.

Sovereignty is a crucial component of state power. It can be defined as rule by command where the land lord state (Coronil, 1997) assumes the right to use, allocate and profit from resources, and exercises coercive control to that end (Li, 2003). But as Weber (1918) noted long ago, while sovereignty as principle of state order-making is at the very heart of modernity, the logic and apparatus rests on uncertain foundations that are constantly open to contention and struggle (Sayer, 1991). Sovereignty, like state-making, is not a *fait accompli*. Its boundaries are always in the making. Many people from outside and within a state's borders can, and do, challenge ruling authorities on a variety of grounds³³. The most prominent challenges to Canadian sovereignty today come from within its boundaries, notably by indigenous claimants. When diamonds were discovered, the land base in question was in the process of being claimed by multiple indigenous groups through a state-sanctioned process, commonly called modern land claims.

Some scholars have suggested we move beyond definitions of sovereignty privileged by political science which locates, as I do here, sovereignty within the boundaries of the nation state, its institutions or with supranational institutions and networks. Mbembe (2002) extending on Foucault (1997) states that the “the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (14). Drawing on the writings of Georges Bataille, he situates “life beyond utility” as the domain of the sovereign. A number of critiques have been brought to bear on this argument which draw attention to the importance of ‘making live’ in late liberal societies (Povinelli, 2011; Berlant, 2011) and others which point out the need for more specific and situated analyses of when and why ‘make live’ projects are pursued and with what contradictory effects (Li, 2009).

³³ Some of the challenges can be on conceptual grounds. See for example the collection of essays in “Sovereignty Matters: Locations of Contestation and Possibility in Indigenous Struggles for Self-Determination” (Barker, 2005). Many of the authors take issue with the philosophical and political foundations of ‘sovereignty’ as inherently western, Christian or American-centric. My aim here is not to debate the conceptual possibilities for the lexical item ‘sovereignty,’ as those would be endless. Rather, the point is to assess when, where and how sovereignty (or practices which fit the definition provided in the text above) are evoked and to what ends.

Given existing contestations over land and resources, how was the state able to maintain its own legitimacy in the context of the political and economic marginalization of the majority of its indigenous citizenry? How could outstanding indigenous claims to land in the area be addressed in ways that allowed mining to move forward?³⁴ Tensions around who owned lands to be mined needed careful attention and management. As I will explained in chapter two and take up further in chapter five, territorial and largely Aboriginal resistance to a proposed oil and gas pipeline project in the 1970s brought the project to a halt (Berger, 1977).³⁵ Many of the issues that were raised by Aboriginal groups – specifically the question of land tenure – had yet to be sufficiently addressed. This meant that diamond developers could have met substantial local opposition, yet they did not. If diamond mines were slated for production on contested lands, how was local opposition avoided or curtailed?

The short answer, mirroring global resource discourses of corporate social responsibility more generally, is that new projects bring much needed development and empower local peoples to become self-sufficient. In the case of the NWT, Indigenous cultural and political struggles were not treated as oppositional to development; on the contrary, they were mobilized, on many sides of the debate, as motivations *for* development. Specifically, mining was seen as a way to expedite indigenous self-determination. The polysemous nature of self-determination meant that local political struggles and federal level reforms, shorthanded here as neoliberalism (see chapter 6) and long thought to be at odds, were increasingly compatible and palatable to many Canadians, indigenous or not. I turn now to a discussion of the production of ethics at the local and national levels to understand how industrial mining was, and continues to be understood as having a positive relationship to the people in the region of extraction.

³⁴ In *Rogue Diamonds: The Rush for Riches on Dene Land*, Bielawski (2003) provides an ethnographic account of diamond development from the perspective of people in Łutselk'e, a remote community of 300 on the east side of the Great Slave Lake forced to make a decision of whether to approve mine development within 60 days.

³⁵ This is an oversimplification. Many factors made the resistance successful, including a sympathetic Canadian populace in an era of growing environmental awareness and a drop in the price of oil making the project less feasible.

3.6 A New Economy, A New Lifestyle?

The three diamond mines are located between 150 and 400km northwest of Yellowknife. Accessible only by air, the mines are out of the sight lines of local residents. It had been four years since I had spent any considerable amount of time in the Territorial capital of Yellowknife. As I walked the city's modest downtown streets, I took stock of all of the changes. The major infrastructure was largely unchanged. Downtown Yellowknife is a public service town. Franklin Avenue is the main artery and is lined with medium sized office buildings, a rundown shopping mall and a few well-worn hotels. Yet, these familiar sights were adorned in new ways. Flags hung from every second lamppost declaring the city "The Diamond Capital of North America!" (see figure 14). Tourist shop windows were decorated with neon lit diamonds, advertising authentic Canadian gems and jewelry. Peppering all parts of the city were local business names capitalizing on the town's rebranding: Diamond Dry Cleaners, Diamond Aviation, Diamond Taxi, and Diamond City Real Estate.

While doing preliminary work for this research in the capital city of Yellowknife, I walked to the town's edge to the Northern Frontier Visitor's Center: a small, modern two story building and one of the few formal tourist attractions in town. Since my last visit in 2003, its interior had been completely renovated. Previously, visitors were greeted by taxidermies of local wildlife and explanations of the science behind Aurora Borealis. Now the blank stares of caribou, bison, foxes, wolverines were on the second floor. The animals were relocated to make room for the Diamond Tourism Display that, much like the flags on the main streets, was a part of an attempt to diversify the local economy through tourism.³⁶

³⁶ Diversification strategies were the city's attempt to obtain sufficient revenue to deal with the increased population and the demands in-migration puts on infrastructure and services. It may seem strange that a city in the midst of diamond boom would have difficulty securing adequate operational funds; however the political economic structure of the NWT, resource policy, and of Canada more generally, illuminates the ways in which profits circulate in, out and through the Territory.



Figure 7: Flag on Franklin Avenue, Yellowknife, NT, Author, 2008

Moving through the display we learn the general assumptions on which the ethicality of Canadian diamonds is based. At the same time, we begin to uncover the truncated ways in which industrial development is often understood. In their introduction to *Timely Assets: Politics of Resources and Their Temporalities*, Ferry and Limbert (2008) describe resources as “objects and substances produced from ‘nature’ for human enrichment or use” (3). They argue that nothing is essentially or self-evidently a resource. For Ferry and Limbert, “[r]esource-making is a social and political process, and resources are as much concepts as objects or substances. To call something a resource is to presuppose a set of interactions between “nature” and “society” (4). Following Ferry and Limbert’s lead, I use the display as an attempt at reading the political and social project of resource-making in the NWT. This process relies upon developing a northern diamond narrative for local and visiting populations.

The diamond tourism display captures how diamonds are made legible as both local/national and ethical objects. Unlike the ‘blood diamonds’ campaign, the display at the visitor’s center makes no attempt to shape consumer practices or persuade industry to act in particular ways. Instead, the focus is on communicating the second claim of northern diamond’s ethicality: natural resources are vehicles for improving the quality of life of local populations. While the display is only able to communicate with those who pass through the center, the narrative that it tells is comparable to the majority of media accounts that appear in the Canadian press.

The short walk through the Visitors Center begins with a panel that reads “Three Billion Years in the Making” (Figure 8). At the center of the nine-foot panel is a bas-relief aerial view of the region. At the bottom of the map is the Great Slave Lake, the ninth largest lake in the world. The region north of the lake is dotted with smaller lakes, that form part of the Mackenzie River drainage basin, Canada’s largest watershed. The only other markings on the map are the names of the four diamond mines.

The claim “three billion years in the making” refers to the length of time it takes for compressed carbon to become diamonds. The display explains the process of diamond formation and harvest and introduces the two prospectors who are credited with discovering diamonds. The narrative in development is one in which resource extraction is understood as a natural and inevitable. In this narrative, valuable resources form below the surface of the earth, and wait patiently for a clever individual (or pair of individuals, in this case) to find them.

The relatively empty map is a kind of sanitized rendering of the region’s history. The map leaves out existing communities in the region as well as previous mining projects which dot both sides of the Great Slave Lake region. The vast territory of the map thus appears empty and awaiting use. This narrative is part of “the frontier myth” discussed above.

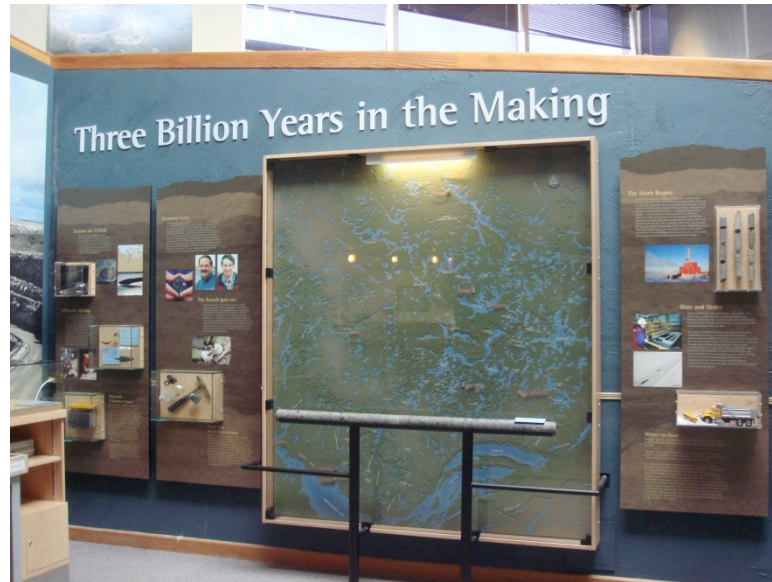


Figure 8: Museum display of how diamonds are formed and harvested.

Exhibit at the Yellowknife Visitor's Center, Author, 2008

The region's extractive history isn't entirely left out of the storyline. The next panel titled "In the Beginning" (Figure 9) reads "Yellowknife was born in the 1930s, when gold seekers flooded the North Slave region...Once known as the 'city where gold is paved with streets,' Yellowknife has moved on to still greater glory as the hub of Canada's sparkling new diamond industry" (Northern Heritage Center, 2008). The message is that the history of Yellowknife is a history of extraction where one precious resource gives way to yet another. The suggestion of an unbroken chain of extraction excludes the realities of gold cycles, which, in the late 1990s, led to one of Canada's most violent labour disputes with nine strikebreakers killed in a mine shaft bombing.³⁷

³⁷ Popular accounts of these events include Selleck and Thompson's (1997) *Dying for Gold* and Staples and Owens (1995) *The Third Suspect: The Inside Story of the Hunt for the Yellowknife Mass Murderer*.



Figure 9: First panel in a historical timeline of the city of Yellowknife.

Exhibit at the Yellowknife Visitor's Center, Photo by Author, 2008

As will become apparent in chapter five, Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and the kinds of social assessments they engender privilege a project-by-project analysis of extraction. Yet, how and why these projects take on the character they do has much to do with the longer history of capitalist development and the changing economic and governmental priorities in and for the region. The ‘In the Beginning’ display erases the necessary pre-conditions which allowed for gold-seekers to “flood the region.” Specifically, the free-staking system set in place by the nascent Canadian state. These laws fostered significant in-migration that became a source of tension for existing populations who used the same regions for the procurement of furs for trade and subsistence goods. Free staking laws are still in place today (Hoogeveen, 2008).

Even with the erasure of the region’s population and pre-mining history in the first few segments of the display, visitors are not made aware of indigenous communities. Often, getting a glimpse of supposedly “traditional” Aboriginal culture is one of the stated reasons tourists visit the NWT. Many who visit are disappointed by the limited opportunities to see tradition in action. I was often caught in conversations with white local business owners or tourism board representatives

who lamented that Aboriginal people were not doing a better job of getting the tourism industry going. The general sentiment was that Aboriginal did not care about socio-economic advancement, local job opportunities, or, more problematically, ‘their culture’. Lack of ‘tradition’ is but one thing that jars optimistic visitors to Yellowknife. The next is poverty.

On the street corners of Yellowknife, the capital city, a competing narrative of a resource town is being told. It is not a story of wealth; rather it is one of waste. In the context of Africa, scholars such as Rosalind Morris (2008) and Achille Mbembe (2003) discuss the capacity of extractive capital to produce waste alongside wealth, as resources and human bodies are systematically depleted. The production of wealth alongside waste, sometimes referred to as “the resource curse or paradox” has the capacity to elicit moral panic, especially in the context of a liberal democracy such as Canada, i.e., one that is often an international example of success with respect to equality through multiculturalism. In Yellowknife, as in Hay River, poverty is distinctly racialized. The majority of the members of the street-involved community are Aboriginal, making the question of poverty easily scrutinized by concerned publics as a distinctly ethnic or cultural concern.

The presence of poverty on the downtown streets is not only a problem for those who endure it. It is a problem for those who observe it, namely tourists, bureaucrats and social scientists of various stripes. Scenes of street-side camaraderie are interpreted as intolerable for many passersby. The use of alcohol by some of these people only fuels an assessment of some kind of failure. Winter temperatures which regularly drop to -40 Celsius, can, and do make life for some of these people difficult to endure. But difficulty of weathering a sub arctic winter without adequate, permanent housing or effective, affordable transportation between the capital and surrounding communities is not bore alone by those on the streets. Recently a homeless shelter was built in the city, largely funded by corporate donations including those from the diamond mines. When asked why they contributed to this project, a mining representative told one of my colleagues that it was for ‘employee retention.’ In the words of this representative, “people who move up here really hate seeing all the poverty. It depresses them” (Moses, 2012). Aboriginal homelessness is thus a ‘public’ concern and periodically prompts the question of what, or who is to blame and necessarily, what is to be done (see also Povinelli, 2008, p. 512).

Due in large part to diamond development, the per capita Gross Domestic Product of the NWT doubled in under ten years making it the highest in Canada and the second highest in the world behind only Luxembourg. These facts say more about the sparse population (40,000) than they do about how wealth is actually distributed. Twenty percent of all households in the NWT have incomes below \$30,000 and costs of living are substantially higher than other parts of Canada. Outside the few "urban" centers of the Territories, in the smaller, remote communities, fifty percent of households have total incomes below \$30,000. Disparities in health and housing are disproportionately distributed among the Territories' Aboriginal populations who make up roughly 50% of the total number of residents. Evidence of such inequalities is laid bare on the streets of Yellowknife.

Back at the visitors center we are provided narrative closure. The last display reads "*A New Economy, A New Lifestyle*" and informs visitors of what is being done. It is a mosaic of photographs of residents from the region that captures the ethnic diversity of the industrialized North. Portraits include Aboriginals, Northerners (non-Aboriginal Canadians living in the area for an extended period), and a few recent immigrants to Canada. Each photo has a caption which tells of how the individual is benefiting from the "new" economy. At the center of the mural is the following text,

There are over 3000 direct jobs in diamond mining and polishing as of 2007. There are also hundreds of related jobs that are created in areas such as housing, schools and the service industry...NWT mine workers are paid competitive wages- average salary \$63,700 in 2006- and the benefits of this employment are primarily reaped by northern residents. Hiring preference is given to Aboriginal northerners and other NWT residents with targets that are typically 60% northerners of which half are northern Aboriginals reflecting the NWT's population mix (Yellowknife Visitor's Center, 2008).

Mining development in the Canadian north is often said to provide unlimited 'opportunities' for local populations. From this panel we learn that the provision of work and local business opportunities are the primary, if not exclusive, benefits advertised by mining corporations (Bell, 2010). The concept of labour as benefit is particularly powerful in the context of indigenous Canada where one of the major derogatory stereotypes of indigenous people is of those people

who do not, cannot, or will not work (said plainly, the stereotype of the lazy Indian). Although many anthropologists and historians have documented the essential role of indigenized labour in key moments of national development in Canada and the United States (Rolf, 1999; Littlefield & Knack, 1986), indigeneity remains an icon of unemployment in North America today. For example, after Canada's most recent census data showed Aboriginal Canadians to have lower than average full time employment rates, *The National Post*, a national right of center newspaper recently reported, "natives on reserve aren't any more lazy than any other sector of society – just that they have more opportunity to smack the government piñata and watch the money fall out...those stubbornly high income assistance numbers on reserve won't budge as long as the state provides subsistence for no work" (Iverson, 2012). The linkage of indigeneity to unemployment and dependency are powerful pieces of the structures of expectation that surround Canadian indigeneity.

Indigenous persons as icons of unemployment are shaped in part through texts like the one quoted above, and are reinforced and reinvented through nationally circulated statistical measures which repeatedly show that Indigenous North Americans are more likely to be under or unemployed than their non-indigenous counterparts. While the relative truth of these findings vary region to region, the substitutability of indigenous bodies and groups in national imaginaries means there is little clarity on where or how disparate employment rates occur. Even less is known about how 'irregular' employment is experienced or interpreted by the people whose lives are defined in this way. Far less still is understood about how particularities of Canadian political economy simultaneously attract and repel indigenized labour.

The message of the *New Economy, New Lifestyle* display is rather simple. Diamond mining is good because it makes jobs for the people of the place. Yet, contrary to the idea of a "New Economy," resource extraction, as we have seen, is hardly new. In fact, the Northwest Territories is the site of the most dense commercial exploitation of mineral resources in North America. And, true to the logic, mining has indeed brought an influx of new jobs. However, these jobs are usually too many for the sparsely populated area (Morrison & Coates, 1994). To harvest resources requires both productive labour and reproductive labour. This amount often exceeds local sources, especially when the demand for a particular commodity is high or large-scale infrastructure projects are required. As described in the previous chapter, this rolling demand for

labour has laid the groundwork for (im)migrations of various scales and durations (including American military labour for road and airfield construction during World War II, see Morrison and Coates, 1994; Japanese workers brought in for fish-processing plants during the 1940s and 1950s, see Piper, 2009).

This raises three questions to be addressed throughout the dissertation. First, why is there an emphasis on the local when there is a known dependence on migrant labour to make these projects profitable? Next, how did it come to pass that the exclusive benefit of resource extraction for local people is participation in industry's development as individual wage workers? Finally, who counts as local? In the short passage on the heritage center's wall, multiple, ambiguous forms of the local emerge: Northern residents, Aboriginal Northerner, NWT residents, Northerners, Northern Aboriginals. As chapters four, five and six show, this ambiguity is not inconsequential.

3.7 Conclusion

The Diamond Tourism display embodies the concerns and arguments of this dissertation. Chiefly, that 'ethically' driven resource extraction is presented and discussed in Canadian public culture in highly constrained ways. These constraints are three-dimensional: temporal, spatial and ethnic/racial. As we have seen, the project-by-project understanding erases key moments in establishing territory as available to capital. Framing issues as local erases the global configurations of capital and labour required for industrial mining. In the next chapter, I focus explicitly on the kinds of people and processes involved in resource development, namely labour migration.

Putting Indigeneity at the center of the discussion about diamonds as a scheme for improvement distracts from the changing but crucial role that racial categories of personhood have had in organizing British Imperial and later Canadian political economy. It forecloses a more nuanced understanding of the interactions between race and class in the region. These interactions have yet to be adequately charted. The display is not only telling for its illustration of analytic limitations of dominant resource development discourse. Between the streets of Yellowknife and the display we begin to see how, in Povinelli's (2008) words, "present-tense modes of living and dying are transformed into future anterior modes of the proper life" (p. 511). Specifically, the

‘local opportunities’ of diamonds takes the presence of indigenous poverty in a resource-rich region and expresses it in the future anterior. This expression is precisely what impedes a deep reading of the historical present and participates in a “politics of deferral. More than that, it reinforces a kind of market-activated future anterior. This is a social tense in which, according to Povinelli (2011),

any social investment that does not have a clear end in market value- a projectable moment when state input values (money, services, care) can be replaced by market output value (workers compensated and supported by nothing but the market)- fails economically and morally. And a social investment is an economic and moral failure, whether or not the investment is life enhancing (p.23).

In following the stories of Ruth, Destiny and David, and eventually explaining their training programs’ failure to produce market outputs, I illustrate how, despite such programs inability to deliver promises of ‘the good life’, they can be, and are life enhancing and meaningful to those who participate in them. It just so happens that the meanings aren’t those intended by state and industry. I return to this matter in chapter six and the conclusion.

4 “That’s Not the Real Hay River!”: Authenticity, Authority and Canadian Political Economy

Critics discuss symbols, while theorists ask by what mysterious process one thing comes to stand for another
Terry Eagleton, 2005

Although High-Risers may not self-identify as being part of a coherent cultural whole, they are extremely insightful with respect to questions of political economy. In this chapter I describe some of the tenants’ life trajectories, which help reveal the types of conjunctures that bring together a labour supply ‘just in time’ for resource booms and busts. Some of the tenants were from as far away as the Philippines. Others were from the maritime and Atlantic Provinces of Canada. Others still had only moved from the other side of the river. These movements provide a vantage point from which to understand larger questions of social mobility and reproduction. The inability or reluctance of High Risers to understand themselves as the ‘real’ Hay River opens up a discussion of how authority and authenticity operate under liberal recognition regimes.

The chapter’s conclusion reflects on questions of ‘the real.’ More often than not, when I told anyone I was in town for research and living in the High Rise I would be told, “that’s not the *real* Hay River!” As I mentioned in the introduction, Hay River is sometimes described as “not the real north.” How can spaces like a transportation community so crucial to social reproduction, be considered “not the real” North? How can a good segment of the working class be considered “not the real” Hay River?

4.1 “I am probably not what you are looking for”

Madison was my first point of contact at the High Rise. She and her husband Stan acted as property managers for the building’s owner Johnny and his wife Cindy while they were away in Edmonton. She arranged to meet me on a Saturday. Monday to Friday was always a little hectic for her. On top of managing the building, she was a court reporter. Her husband, Stan, worked for the utility company and also had full workdays. Sometimes, Stan would work nights too, as he was regularly on call. Despite this schedule, 38-year-old Madison maintained a cheerful

demeanour. Her email address was sunshineMaddy@yahoo.ca and she signed all correspondence with a ☺.³⁸

“There are no furnished apartments with the river view,” Madison apologized as we travelled up the elevator. The High Rise, I learned, had many internal divisions. The High Rise was a microcosm of Canada’s “vertical mosaic” (Porter, 1965), with white public servants usually at the top, and Aboriginal and immigrants closer to the bottom. East-facing apartments looked out over the river and beyond to an expanse of sub-arctic wilderness. West facing apartments looked out over the downtown and the industrial park. The units at the top had been renovated and were largely kept for public servants, teachers, nurses et cetera. My friend Tim told me they confine the “riff-raff” to the lower floors. Madison showed me a unit on the 8th floor. I am still unsure what that meant about her take on my moral character.

The one-bedroom apartment Madison showed me was made spacious by limited furnishings: a tweed sofa in the living room, a mattress on a metal frame in the bedroom, and a large, broken television set in the corner. The kitchen cupboards were thick with layers of paint applied with the hopes of ‘modernizing’ the apartment’s look. I told Madison I would take the apartment. She immediately set about crawling underneath the sinks to turn the water on. “It always runs a little brown at first,” she assured me, “but nothing to worry about.”

Madison asked me what my study was about. This was the part I really hated. “Labour migration?” I offered, more as a question than as an answer. I started offering a long list of other terms without connecting them coherently “language...mobility...development... diamond mining...”

“Well, you should interview my husband, Stan, we manage the building together, he’s from New Brunswick. He even speaks French. We are living here and managing the building for the owner Johnny to save money so we can eventually build a house out east. I love it out there.” Madison

³⁸ Both names and email addresses are pseudonyms.

was fair skinned with dark eyes. She had a high-pitched voice and a high ponytail. She wore blue foam garden sandals and a two-piece, pink velour tracksuit with white stripes up the sides. In some ways she looked like people I knew from the High Arctic, but I was not certain enough to make the guess. Instead, I asked if she was also from out east.

“Oh no, I am from Inuvik,³⁹ but Stan took me to New Brunswick a few times and I love it. I mean Inuvik will always be home. I am hoping I may eventually be able to go to university, you know to study my culture and traditions. We just have to save up first.”

“That sounds really interesting, maybe I can interview you too?” I asked, pleased with myself for finding an Aboriginal migrant informant on day one.

“Yeah, well, I guess you could. I am not sure I am really what you are looking for.”

Madison’s hesitancy was the first in a series of interactions where it was clear that the potential interviewee did not imagine themselves as representative of the type of categories they thought I was interested in. This was fairly typical in much of the work I have done in different resource rich regions of Canada (Heller & Bell, 2012). Although Madison had moved from the High Arctic to Hay River and would eventually move east, she did not think she had insight into economic development. Many people – women in particular – felt at a distance from northern development.⁴⁰ My guess is this is because they are not directly employed by industry, even if their work is crucial to the larger economy.

³⁹ Inuvik is a community of 5000 in the high arctic. It is similar to Hay River, a multi-ethnic regional hub built in the 1960s in attempts to replace the neighboring village, Aklavik. The most predominant ethnic groups in the community are Inuvialuit and Gwich’in.

⁴⁰ There is a second layer to Madison’s assessment of her own inauthenticity. In a longer interview, she spoke to me about having been adopted out of her family and moved to Ottawa with a (non-indigenous) aunt. She expressed remorse about having ‘lost’ her culture. Having done earlier graduate research on adults involved in a university funded indigenous language revitalization movement in Alaska (Bell, 2006, 2009; Bell & Marlow, 2008), I knew that these feelings of loss came at a particular intersection of race, class and gender. To locate authoritative knowledge of ‘traditional culture’ in institutions such as a university points to one’s financial ability to access those spaces. On the other hand – and for many women from mixed race families or in mixed race marriages – social network ties to other spaces of cultural transmission have dissolved. These institutional spaces make new forms of connection and meaning possible for women like Madison.

This valuable lesson of the gendered language of labour was reinforced when I slid participant recruitment flyers under all 85 apartment doors at the High Rise, and then heard back from only men (with the exception of two of my female friends). Reading my stated interest of “labour migration,” many High Rise women did not identify with the call, on the grounds that ‘labour’ is understood as primary resource jobs or other types of masculinized work. Most women, save one left-leaning migrant from France, would not consider themselves or their work as ‘labour,’ although they all worked both in and out of the home.

I moved in to the High Rise partly out of ethnographic curiosity. I wanted to identify the ‘migrants’ that the public seemed so worried about during local debates on crime (see chapter five). On the other hand, who were the people coming north to try their luck in a booming economy? Though I had lived in Hay River prior to taking on this research, I had no clear sense of who might live in the High Rise. It was often stigmatized as being dirty and decrepit, and its residents were commonly referred to as wild or transient. The current owner of the building, Johnny, had been trying to “turn it around,” and had renovated a few of the apartments on the upper floors. Teachers and other public servants occupied those apartments.

I was not alone in my murky understanding of High Rise residents. Marie, one of the local school principals, had lived in Hay River for ten years, yet she had never been in the High Rise before I moved in. After visiting me a few times, she declared, “There are people here I have never seen before in my life. This place is a separate culture!” Yet ‘High Rise culture’ has never made it on to an ethno-cultural map of Hay River. Unlike local so-called traditional cultures, it is not written up as a tourist attraction or described as a source of pride. No one, not even its tenants, would tell you that the High Rise is ‘the real’ Hay River. With only a few exceptions, most tenants spend their time distancing themselves from High Rise culture rather than embracing it.

Many choose to live in the High Rise simply because there are apartments consistently available and the leases are month-to-month. Other choices for rental housing in Hay River are few.

Although it is one of the more “well-worn” residential buildings, the High Rise is not exactly inexpensive. Apartments in the High Rise cost between \$850 and \$1500 per month.⁴¹ Other options in town, when available, are marginally more expensive. By comparison, these rates would be average in a larger Canadian metropolitan center like Toronto. However, they are particularly high for a rural community. From the perspective of my eighth- floor apartment, and through my interactions with High Risers crucial components of Canadian political economy – present and past – come into view.

4.2 David and Cindy: Moving In, Moving Up, Moving On

Cindy, David’s mother, knew of the opportunities of diamond development from personal experience. Her family was Métis from a rural community in northern Saskatchewan. After the collapse of a local sawmill, her first husband (David’s father) secured work with a sub-contractor in one of the diamond mines during the construction phase. At project completion, the mine offered his father direct employment and a relocation allowance for his family. When their marriage ended, Cindy opted to stay in Hay River with her two teen-aged sons, as her salary as a homemaker was higher in the NWT than it had been in Saskatchewan. Shortly afterwards, she met Johnny, the High Rise owner. Once they started dating, she began to work for him.

David was very optimistic about the training course. “The mines, they’re going to hire me for sure,” he said confidently as we sat in my kitchen talking about his plans for the future.

“How can you be sure?”, I asked

“I’m Métis. You know what that means?”

Unsure of where he was going with the question, I shook my head.

Laughing he said, “It means half-white, half as fucked up as Indians.”

⁴¹ The NWT has some of the most relaxed rent control laws in Canada. For example, a landlord can raise the rent by any amount provided they give tenants three months’ notice. By comparison, in Ontario, rents can be raised a maximum of 4% per year.

The relationship between racial categories of personhood and priority employment (chapter five) intersect with powerful racial ideologies like the ones David joked about. Being from ‘out of town,’ David described having a hard time integrating into the local social scene and labour market. He set his sights on the mines. He imagined an out of town employer would prefer his status, as Métis. As we will continue to see, ties between race and employment exacerbated existing inter-ethnic tensions and was often a source of conflict in conversation between people in Hay River. Questions about “who really deserves” their jobs often came up to express race-class tensions. This was reinforced for me when I met with Billy.

4.3 Billy and the Eastern Reserve Army of Labour

Billy showed up for his interview with six cans of Molson Canadian, a bottle of white wine, and a small bottle of Root Beer Schnapps. He was one of the seven men who immediately responded to the participant recruitment flyers I slipped under the High Rise’s 85 apartment doors. I often saw Billy at the local pub when he was on his ‘out’ rotation from one of the mines. He worked in logistics, which I understood to roughly translate to putting things and people in the right places around the worksite and camp. In the interview, his speech style wavered from wildly excited to quiet and conspiratorial. It was clear that he felt vulnerable about leaking any information about the mines that could get him into trouble. “They really keep tabs on you, you know,” he said out of the corner of his mouth.

Billy was over 50 years old, and his trajectory maps neatly onto some of the major Canadian economic shifts that took place during his lifetime. He was an athlete in high school in Newfoundland, and left early to start work in the marine shipping industry. With declining codfish stocks in the early 1980s, his parents moved to Toronto to work in manufacturing industries. Billy joined them after having put in ten hard years of work at sea. He took a job in the meatpacking industry in the early 1980s. When the industry began to ‘modernize’ and larger companies merged with one another, meatpacking plants were relocated or ‘updated,’ so as to reduce the numbers of unionized employees. When he heard the news about diamonds in the NWT in the mid 1990s, he knew where to go to find better work.

When he arrived in Hay River, he spent his first years in the shipping industry. The Northwest Transportation Company Limited (NTCL) had its headquarters in Hay River. NTCL started in the 1950s as a federal shipping company linked to the uranium mine project on Great Bear Lake. When demand for uranium dropped, the government of Canada split the company, and the shipping division became an entity in its own right. Now owned by the Inuvialuit regional corporation, NTCL provides marine transportation services to communities and resource exploration projects along the Mackenzie River in the Northwest Territories and across the Western Arctic. The shipping season is typically five months long if rivers stay clear of ice. Deckhands and office employees tend to be hired locally, while other labour is brought in, primarily from Newfoundland. Billy worked the boats for his first summer, and then actively pursued a job with the mines as a more permanent employment option.

Billy got a job with a local automotive company that held multiple contracts with the mines (auto parts, service, vehicle operation etc). Part of his company's winning bid proposal is their claim to a 100% northern employee rate. Since Billy had an address and had been in the territories for three months, he was considered a "Northerner" and eligible to be hired. He spoke with slight frustration about the policy. On the one hand it had given him a leg-up to get into the mines, but now he felt like he was stuck in Hay River. He had wanted to move back to Newfoundland and fly back-and-forth like many of the other sub-contractors, but giving up his address would mean giving up his job, as the 100% northern employee policy was strictly enforced, at least at his level.

Billy had been saving for quite some time, and he bought his first home (a small trailer) the winter after we initially spoke. Small trailers are a common option for first time buyers, and range from \$75,000 to \$175,000 in Hay River. I would pass him on the street occasionally, and at one point he let me know that his job position was more vulnerable than he had initially communicated. Additionally, owning a home made him more concerned about keeping a steady job. In late May of 2009, he told me that the workforce at the mine had been cut in half. His job was considered part of the site's maintenance, so regardless of whether it was in production or not, he was still needed. Still, he was concerned because the mines were increasingly ending sub-contracts. He had heard of some workers being let go by the subcontractor and then wooed back by the mine directly; these were not then circumstances he could count on. He was doing his best

to do his “top performance” on each and every shift. His growing anxiety partially explained some of his previous remarks to me about his Aboriginal co-workers from the smaller communities in the ‘direct-impact’ area.

“At the mines, it's safety first” he said, “but there are lots of Natives who aren't safe workers but get to keep their jobs because of the quota system.” Billy's quote here effectively highlights one of my points from chapter five: a major consequence of assessments and agreements (IBAs, SEAs) is that they heighten ethnically-organized class tensions. Billy's trajectory also makes clear that a large part of Canada's citizenry is “indispensably disposable” (Kawashima, 2010).

4.4 Grateful Gary: How Sub-Contracts Deflate Wages and Keep Housing Costs High

Gary was one of the other High Rise residents that responded to my flyers. Like Billy, he was from New Brunswick, an eastern province in Canada, and a region that provides much of the labour force for natural resource work. Gary's booming voice and assertive stance stood in stark contrast to the Seven Dwarves sweatshirt he wore to my apartment on a Sunday afternoon in August. He sat in a wing chair with his feet thrown over the right arm. He was in town on a contract to install sprinklers in the assisted-living facility.

Two years ago, Gary was living in his car in Woodstock, New Brunswick, when a contractor picked him up to work as labour on a job at the local hospital. A few days into the job, the boss realized that Gary would have to be registered as an apprentice. The hospital was a government project, and in New Brunswick all provincial projects require labourers be enrolled as apprentices to accumulate hours toward professional certification. When the job ended, Gary had worked enough hours to write his first block of apprentice tests. He was delighted when he passed, but his excitement quickly dissipated, as the employer would not take him back due to the legislated wage increase that comes with training.⁴²

⁴² This was Gary's interpretation of what happened. He explained that there had been four of them in the same situation and none were given their positions back.

While on the job site, Gary worked with someone who did contract work in the Northwest Territories. Gary's new contact had passed along information for a company that did similar work to Gary's new trade: sprinkler installation. With his unemployment payments dwindling, Gary sent a resume to Yellowknife. That same day he got a call from the employer with an offer to fly him up the following day. He explained it this way,

Well, I am single, right, and I don't care and I'm tired of not paying my payments. I'm tired of Honda Canada calling me everything but a delinquent, right. I'm tired of having surcharges at the Royal Bank. I said yes. I had no idea. I'm not world-travelled. I am 51 years old and I had never been on an airplane in my life. Well, that next day I took three!

His first project was putting in a sprinkler system at a power plant in a diamond mine. Largely, he enjoyed the work. "It's awesome," he said. "The food is next to none." He did note that there were a few downsides. Speaking about security and safety procedures he noted, "In a way, it's a glorified jail. The only difference is if you screw up, you get kicked out. But I had a good experience." When his first three weeks were complete, he was flown home, where he collected unemployment insurance until he got another call from Yellowknife.

Socio-economic agreements measure the number of people on social assistance in the Territory. Gary's story illustrates how labour migration within Canada obscures the effects that periodic mine work has on the national labour force. Now on a second contract in Hay River, Gary was enjoying the high salary he is earning.

Well, that is what I am here for. The money, not anything else... I get awesome pay: \$18 an hour. Plus, for every hour I work safely, I get one dollar put in a kitty for me. I can cash it in anytime I want to buy tools. I get a food allowance of \$55 a day. I work two hours of overtime every day and I work every Saturday...it works for me because I have nobody to care for but myself and I can go anywhere on a minute's notice.⁴³

⁴³ Here, and elsewhere, I use ellipses... to indicate that I have edited out sections of the interview for clarity and brevity.

Gary's employer paid for his High Rise apartment. His wage (without overtime) was actually on the lower end for the north, but compared to New Brunswick, it was extremely high. Because Gary did not have to pay to subsist in the north, he found his temporary stay quite comfortable. At the job's end, he had accumulated 1200 hours of work; he was able to go back on unemployment, and prepare to write the second block of apprenticing exams.

4.5 Michelle: "Forget the future!"

"I am sick of planning for my future." Michelle was 30-years-old and two semesters from completing her high school diploma. She was one of eight young mothers that lived in the High Rise. I met her at the Hay River community college. Before teaching the work readiness course I described in chapter six, I was invited to talk to the college students – all women – about being a woman in university. It was supposed to be motivational. Tim, the college director, felt that many of the women were very close to moving on, but that for some reason, they continued to drag their feet close to graduation or in the application stage for university. My job was to help them make a five-year plan. During my best effort to provide a non-condescending and informative talk, most of the women looked completely unimpressed. In a one-on-one conversation later, Michelle explained her feelings on the matter: "I mean, you spend all this time planning out what to do, and you think, okay, this is going to work. Then, of course, something happens and you are right back where you started. It's a waste of time, all these plans."

Michelle had two children in primary school. After talking for some time, she let me know that she was expecting again, and that was why she was so resistant to committing to more courses. She explained, "my boyfriend is looking for full-time work now and that means in the mines. He will have to do two weeks in, two weeks out. I can't go to school and raise three kids when I will be alone half of the time." I ask her about other employment possibilities for her boyfriend but she was adamant – "the mines pay really well, we will be able to get ahead." Michelle did not return to college for her final semester. In the new year, she and her family left the High Rise and moved in with her parents. Her boyfriend had not had much luck getting a job in the mines, so they needed to cut expenses before the baby arrived.

4.6 Marion: Uneven Conditions of Care Work

Marion pulled up to the High Rise in a Ford Focus station wagon in November. Her possessions filled the back half of the car. In the passenger seat was Sadie, her French bulldog, dressed in a sailor's costume. Marion was one of four new tenants in the High Rise who had come to work as nurses or nurses' aides in the new assisted living facility. This was the same facility where Gary was installing the sprinklers.

Marion was close to retirement and felt financially underprepared. She was a registered nurse practitioner (RPN) working in Ontario, and had come up north in the early 1990s to earn the higher salaries afforded to northern and rural public servants. She had saved enough to return to Ontario and buy a house. However, over the course of her four years in the north, the conditions of work in health care provision had changed significantly. Casual contracts had become commonplace. As of the 1960s, nursing in Canada has been characterized by strong worker organization. As Guy Standing (2011) notes, the increased contractualisation of labour means that collective contracts in industrial societies are increasingly replaced by individual ones. This allows for employers to provide different levels of security to its workers.

Marion, upon her return to Ontario took a string of casual positions hoping it was only temporary. Coming from a relatively small town, there were few full time openings for Marion, and when a professional left, a contract worker would take their position. This strategy of using enormous amounts of contract or casual labour is what is referred to in business-speak as "functional flexibility." According to Standing (2011), "the essence of functional flexibility is to make possible for firms to change the division of labour quickly without cost and to shift workers between tasks and positions and workplaces" (p. 56).

Marion's migration north is likely partly in response to the contested terrain of Aboriginal health care across Canada. Numbered treaties (see chapter two) included federal provision of health care. The federal government has consistently refused this, arguing a moral but no legal obligation to provide services "until" the provinces extend their services—which the provinces, also, argue they needn't do in face of presumed and putative federal responsibility (here,

provincial and aboriginal interests align, though both provinces and federal governments evade full responsibility for health care).⁴⁴

The deterioration of conditions of work in other parts of the country is a large part of why people move north. This was certainly the case for many teachers and nurses I spoke with over the course of my time in the field. This was also the case in my own experience. When I finished my teaching degree, Ontario had little in the way of full time employment and was in the process of imposing new types of scrutinizing measures upon teachers' work (standardized testing, professionalization credits, et cetera). Marion and I both travelled from Ontario for similar reasons. In the next vignettes we will meet people from much farther away.

4.7 “We became servants, but we were well-treated”

Ivan moved to Hay River from Chile in 1978. His apartment had the identical layout as mine, yet it felt unfamiliar. The walls were filled with neatly framed family photographs and artwork. Ivan's 11-year-old son took off to a friend's apartment as soon as I arrived. Ivan sat down, crossed his legs, and began to tell me about his thirty years in the Northwest Territories.

Ivan's sister was the first one to come to Canada from Chile. She had been working as a waitress in a Canadian-owned copper mine when she met her future husband, Dave, a driller from Manitoba. When Chilean President Allende came to power in 1970, he nationalized the copper industry and Dave was transferred to a mine in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Unsatisfied with the work, Dave's sister and her husband moved west, and eventually ended up in Hay River where Dave would become a fisherman and entrepreneur. Dave's suicide brought Ivan and his parents to Canada to console Dave's grieving widow. It was 1978, and Chilean military dictator Pinochet had come to power, so fleeing Chile appealed to family for various reasons.

“Being an immigrant and coming up here is like winning the [lottery],” Ivan told me. “When we arrived, they were desperate for help. Dad took a job as a janitor for \$1000-a-week and could not believe it! Although my father had been wealthy in Chile and had owned his own business, he

⁴⁴ Bonnie McElhinny brought this to my attention. I am much less familiar with the Ontario context, but my sense is from speaking with Marion and what I know of the terms of Treaty 8, this is likely accurate.

did not mind being the janitor because he was still treated like a ‘mister.’ We became servants, but we were well-treated, so that was confusing to us.”

In 1979, the Pine Point lead and zinc mine was in full swing just east of Hay River. Ivan got a job as a mill operator for \$12.20 an hour. While employed, the company paid for his room and board. He stayed for three and a half years. He told me about the strength of his union at that time: the United Steel Workers’. They taught him about coffee breaks and got him an English tutor. These are two lessons he said he was still grateful for. “I was mostly working with Native guys,” said Ivan, “some from Manitoba, some from Fort Resolution. That’s how I know so many elders from there. Those guys were all at Pine Point working the day shifts at the saw mill.” The demographic that comprised the majority of Ivan’s workmates points to an important piece of northern modes of production. As Sahlins (1999) and, more recently, Dombrowski (2008, 2010) have shown, those who are most successful at ‘subsistence’ activities (fishing, hunting) are usually equally successful at procuring wage employment. After the 1870s, people needed cash to access the means of production. Unlike pre-1950s, when goods could be acquired through debt from fur posts, the more recent need for access to tools (guns, shells, fuel) requires access to wages, whether directly or indirectly.

During a recession, the mine took a six-week closure. Ivan had wanted to move up to surface work and took the closure as an opportunity to move on. When the mine re-opened he was re-offered his position, but he turned it down in favor of pursuing his diploma for motor vehicle licensing and instruction. Ivan rattled off a long list of the career changes that took him all over the Territories. He had tried owning a restaurant in Yellowknife with his wife, but ended back in Hay River when it did not get off the ground. “We were happy to come back to Hay River. It’s friendly here. At first I thought it was creepy, weird, but now I think it’s special.”

Ivan was now a truck driver for one of the largest ground shipping companies in the region. He had been with the company long enough to get primarily short-haul day trips. His load was usually groceries and mail destined for different communities on the same side of the lake. Ivan’s marriage was in trouble and that was what landed him in the High Rise. He had faith that God would bring him and his wife back together again.

4.8 Chris: Why ‘Here’ Can Never Be Home

Chris emailed me to set up his interview. I had never seen him before the day I showed up at his two-bedroom apartment on the third floor. Chris showed me to the spare room that he had set up as a recording studio; he sang and recorded Filipino folk songs, as well as original works in what he simply called ‘my language.’ He sent the CDs he records to his wife and children, who still lived in the Philippines. He had been in Canada for seven years and had not once returned home.⁴⁵

Chris trained as an engineer and worked in Manila before graduating. He then went to Saudi Arabia for five years to work for a German company. He used his savings to return home in the late 1980s and started a small business, which then failed. He then arrived in Canada to work for Magna, an automotive systems company. He thought he was going to work in Toronto, but was told by his employer that he was “mis-oriented” and would need “Canadian experience” for those positions. He was given a job in Magna’s factory in St. Thomas, Ontario; he held it for two years before being laid off. He took a job at a local fast food chain. He described it as being “a little bit embarrassing” when he told me that he kept the job in order to support his family. When he saw a six-month contract with the Territorial power corporation, he applied for it. He was now on his second six-month contract. Full-time employment with the power company was among the most coveted work in town. Although Chris could qualify as a ‘northerner’ on paper, in practice this was unlikely to yield permanent work for him. This has to do, in part, with local politics, but also Chris’ ‘marked’ English was perceived by his employer, and in turn him, to be a barrier to full employment. Although he was extremely proficient in English, he seemed certain that without learning to minimize his ‘accent,’ he would never get a better position. He often asked me for English lessons, as ESL courses were unavailable in town.

Although there is a rather large Filipino community in both Hay River and in Yellowknife, there are often moments where these people are reminded that they are ‘not really a northerner’ or maybe not even ‘really Canadian.’ For instance, at the French language school where I worked, many children have Filipino mothers and francophone fathers. Many of these women came to

⁴⁵ This is his choice of term for the Philippines.

Canada as care workers in the late 1980s. A few began their careers in the neighboring town of Pine Point. There they met their husbands. Francophone men are typically overrepresented in the primary industries (Heller & Bell, 2012). Once Pine Point closed, their families moved to Hay River. Some work in the service industry (e.g., as grocery clerks) or run home care daycare programs.

The French school is a politically contentious issue, and I have described it in detail elsewhere (Heller & Bell, 2012, see also Heller, 1999). The short version is that federal law mandates that school instruction be offered in both official languages (French and English) if there is a demand. In the 1990s, francophone parents organized, lobbied for, and won the right to a school. School funding is on a per-capita basis. Some Anglophone school officials and local people feel that this ‘steals’ money from their schools. This sense is further compounded by the belief that most of the students ‘aren’t really’ Francophone, as most of these students speak English at home. During my fieldwork, this issue had reached a boiling point. An Anglophone school board representative ordered that the court verify all Francophone students’ so-called authenticity. The accusation was that the French school was ‘making’ Francophones. The major evidence against the school that I heard in casual conversation was stated in the form of a question: “how can all those Filipino kids be French!?”⁴⁶

4.9 Conclusion: On Authenticity and Authority

In the introduction, I outlined three analytic constraints embedded in diamond development discourse. As a review, the first analytic constraint is spatial. Northern development schemes presuppose that natural resource extraction exclusively concerns the immediate population. The second analytic constraint is temporal. Diamonds-as-development presupposes that individual resource projects are appropriate units of analyses, or said differently; individual mining companies are the most relevant targets of scrutiny. The third analytic constraint is racial/ethnic. Northern development discourse presupposes that Indigeneity is outside of history, thus foreclosing an understanding of the making and unmaking of communities in relation to history and political economy. To go beyond these constraints is to understand Canadian social

⁴⁶ For a dynamic discussion of contemporary issues with respect to Filipinos in Canada see Sintos, McElhinny, Tungohan and Davidson (2012).

reproduction and how the legitimacy of resource extraction is maintained despite ongoing socio-economic inequalities in the region. This chapter and the last attempt to shed light on these dynamics.

My use of the term ‘migration’ on my recruitment flyers showed a certain naiveté on my part. I came to learn over time that most High Risers, like Ivan and many others, had been in town for a long time, and some for their whole lives. While they may not have always been in the High Rise, they were not (save the teachers and the nurses) altogether new to Hay River. This struck me as important. In a place that explains much of its social inequalities as due to ‘transience’, many stigmatized people were arguably local. Transience, then, ‘Transience’ was a class-based way of marking mobility, and a way of situating many people outside of the ‘real Hay River.’

My own movement in and out of town in between 2005 and 2008 was never described as transience. For public servants like myself, movement was expected. Unlike the more outright stigmatization of ‘transients’ (working class white men and Aboriginal people from smaller neighboring villages), professional class mobility was negatively socially sanctioned in subtle ways. New people could be denied the right to participate in local business and political affairs on the grounds that they are not ‘real’ northerners, and therefore untrustworthy.⁴⁷

I have taken an interest here in those places and people who were suggested not to be ‘real’ and I have tried to partially account for their very real lives. This is not to suggest that I have located ‘the real’ and can re-present it here to you as a type of corrective tale. Rather, I took assessments of ‘not the real’ to be indicative of something larger. Struggles to define Hay River or ‘the north’ – spatially and symbolically – are instructive in understanding class formation and the distribution of labour and resources in and out of that place.

⁴⁷ In my own experience setting up a small business teaching fitness classes, I was made to feel largely unwelcome by town administrators and facility operators. Only once I had the support of the local elite women who wanted my services did I gain easier access to municipal spaces. It is often said that new people in town are “not going to stick around.” This is a self-fulfilling prophecy, as new small business owners meet such significant opposition from local elites that they usually become frustrated and do indeed leave.

Just as the High Rise is often deemed ‘not the real’, so too was the Hay River inukshuk contested as being a representation of “the real Hay River”. In June of 2009, Canada Post released a stamp of the town’s statue as part of a new “Roadside Attractions” series which features “quirky” objects from each of Canada’s ten provinces and three territories.

On a Monday lunch hour in the summer of 2009, seven local politicians, two postal workers, a lone stamp collector and an anthropologist gathered in the town hall for the launch of a new stamp. The collection, according a Canada Post representative in Ottawa, was meant to “speak to the fun of the country side”. More than that, the regional postal manager remarked,

Canada Post's stamps attempt to capture Canada and what it means to be Canadian and showcase it to the world. [The Hay River stamp] celebrates a remarkable landmark that is fundamentally Canadian and speaks to who we are as a people." (Hay River Hub, June 2009).

Although the local stamp collector was happy to see his town recognized on a stamp for the first time, he was not certain that the statue represented the “the real” Hay River. He told the local paper, “Inukshuks [sic] are an ancient Inuit tradition of building stone markers to guide travelers through the landscape of the Far North”, he remarked. Hay River is not the ‘traditional’ home of Inuit and by extension not the ‘natural’ home of inukshuit. The stamp collector’s comments, like the larger public debate following the release of the Vancouver Olympic’s inukshuk logo ‘Ilanaaq’ (see introduction), are not only about the authenticity of objects, but also about the right to belong. Is the inukshuk an authentic Canadian symbol? An authentic Inuit symbol? Are Inuit authentic Canadians?

Most anthropologists and sociologists will tell you debating “authenticity” is a game that can never be won, however people everywhere play it all the time. It isn’t for lack of analytical savvy, rather to decide what counts as ‘authentic’ is a way of boundary making whereby which some people or objects are differently valued (Barth, 1969). That objects might “mean” something is a contested assumption. Linguistic anthropologists generally agree that the relationship between sign and signifier is arbitrary (Saussure, 1916). Hay River functions as a sign. For Valentin Vološinov (1929), later echoed by others such as Williams (1976) and Bourdieu (1991), signs in particular, but language more generally, operates as a socially

structuring field. To struggle over meaning is inherent to the social qualities of language as a social practice (Heller 2002, 2011).

There are, of course, ‘real’ physical features here, such as riverbanks, abandoned buildings, and new homes that are part of the space; however, the sociality of space comes from the struggle to define what these very things mean. This struggle for definition may be concerned with whether a structure is a health hazard or a home, or whether a building is a symbol of modernity and hope, or an eyesore. Sometimes, as in the case of the High Rise, the social consensus changes from one view to the other, over a period as short as forty years.

I continue the discussion of ‘authenticity’ in the dissertation’s conclusion. Now, I want to move the discussion to ways in which “seeing like state” in northern Canada has not overlooked local knowledge, as Scott (1998) suggests, nor has it simply worked on and through local practices, as Li (2005) suggests. Rather, seeing like an ‘industry-state’ has involved the production of limited forms of ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ locality in such a way that commensurates existing inequalities with economic imperatives, chiefly resource extraction.

5 Turning Diamonds into Development: The Dialectic of Suffering & Opportunity

5.1 Introduction

In the spring of 2012 I taught a course called “Politics of Indigeneity.” The lecture hall was at capacity with 80 students enrolled in the third year lecture. All of the students were non-Aboriginal. On the first day of class I asked them to tell me what they knew of indigeneity in Canada. The short list of answers, offered by only a bold few in the front row, included exclusively objects of concern and injustice: loss of land, destruction of environment, colonialism, residential schooling and homelessness. Most students did not offer anything in the way of existing knowledge, but many expressed a strong sense of obligation that they *should* know more, that they *should* do more, that their nation, Canada, *should* do more, *should* apologize, *should* correct past wrongs. In this chapter I focus on such ethical impulses in relation to Canada’s history of using racial categories of personhood to organize property and labour markets. I look at the structures of expectation that constitute indigenous life in public culture, drawing on media representations as well as interactions I have had over the course of the last four years.

Fieldwork is a funny exercise. It is always hard to know when it starts and when it ends. This is especially true when your work is ‘at home.’ Although I no longer lived in the Northwest Territories, talk about it seemed to follow me everywhere. Because the Canadian north today occupies a significant place in the national imagination, most people have something to say about it regardless of where they are in the country. This impulse to form and share decisive opinions about the North was made particularly clear for me throughout the period of my doctoral research (2007-2009). Oil insecurities, global warming and arctic sovereignty raised the stakes of an integrated northern and global economy, fueling competition over how human and natural resources should be managed. These debates drew public eyes and political interest northwards. For example, in his first two years of office, current Prime Minister Stephen Harper visited the three Northern Territories (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and the Yukon) more than any previous head of state. Popular publications on the issue of arctic sovereignty multiplied

(Abele, 2009; Byers, 2009; Sale, 2009; Emerson, 2010; Grant, 2010) and state funding for academic research in the arctic increased significantly. In fact, 2006 was declared “International Polar Year.” Large and small, debates about ‘the North’ seemed to be pre-occupying southern Canada. Just about everyone I speak to is determined to have their say.

Throughout my doctoral program, I took stock of what people were saying about ‘the North’ in ‘the South’ by collecting articles from major newspapers and making notes with every opportunity I had to discuss my research with someone new. I began to collect these stories, referring to them as “Northern Circulations.” The collection grew rather quickly. At the time, I thought these stories were largely unnecessary to my research. I tend to be very dismissive of media and popular accounts as they often represent the North in a way that conflicts with my own experiences of living in the territories before graduate school. Over time, I came to realize that the *disjuncture* between what happens in ‘the North’ and how that circulates to ‘the South’ was an important piece of my puzzling over the dialectic between economic productivity and social regulation in the Diamond Basin. Consider the example from the jewelry store I mentioned in the introduction (“nothing but problems/good jobs”). It is paradigmatic of many interactions I have had with respect to my field region and topic. My students’ responses, while in a different tenor, were in many ways in the same key. They communicated an anxiety about people whom they would not meet but felt decidedly attached to as matter of national praxis. In this chapter, I explore the far-reaching effects of structures of expectation (e.g. ‘nothing but problems’ and ‘something ought to be done’) as they comingle with natural resource development in northern Canada.

Expressions of public concern and aspirations for Others to live an ameliorated life form what Tania Li (2007) has called “the will to improve” (see introduction). According to Li (2007) the will to improve requires two key practices to translate ethical aspirations into explicit programs. The first is ‘problematization’, meaning identifying deficiencies to be remedied. Section 5.2 *Picturing Northern Poverty: Representation, Problematization and Structures of Expectation in Canadian Public Culture*, focuses on the ‘problematization’ of northern populations. In order for diamonds to be ‘development,’ Northern Canada, and more specifically, its indigenous population, must be understood to be ‘underdeveloped.’ An analysis of my most common “northern circulations” reveals that poverty and child welfare are most commonly constituted as

deficiencies in the areas of individual employment and/or mental health. These deficiencies are racialized as being particularly Aboriginal concerns. As a result, a second layer of deficiency is identified: the failure of the Canadian state to realize its own liberal democratic values, in particular the said failure of post-1970s multiculturalism and cultural recognition regimes.

In section 5.3 *The Immediacy of Unmarked Suffering*, I analyze the media coverage that followed the shooting of an RCMP officer in Hay River. I show how different forms of racialized suffering are accorded disparate social tensions. Whereas Aboriginal suffering is enunciated in the future anterior, crime prevention measures which followed the death of an RCMP officer were in the present imperative.

The second key practice identified by Li (2007) is what Rose (1999), calls ‘rendering technical.’ Rendering technical involves a set of practices concerned with representing “the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specifiable limits and particular characteristics...defining boundaries, rendering that within them visible, assembling information about that which is included in devising techniques to mobilize the forces and entities revealed” (Rose as summarized in Li, 2007, p. 7). The problematization of northern populations is intimately connected to the practices of rendering certain deficiencies technical (cf. Scott, 1998). When a range of complex social and historical issues are reframed as simply a matter of employment – or, less simply, as a matter of failed mental states – they anticipate specific, limited, and limiting types of interventions. The most common are those that either a) facilitate individual access to wage work in the primary sector (e.g. job training programs and priority employment regulations) or b) provide mental health services (individual counseling). In some cases, like the pre-requisite course for vocational certifications I describe in chapter six, they involve both.

In sections 5.4, *Rendering Suffering and Opportunity Technical I: Tools of the Trade*, and 5.5, *Rendering Suffering and Opportunity Technical II: Communities and Diamonds*, I examine how northern poverty is rendered technical with vis-à-vis natural resource projects. I look at the chief instruments used to assess quality of life issues (Impact Benefit Agreements, Socio-Economic Agreements and their linked government reports) in the diamond basin. I ask, what kinds of boundaries do these apparatuses set with respect to the simultaneous production of resource wealth and poverty? My argument is that these assessment measures, and their accordant

interventions, place strict temporal, spatial and ethnic boundaries on how we understand (or fail to understand) issues of social reproduction. By evoking the three key analytic constraints identified in the introduction (spatial, racial and temporal)⁴⁸, the questions of inequality that so concern Canadians are made harder, rather than easier, to address.

To conclude, section 5.6, *On Having Something to Say About Suffering*, articulates how by contrasting representations of the north, four major arguments appear. First, a dialectic of suffering and opportunity is the main organizing trope that organizes narratives of the “North” for consumption in the “south.” Second, this dialectic simultaneously undermines and legitimizes resource developments. Third, the contradiction of resource development (suffering/opportunity) is managed by the use of the “future anterior,” a temporal marker that defers structural inequalities onto a time when they will have all been redeemed. Four, this orientation to the future anterior both racializes and spatializes suffering and opportunity in a particular way that re-invigorates the colonial past while blurring the present.

⁴⁸ As a reminder, the first analytic constraint is *spatial*. Northern development schemes (notably natural resource development) presuppose that *natural resource extraction exclusively concerns the immediate population*. This forecloses the possibility of holding the local, national, regional and global in the same analytic frame. As we saw in the last chapter, and as I discuss in subsequent chapters, industrial mining relies on transnational formations of capital and labour. In fact, relations between existing populations and in-migrants are essential to understanding social organization in the area.

The second analytic constraint is *temporal*. Diamonds-as-development presupposes that *individual resource projects are appropriate units of analyses*, or said differently; individual mining companies are the most relevant targets of scrutiny. This forecloses a deep, contextually specific reading of the embeddedness of single projects in a much longer history of capitalist transformation in the area. It makes readings of northern resource developments, as Piper (2009) notes, “all too often historically blind,” as if the North were “a blank canvas on which only current and future development will leave its mark” (p. 2).

The third analytic constraint is *racial/ethnic*. Northern development discourse presupposes that *Indigeneity is outside of history*, thus foreclosing an understanding of the making and unmaking of communities in relation to history and political economy. As Eric Wolf (2001) suggests, and as I aimed to do in chapter two, “[local] communities as outcomes and determinants of historical processes; intimately connected with changes in the wider political and economic field” (p. 161).

5.2 Picturing Northern Poverty: Representation, Problematization and Structures of Expectation in Canadian Public Culture

Throughout my doctoral program, I took stock of what people in ‘the South’ were saying about ‘the North’ by collecting articles from major newspapers and making notes with every opportunity I had to discuss my research with someone new. I was initially very dismissive of media and popular accounts or ‘northern circulations’, as they often represent the North in a way that conflicts with my own experiences of living in the territories before graduate school. Over time, I came to realize that the *disjuncture* between what happens in ‘the North’ and how that circulates to ‘the South’ was an important piece of how mining-as-intervention can come to be seen as a ‘new’ and sensible strategy for addressing forms of social harm.

How do Canadians, like the jewelry store salesman I discussed above – those Canadians who, ostensibly, never visit the places they assess as spaces of suffering and/or opportunity – come to speak about them so readily, often passionately? These conversational exchanges rely on “structures of expectation” (Ross, 1975), meaning previous experiences of the world that organize knowledge about the world and are used to predict interpretations and relationships regarding new information, events and experiences (Gumperz, 1979; Tannen, 1979, p. 138-139).

The bulk of Canadians’ previous experiences of the north are not firsthand. Rather, they are mediated by representations from media, educational texts, artworks, or museum exhibits. Representations of places and people are neither neutral nor are they merely discourses that float above the “real” conditions of everyday life. In *Orientalism*, Said (1979) argues that all representations operate “for a purpose, according to a tendency, in a specific historical, intellectual, and even economic setting” (p. 273). Representations are infused with ideological assumptions and value judgments of the representer. Equally, representations are contested, their meanings largely constructed at the intersection of viewer, object and historical context. While not overly determining, representations have real effects.

By drawing attention to how Indigenous suffering has become a political commodity outside of the places it is actually happening, I seek here an alternative from exposing or ignoring suffering. As we will see, Others’ suffering enlivens certain kinds of movement, notably of bodies and

capital that are in turn critical to global flows of resources and wealth. This chapter is heavily inspired by James Ferguson's (2006) *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* and Elizabeth Povinelli's (2011) *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism*. These books share little in the way of geographic or even theoretical focus. Ferguson discusses Africa, while Povinelli oscillates between Aboriginal Australia and the United States. Their shared interest is in the construction of or concern for a suffering Other. They analyze representations of suffering by asking where, why and which bodies become sites of moral panic and for whose purposes. Admirably, they do so without taking an overtly relativistic stance which would undermine very real conditions of inequality. In very different ways, both authors are trying find their way out of an impasse between alarmist discourses of suffering and naïve accounts of cultural difference and ingenuity.

Analyzing representations of the North is beyond the scope of any one work (see Davidson, 2005 for overview). I concentrate here on those representations that elicit an ethical response and incite a will to improve in one way or another. There are two examples in this chapter and only one is from Hay River. The second is from Nunavut (which I will say more about in a moment). While it may seem 'wrong' to use an analysis from one region of Canada to discuss another, I do so with good reason. The fact of the matter is, non-Aboriginal Canada scarcely makes distinctions between places and bodies. When the jewelry store salesman says "nothing but problems" he is culling his knowledge from a sea of discourse about Aboriginal Others that has no one primary author or is not actually about the specific place or people. This is precisely part of the argument I want to build here. Part of the work that these images/ circulations do is that they are melted in a broader project of (not) knowing different regions and histories as specific. I run the risk of reproducing that here, but I hope not to. I hope to show how one story, in one place, becomes welded to other people in another.

An article entitled *Life on the Mean Streets of Iqaluit* (Paperny 2009a) (*Means Streets*, hereafter) and its accompanying image (not pictured) brings together common elements I have observed in collecting and analyzing over a hundred similar texts and is thus paradigmatic of the issues under scrutiny here. The image is of two young Aboriginal boys asleep on pavement next to a garbage can outside of a supermarket. It is an example of what Kleinman and Kleinman (1997) call, the "mediatization of suffering"; an image of suffering that is "appropriated to appeal emotionally

and morally both to global audiences and local populations” (p. 1). This image and article serve as a window into the problematization of ‘the North’.

The spatial designation of ‘the north’ is one that has shifted many times in Canada’s rather short national history.⁴⁹ While my focus thus far in the dissertation has been on the Great Slave Lake region of the Northwest Territories, here I expand my analysis to include Nunavut they are subject to similar kinds of representations. Nunavut was formed in 1999 by separating from the Northwest Territories. Iqaluit is the capital city of Nunavut.

Nunavut is one of three northern Territories. Canada’s three Territories (Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon) share different political status those shared amongst the ten southern provinces. Most important here is the fact that resource revenues for the territories are managed federally, and are dispensed back to the population via per capita transfer payments. All three have relatively small populations, ranging from 30,000 (NU, YK) to 40,000 (NWT) and large land masses (Nunavut is 2,000,000 km²). Diamond mines are close to the NWT/ Nunavut border. One diamond project did begin in Nunavut, however was closed quickly. Beside diamonds, Nunavut is an arctic territory of particular interest to extractive capital for possibilities of off-shore oil and gas drilling. Referred to as the “final energy frontier” (Vanderklippe, 2012), the region is part of the federal government’s northern strategy, which includes making 905,000 hectares of the northern offshore up for private bid by the end of 2012.

The three territories are organized and marked on a spectrum of indigeneity, with Nunavut standing in as *the* indigenous territory, the NWT as mixed, and the Yukon as primarily a settler territory. Part of this is explained by demographics. According to recent census data (2006/2011), 83% of Nunavut’s population identified as Inuit, 53% of NWT residents identified as First nations, Métis or Inuit, and 21% of the Yukon identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

⁴⁹ Historian Janice Cavell (2002) has traced the shifting geographical region to which “the north” has referred. Tracking the discontinuities in Anglophone historical writing, she argues that before the 1970s, for example, the Arctic Archipelago was not easily integrated into paradigms of national development. The changing boundaries of what counts as north, has led some researchers to talk about ‘the idea of the north’ (Davidson, 2005) or the north as simply an ideological construction or virtuality whose name ‘the north’ “has become the name for a place without a proper or consensual referent” (Weber & Shields, 2010:110).

These racial gradations are often matched with quality of life assessments. The common joke being that the three territories can be renamed “None-of-it”, “Some-of-it” and “All-of-it.”

The territory of Nunavut was the pinnacle of Canada’s turn to liberal multiculturalist state policy after the 1970s. It aimed to recognize indigenous difference and mark Canada as a model of tolerance and an expert in the management of cultural difference. Part of the institutional practice of cultural recognition was awarding/imposing collective, albeit partial land tenure regimes. I say partial as land ownership often excludes sub soil rights. Nunavut was the largest of these awards, and is the one most carefully watched and assessed. It was the potential pride of a nation, yet in 2009, a headline from *The Globe & Mail* reported “10 years in, Nunavut gets a failing grade” (Paperny, 2009b).

Mean Streets paints a dark picture of the capital city of Iqaluit, one that most certainly contributes to the “nothing but problems” discourse that I spoke of earlier. The story begins when a local resident snapped photographs of two boys sleeping beside a garbage can. She first called the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and then took the photos to the regional newspaper, which published them. According to the initial article, “their publication garnered thousands of outraged responses – and a degree of blowback for having published them in the first place” (Paperny 2009a). In reprinting the image, *Mean Streets* intended to summarize the heated debates about the area's social problems, with different experts weighing in on whether this was in fact a crisis.

The article reported that by the time the RCMP arrived, one boy was gone. The second was brought home by the RCMP and his mother was told by the officer she was “one of the worst parents they have ever seen.” Soon after, this second boy was taken by social services and placed in foster care.⁵⁰ While the article largely blamed the children’s parents, the image of the boys beside the garbage became a springboard for much larger debates about quality of life.

⁵⁰ In Canada, First Nations, or Aboriginal children are over-represented in the foster care system. For critical insights into this issue see Blackstock, 2009a, 2009b.

That the image of children is significant. As Kleinman (1997) has shown, children are particularly powerful subjects in mediatized sufferings circulated to western audiences. Their implied innocence and vulnerability heightens an imagined adult reader's emotional response to the images, and invites questions about the ethics of the scene. Children's poverty is particularly poignant in generating an empathetic response, as children, unlike the adult street-involved population, can not be easily blamed for their situation as individuals (although their parents can be).

As Davin (1997) and McElhinny (2005) have shown, the welfare of children is a site of rich expression of colonial power and authority. An emphasis on children, rather than adults, participates in what can be called the "politics of deferral". By problematizing poverty as particularly about youth, issues of exceptionally low average household incomes and exorbitantly high food and private housing prices are bracketed in favour of a distant time when children grew into self-sufficient adults. Many responses to the main article poured into the newspaper's office. A selection was printed in the comments section over the weeks following the story. Observe the following anonymous response submitted in response to *Mean Streets*.

The problems start when the children are small. About half of Nunavut's three to five year olds are going hungry...Half of pregnant women do not have enough to eat. Add in substance abuse and family dysfunction. The odds are stacked against Nunavut's children. Yet mental health and addictions facilities are few. One wonders how effective child-welfare services are. And who speaks for the children who are served (or not) by government? No one it appears. (Who speaks for Nunavut's children, *Globe and Mail* online, 2009)

The respondent's question "Who speaks for Nunavut's children?" indexes the assumed vulnerability of children and presumes an inability for children to represent themselves. It also implies that there is no one in Nunavut already heavily invested in issues of child welfare (which is certainly not the case). The problematization of poverty as explicitly a concern for pregnant women and children has very real consequences. Youth in the NWT are often the subjects of future-improvement projects. For example, while working as a schoolteacher at the francophone elementary school in Hay River, I observed almost weekly requests by state and NGO agencies to come into the school to conduct various intervention programs. Some examples of these

programs and interventions included diabetes education, anti-drug seminars, anti-smoking campaigns, and oral health workshops. The suggestion of an AIDS education was particularly interesting to note, as the NWT is a region with an HIV infection rate of almost zero. All of these visitors made it very difficult to juggle tasks such as reading and critical thinking. It is very common to see children (especially those from lower income homes) wearing health promotion paraphernalia such as toques that say “drug free,” or t-shirts that say “butt-out.”

Over the course of my fieldwork, I noticed a substantial number of public health campaigns directed at pregnant women. Indigenous women in particular were the targets of public scrutiny for proper behavior during pregnancy. As I illustrated in chapter two, Destiny was subject to a particularly severe assessment of her behavior during her pregnancy. As a reminder, she was fired from her job cleaning hotel rooms when she was spotted in the bar after work. It should be said this is one of the few public places where adults socialize, and she was not drinking alcohol. Yet, this kind of suspicion around indigenous and low-income, non-indigenous women’s pregnancies was commonplace, fueled by national media reports like the one above, and by much older stereotypes regarding alcohol consumption practices.

The earlier quotation from the anonymous responder to Mean Streets gestures to issues of food security. However, a more pressing concern in discourses of poverty and access is the notion that poverty is too often linked to mental health. If the issue is women and children being hungry, then how can a lack of *mental* health and addictions facilities be a sensible solution? Here, the work is achieved partly through the existing structures of expectation that position rural indigenous populations as particularly heavy users of drugs and alcohol. It is also reinforced in the original *Mean Streets* text, which uses mental health as the central interpretive frame. In the following excerpt, watch how the two sleeping boys become synonymous with a much more serious set of issues.

Painting a complete picture of how many runaway young boys exist is not possible because formal numbers are not collated unless the young are placed in care. But for Nunavut's youngest, the risks are high. The youth suicide statistic alone is troubling. (Paperny, 2009a)

The sleeping boys are deemed “runaways” and immediately, and casually, coupled with suicide. Stevenson (2005, 2012) has skillfully explored the issue of Inuit suicide. Stevenson (2012) argues that “the biological life or survival of the Inuit became the primary object of Canada’s northern policy in the postwar era” (p. 592). Securing life is securing sovereignty and state legitimacy. As a contemporary continuation of this type of biopolitics, *Mean Streets* thus substitutes a range of social relations for a single quality of life assessment: failure. It gives the reader a distant, yet nevertheless urgent, medicalized sense of suffering. The reader learns not a single detail of the boys’ lives lived outside of suffering. Suffering seems to be a constant state of affairs, equally distributed among all northern indigenous persons. This medicalized understanding of structural inequalities ultimately legitimizes an interventionist state apparatus (Waldram, 2004). According to Irlbacher-Fox’s (2009) study of Aboriginal-State negotiations, in the Northwest Territories,

the state effectively shifts responsibility for suffering onto the sufferers, establishing itself through discourse and action as a necessary and legitimate interventionist agent in the lives of Indigenous people alleged to lack the capacity to recognize or alter what the state alleges to be their own suffering-inflicting actions (p. 107).

The use of mental health discourses in the management of poverty is not new. The major force of these narratives is their ability to transform complex social relations of inequality and render them individualized psychological problems. To be clear, I am not dismissing ‘mental health’ as a red herring for structural inequalities in every instance. I am merely opening up to discussion the wider range of issues and concerns these discourses get tied to, in my case natural resource extraction. The limits of the mental health and historical trauma paradigms for understanding the unequal distribution of resources in Canada are currently being called into question by some researchers (Dombrowski et al., 2012). Nevertheless, images of rural poverty and their psychological explanations, like the one in *Mean Streets*, abound in popular media and turn up again in “nothing but problems” talk.

Two supporting graphics (not reprinted here) flank the main text of *Mean Streets*, and imply that Indigeneity can and should be explained through the application of psychology. The first graph is of individual diagnosed psychological problems. Data collected is of indigenous residents only.

It is important to note that Iqaluit is 50% non-indigenous. By pointing out individual (and ethnic) mental health issues, the attention is put on “the capacities of the poor [rather] than on the practices through which one social group impoverishes another” (Li, 2007, p. 7). In moving quickly to a scientific, psychological explanation of the scene, *Mean Streets* ethnicizes the issue of poverty. The second graphic is of comparative suicide rates and is parsed in ethnic terms (Canadian Inuit versus Alaska Native versus Greenlandic Inuit).

While disproportionate rates of suicide are not to be denied, the appropriation of Indigenous suffering by the media turns individual and collective memories of violation into *trauma stories*. As Kleinman and Kleinman (1997) explain, these trauma stories then become the currency, the symbolic capital for exchanges for physical resources and political status (e.g. refugee, Indigenous) (cf. Waldram, 2004 regarding Aboriginal Canada; James, 2010 regarding Haiti). Many northern communities work within this discursive frame in order to access funding and other supports (Adelson, 2004; Irlbacher-Fox, 2009; Kirmayer & Valaskakis, 2008).

In the case of the diamond basin, certain community members are well aware of the limited benefits new resource projects bring to the region’s most marginal constituents. By integrating a therapeutic lexicon in negotiating access rights to minerals, communities have been able to secure select types of funding for social programming. In the context of urban Canada, as Maxwell (2010) notes, mental health discourses became a major organizing narrative in spaces like prisons and urban community aid centers as of the 1990s and in some cases opened up new spaces for redefining ‘care’ in the context of state institutions.

Casting political and economic issues of poverty and homelessness as primarily therapeutic concerns presents both possibilities and challenges (Carr, 2011). An interventionist approach is often hailed when the state has been established as wrought with dysfunction and abuse. This is confirmed by the academic and popular anecdotes quoted in the *Mean Streets* article. A quote from a follow-up piece to *Mean Streets* summarizes, “Prime Minister Stephen Harper, visiting Iqaluit yesterday, appropriately said the photograph revealed ‘a terrible, tragic story’ and expressed hope that economic development would help ease social problems” (Paperny, 2009a). From here, the door is open to attempt to align economic projects with governmental ones.

In a region the federal and territorial governments say they are determined to develop, thousands of young people, many of whom grew up in dysfunctional or abusive environments, find themselves without education or employment prospects in the territorial capital... A few hours after the picture was taken on July 26, the federal government held a joint press conference, involving three ministers who outlined Ottawa's strategy on sovereignty and northern development, talking of their hope for the area... (Paperny, 2009a)

These texts serve to take single events (boys sleeping) and raise them to the level of social crises. As Povinelli (2011) points out, “crises and catastrophes are kinds of events that seem to demand, as if authored from outside human agency, an ethical response” (2011, p. 14). Indeed, from the perspective of these news accounts, the author of such catastrophic states is unknown. Social dislocations like those described in *Mean Streets* are circulated severed from their wider political economic contexts of production, and linked to ‘solutions’ that align with capital’s extraction imperative.

The suggestion that economic development, education and employment prospects are the cure to social ills is particularly relevant to this dissertation. As I show in the next chapter, education has increasingly become narrowly defined as training for fragile resource industries. Employment almost exclusively means work in sectors the state has an invested interest in attracting to the area, specifically resource exploration and extraction.

What is particularly relevant in the above passage is the sequencing of events. Dysfunction *precedes* development: the. The use of terms like ‘hope’ and ‘determination’ position ‘development’ as a future project. This project appears to be authored largely by the state. The state seems to stand apart from society (Nunavut). Capitalism appears as an external force, and resource projects present a kind of catastrophic capacity to elicit conditions of suffering or thriving. This coupling of suffering to opportunity, in articles like *Mean Streets* and in much of the academic advocacy work in the area (e.g. Candler et al. 2010; Gibson & O’Faircheallaigh, 2010) successfully decouples persons from process. It assumes economic processes happen *to* people, not *with* and *against* them.

From this analytic starting point, two elements of a relation appear to be independent of one another. In this scheme, indigeneity is pre-existing and separate from imposing development. The relationship is therefore necessarily depicted as oppositional, and overlooks any sense of the mutual interdependence of concrete forms of community (Indigenous or otherwise) and state-capital (from merchant to industrial to finance). In chapter two, I took a relational approach to show how in Nugent's (1994) terms, "each helps to create, construct, enable (or not enable) the other according to specific material-political interests and cultural conceptions which are contingent in time and through space" (p.357).

Quoting an area scholar, the story ends by stating, "After a decade of establishing itself politically, now the time has come when they [Nunavut] have to build a society... that may take another twenty years" (Paperny, 2009a). As a reminder from chapter one, much like Povinelli's (2008, 2011) observations about Indigenous Australia, Indigenous-marked suffering in the North is apprehended through the future anterior - a future where the present misery will have been redeemed. The tense of the future anterior is one of potential. Within any given present, it images "what will have been" before an event actually comes to pass. In English, it is a tense evoked in the murky content of texts and is not easily identified by the usual construction of an auxiliary verb plus past participle as it is, for example, in French. Nevertheless, we see it here. To end the Northern Indigenous state-of-suffering and to arrive at the future point might take twenty years and will be achieved by sovereignty and development.

More than just discrepancies in word choice and verb tenses, disparate temporal modalities of suffering engender different types of, and timelines for, action. Racially marked suffering is, according to the scholar cited in the article, to be solved in twenty years, whereas other events, like the shooting of an RCMP officer in Hay River I describe in the next section, demands action in the present imperative. The use of the future anterior asks that racialized suffering be bracketed in favor of a distant horizon. As quickly as we learn about suffering, we are asked to put it aside to focus on opportunities. Again, as Povinelli (2011) observes, "from the perspective of the future good that market integration will bring, present suffering should be bracketed" (p. 24).

5.3 The Immediacy of Unmarked Suffering

The next “Northern Circulation” takes us back to Hay River, NWT. Like Iqaluit, Hay River’s population is 50 percent Indigenous, although we will see how these two statistically congruent towns are disparately racially marked. I contrast these two pieces to highlight differential spacial and temporal practices in the construction of opportunity and suffering.

On October 6, 2007, a Royal Canadian Mounted Police Officer was fatally shot in Hay River. With a population of under 4000, this industrial transportation town on the south shore of the Great Slave Lake had never before made national headlines. By October 13, the story had been picked up by *The Globe and Mail* and so began the circulation of ethnographic details surrounding a life and death in an out of the way place.

According to the article, the RCMP officer was responding to a routine call; a noise complaint at 5:00 a.m. at an address described as being the “most notorious crack house in town.” The officer had gone to the scene alone and was later found dead in the nearby woods. Textured descriptions of the officer’s death and life transpose a sense of suffering onto the reader in what is described as a “senseless” act.

In the final moments of [his] life, the big officer lay upon a bed of golden willow leaves beside the sap-soaked trunk of a coning spruce. At his side were a Tim Horton’s coffee cup, a Doritos chip bag, a plastic shopping bag — common refuse that tended to collect in this wooded windbreak dividing the property belonging to the subsidized singles apartment building from the empty lot next door (White, 2007, np)

In this “Northern Circulation” story of suffering, the ethnographic gaze is intimate, whereas in “Mean Streets,” we are given a distant, medicalized sense of suffering. The reader is never given details of the boys’ lives lived outside of suffering. Whereas in Iqaluit, suffering is a constant

state of affairs, in Hay River the suggestion is made that suffering is a blemish, an interruption on what is normally unmarked.⁵¹

But for all the north had going for it, [the officer] faced dangers ... gangs had found a lucrative trade in northern drug trafficking. Money from oil, gas and diamond mining had deepened the pockets in the north. (White, 2007, np)

Alongside ideas of suffering is the notion that increased salaries from resource work, if left unchecked, leads to conspicuous consumption practices like drugs, alcohol, and “unnecessary” recreation items⁵² (big trucks, snow machines, etc.). From having visited Hay River’s “most notorious” address with Destiny, I can say that the residents of the home have not reaped the rewards of industrial growth. The local market for crack is in fact small (6–10 users) and, despite the occasional visit from a petty dealer from Alberta (the shooter), the residents of “the most notorious address” are not successful at running a local drug network (as evidenced by the fact that the ‘notorious’ is located in the most heavily subsidized housing area). Residents of Hay River earning high salaries from the mines are subject to regular drug testing and aren’t clients. The managerial class and public servants represent a higher proportion of drug users, but their preference is for marijuana, so they do not stop by ‘notorious’.

Despite these facts, the local elite were furious to have the circulation of the loss of an RCMP officer come to index their town as a drug hub. The word “outrage” was used in all subsequent articles about the shooter’s trial and the community’s recovery. I attended endless meetings where different “crime reduction” strategies were discussed. These primarily clustered around child welfare (curfews, additional drug fines around the schools). Like in Nunavut, youth in the NWT are often the subjects of future-making projects.

⁵¹ This has to do in part with the racialization of each community. Both Hay River and Iqaluit have 50 percent non-Indigenous populations, however, while Iqaluit is marked as Indigenous, Hay River is understood as a white settler town (evidenced by its description as being blue collar).

⁵² This applies equally to the white working class in Canada as it does its Indigenous counterpart.

More than just discrepancies in word choice and verb tenses, disparate temporal modalities of suffering engender different types of, and timelines for, action. Racially marked suffering is said to be solved in twenty years, whereas demand for action following the death of the officer was immediate. The presentness of the imposition of suffering in Hay River demanded action in the imperative. While the shooting occurred following my preliminary fieldwork in 2007, the public debates over “drugs and crime” continued for the fourteen months of my stay in Canada’s Diamond Basin between 2008 and 2009. There were initiatives to further criminalize (certain kinds of) drug use and distribution and to increase surveillance (curfews, parent fines) ... all of which Loïc Wacquant (2009) might call “punishing the poor.” The phraseology of Australia’s former prime minister John Howard even circulated to the lips of local elite in Hay River who demanded action against the crimes that were “fraying the social fabric of the community” (as a reminder, the estimated crack using population is 6).

The circulation of suffering in national media had loop back effects like the institution of a “drug free” zone in Hay River.⁵³ The area around the school, which also includes almost all of the low-income rental housing like the High Rise, the trailer court (where Ruth lives) and ‘Disneyland’ (the housing complex where ‘notorious’ is located), was subject to increased community surveillance. Yet, loop backs aren’t always guaranteed. During the course of my fieldwork, there were other deaths in Hay River. Through local rumors and interviews with housekeeping staff, I learned of a man from a neighbouring Aboriginal village who had rented a room at the local inn and then hanged himself in the closet. A young Aboriginal woman was hit by a transport truck on the Mackenzie Highway while coming home from a Halloween party. A twenty-six-year-old woman from Alberta “fell” to her death from the High Rise. A fifty-two-year-old father of two was found dead outside of the Legion (a veteran’s bar). A man killed his wife and her lover in the High Rise. These particular stories did not circulate as did the story of the RCMP officer.

⁵³ These circulations can also loop back in the making of federal policy. For example, a few months after the original publication of “Mean Streets,” I saw the photo of the trash-can sleepers again. This time it was a slide in a PowerPoint presentation given by a political science PhD candidate at the University of Toronto. His talk was on “Human Security in the Arctic.” In it, he outlined various United Nations definitions for human security and argued for a version of the term that went beyond securing people from physical harm to one that included socio-economic security. This was necessary because, according to popular sources, many people in the Arctic were suffering. The photo, now serving as evidence, caused a stir in the room. Lecture attendees, many of whom were policy-makers, shook their heads.

These stories did not prompt endless town hall meetings, the establishment of a drug free zone, or the erection of a public monument (as was the case for the RCMP officer). These deaths were lumped in with a more general, well-circulated story about the North, summarized in the first story as social dysfunction and cultural loss.

5.4 Rendering Suffering/Opportunity Technical I: Tools of the Trade

By looking at the measurements said to assess the impacts of diamond development, and in the process address issues of social dislocation, we can begin to question through what institutional means suffering and opportunity come to be empirically known. The ways in which suffering and opportunity are rendered technical anticipate the kinds of interventions that federally funded agents and experts prioritize within a framework of neoliberal reform (Harvey, 2005, Ferguson, 1994, see chapter six).

In the NWT suffering is rendered technical in relation to natural resource extraction through two instruments which are worth describing in detail. The first, are Impact Benefit Agreements, the second are Socio-Economic Agreements. As I mentioned in chapter three, when diamonds were claimed and discovered in 1991, they were on contested lands. The federal government held jurisdiction over the land in question, but regional Aboriginal land claims were underway. To expedite development, the state approved the first diamond mine provided that BHP Billiton make “significant progress” in reaching an Impact Benefit Agreement with Aboriginal groups in the region within 60 days.⁵⁴

IBAs are confidential documents signed by the developer and the Aboriginal authority and usually specify private arbitration as the means for settling disputes. In the case of the Canadian North, IBAs extricated the federal government from the sticky business of dealing with Aboriginal politics, leaving industry to seek support for resource development from groups whose relationship to land and livelihood was uneven and tenuous. Because of their

⁵⁴ During the “60 day scramble” groups were expected to review very high volumes of legal, environmental and financial data and come to a decision about the future of land use (Bielawski, 2003).

confidentiality, it is difficult to assess the terms of IBAs (Sosa & Keenan, 2001). Broadly, they involve royalty sharing and cash payments. Linked to the Corporate Social Responsibility movement, these agreements are steeped in the language of the local, yet are global industry standards for dealing with Indigenous populations.

Political events in the 1960s and 1970s outside of the north provide the context for the emergence of socio-economic impact assessment. As part of a broader genre of knowledge production, Social Impact assessments emerged in the United States in 1970 with the advent of Nixon's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). After the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, opposition to careless large-scale extraction was growing. NEPA provided the institutional soother that allowed projects to move forward with some additional paperwork. Three years later, the Alaskan pipeline proposal would prompt the Environmental assessment process to take social issues into account due to rising indigenous activism associated with the American Indian Movement (AIM). Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, Social Impact Assessments boomed alongside the economy with many large-scale energy projects in Canada and the United States requiring SIA studies (Vanclay, 2006). By the late 1990s Impact assessment was focus of multiple scholarly journals and a small industry in its own right with growing army of consultants and anthropologists.

Although usually assumed to operate homogenously across Indigenous contexts (Australia, and various regions of Canada), IBAs take on local characteristics due to differences in state structures, corporate interests and the existing policies governing the type of resource to be extracted (e.g. minerals and oil operate under different regulatory acts). The efficacy of IBAs in promoting social equality in the Canadian context is slowly being called into question. Laforce (2010) questions the ability of the IBA instruments to improve Aboriginal participation in decision-making processes. Caine and Krogman (2010) make the point that power is unequally distributed amongst negotiating parties. Further, they argue that the confidentiality of IBAs can “stifle Aboriginal people from sharing information about benefits negotiated by other groups, prevent deeper understanding of long-term social impacts of development, thwart subsequent objections to the development and its impacts, and reduce visioning about the type and pace of development that is desirable” (p. 77). While these critiques are valid, they make an analytical move, which takes the ‘otherness’ of Indigenous populations as inherent and stable.

Returning to the case of the diamond basin, after the assigned 60 days, IBAs were reached with the five communities immediately surrounding the deposits and mine construction began. However, there was some controversy with respect to which communities were included. By the time the third mine began its negotiations, seven separate communities were called into its negotiations as other locales in the region wanted to be included in the opportunities thought to come with development.

The rise in land claim settlements raised concerns amongst settler populations about their own security as national subjects. There were concerns that new forms of recognition might marginalize non-indigenous northerners (non-Aboriginal residents make up over half the population). IBAs only involve indigenous communities. This is a result of unsettled land claim issues discussed at length in chapter four. For now, it is important to understand that the introduction and peculiar economic structure of IBAs meant that the NWT as a whole struggled to find a means for these northerners to benefit from resource development. The territorial government had concerns too. The need for assurance was, in large part, because mining resources in the NWT are managed federally, with royalty payments going to the federal government and then back to the territorial government through transfer payments based on population. The modest royalty structure in the NWT is often used by both levels of government to attract industry and investors, the anticipated level of direct transfers was low, and the fears of large, open-pit mining and the influx of migration it would encourage were common topics of public debate. Such fears were well founded. The current royalty regime in the NWT is among the lowest in the world. While industry profits climbed, so too did the housing crisis in the capital city of Yellowknife (GNWT, 2009). The rising cost of social reproduction put pressure on regional and Territorial governments whose ability to provide for its citizens is stifled by low royalty regimes and further exacerbated by increased temporary labourers who are not accounted for in the transfer payment scheme. In such instances, the government's only line of recourse is to attempt to persuade the labour not to emigrate.

In the service of existing local elites and in the interests of encouraging labour to stay north, Socio-Economic Agreements (SEAs) were introduced by the Territorial government to guarantee priority employment and business opportunities (tenders and sub-contracts) to residents of the

North (rather than say, attempting to institute a fair economic rent regime through a mining/resource tax, capital investment tax or the creation of a heritage fund). SEAs helped to pave the road to diamond development by raising public support among non-Aboriginals. Citing employment and training as the supposed key benefits of contemporary resource projects, the SEAs were attractive to northerners – as well as those in the process of formally becoming northerners – as most are displaced working class Canadians who have come north for work opportunities. Many of these workers were from the Eastern Provinces (Newfoundland, New Brunswick), where primary and secondary industry had been in sharp decline since the 1980s, and human labour is the main export, as it has been at several historical junctures (Sider, 2003b, 2006). For Aboriginal residents from other parts of the country, these measures are equally attractive (see chapter four). Socio-Economic Agreements reassured people in NWT that, at the very least, they would not be burdened with the sole and substantial costs of monitoring development (both social and environmental).

Even within emerging criticisms which note the power differentials between negotiating parties (Caine & Krogman, 2010), rarely is it noted that IBAs and SEAs have transformed much of the discussion around development from questions of Indigenous land and livelihood to questions of labour. Corporations, government agencies and community groups now speak in the limited domain of employment percentages. There is a steady stream of published figures that show what percentage of the workforce are Aboriginal, Northern or Other. Targets are set and programs are put in place to try to make these goals realizable. Of course, the inference is that this kind of alignment between employment rates and racial categories of personhood will translate into broader forms of socio-economic equality.

The emphasis on jobs is not merely externally driven. Over the course of 18 months of fieldwork in Canada's diamond basin, it was clear to me that the majority of Aboriginal residents in the larger region have a distant relationship to the supposed economic benefits of diamond development, even when projects happen on land in various stages of being claimed. For this reason, many Aboriginal residents see development projects in terms very similar to non-Aboriginal residents: as a potential source for labour or employment. State and industry have encouraged this process via IBA/SEA agreements that, to an extent, privilege Aboriginal/Northern hiring. The targets of employment as intervention are largely the indigenous

population (assumed to be of local origin), although the SEAs broaden the reach of affirmative action measures to include non-indigenous residents as well. In the next chapter I follow one such intervention.

5.5 Rendering Suffering/Opportunity Technical II: Communities and Diamonds

An emphasis on market output values is made clear when we look at the annual assessments of the impacts and benefits of diamond mining. These reports are published annually by the Government of the Northwest Territories, under the title *Communities and Diamonds*. This kind of publication represents the public face of the mines' commitments to 'community' and 'development.' It is a useful document for understanding how the problematization of the north is rendered technical and which domains are seen as "intelligible fields" fit for intervention. These agreements outline developers' commitments to employment and business opportunities for local people and include social and cultural sensitivity provisions. Importantly, they also define roles and responsibilities for the measurement of social and economic impacts and establish the institutional apparatus, which assess changes linked to development.

These assessments are then re-circulated. In contemporary media reports they are fractured and splintered and inserted into news pieces in either support of or opposition to resource development. In the NWT, the assessment of failure and/or success of resource development is largely achieved through a monitoring board made up of state, industry and 'community' representatives. Assessment is a loaded term, rationalizing such ideological elements as 'progress' and 'sustainability.'

Publications like *Communities and Diamonds* give us a portrait of suffering. They tell us who is suffering, where they are suffering, and in what ways. The most common method deployed in impact assessment is the isolation of a series of measurable social and economic statistics whose quantities can be tracked from the date of project inception until that particular project is completed. According to their advocates, these statistics constitute "quantitative and technical elements of social indicator identification, baseline assessment, and other research approaches that generally dovetail with bio-physical elements of environmental impact assessment" (Asselin & Parkins, 2009, p. 485). These isolated variables (Table 2) form what I call the "statistics of

suffering.” These are primarily industry-selected indicators, which depend on aggregate individual statistics collected through the Canadian census.

Despite the surge and fall of the industry during my fieldwork, the government of the Northwest Territories’ 2008 *Communities and Diamonds* report recounted primarily positive outcomes of development for the immediate region, stating, “major spending is continuing to increase in the areas of housing, transportation and warehousing. The diamond mines have likely contributed to the rise in business activity. An increase in capital spending indicates an expanding economy” (2009, p. 14).

Community, Family and Individual Well-Being	Cultural Wellbeing & Traditional Economy	Non-Traditional Economy
Potential years of life lost Injuries Suicides Teen births Single parent families Total police reported crimes Property crimes Violent crimes Communicable diseases Children receiving services Spousal assault Federal statute crimes Traffic crimes Other criminal code offences Home ownership Crowding Core need	Aboriginal language use (youth) Hunting and trapping Fishing	Average income Proportion of high income earners Income Assistance Employment rate Unemployment rate Participation rate High school completion Less than grade 9 Business Activity Government Costs Secondary Industry

Table 2: Measured variables in socio-economic impact assessments.
Chart reproduced from GNWT, 2008.

The expectation here is that there will be a trickledown effect from capital spending. This has never been shown to be an accurate assumption. For those concerned with matters of ‘quality of life,’ the question is whether expanding economy translates into improved conditions of everyday endurance. Here the answer is less optimistic. From the same report,

It is difficult to draw conclusions about the trend for family violence on the basis of rates of reported spousal assault. The number of women and children using shelters has fallen.⁵⁵ However, in the NWT family violence is quite high... In the North, high unemployment, social isolation, alcohol consumption, younger couples and common-law unions may contribute to the high level of family violence...diamond projects have not had the positive impact on crowding

⁵⁵ This requires clarification. First, most communities do not have shelters. From the perspective of shelter workers I spoke with informally, their services are accessed over and above their means. A recent report on homelessness among women indicates that there are roughly 1,000 homeless women in the NWT – which constitutes over five per cent of the female population (YWCA, 2007).

[housing] that was expected. Crowding was expected to drop further. Lack of suitable housing, in- and intra-migration as well as house price rises may be factors. (GNWT, 2009, p. 10-12)

Somewhat ironically, the stated causes of crowding (migration, high prices) are seen by the report as neither as related to nor produced by, expedient large-scale development. The report illustrates the tension of suffering and opportunity discussed above, but it achieves much more than that. Observe the first quotation. It makes a causal connection between family violence and (among other things) high unemployment. I worked with several women throughout the course of my fieldwork who experienced significant forms of domestic violence and found no correlation between employment status (theirs or their partners) and instances of violence. Admittedly, my sampling techniques were not inclusive, however the conflation of individual aggregate statistics with one another in this way naturalizes a link between employment and forms of social dislocation that may very well be unfounded. This conflation provides support for free market ideologies and increased market-driven interventions including the job training programs I describe in the next chapter.

Increasingly, funding provided to the region is directed towards these types of initiatives. While in the field, I received a government publication whose headline read *Investing in Training, Investing in Northerners*. The story profiled Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Chuck Strahl's announcement that nine million dollars would be invested in northern training initiatives over the next three years. "Canada's government is committed to creating the best educated, most skilled, most flexible workforce in the world. This is a good news story about co-operation between government, First nations, the training sector and industry," said Minister Strahl. The article ends by noting "In Budget 2007, the government of Canada committed to fostering private and public sector partnerships that help Aboriginal people with the skills and training they need to take advantage of opportunities in the North and across Canada" (INAC, 2008, p. 1).

From social science to media accounts, the assessment tools used in a report like *Communities and Diamonds* are usually portrayed as viable approaches in assuring that Aboriginal people will reap economic benefits of resource extraction (Gibson & Klinck, 2005). However, it is important to keep in mind that an emphasis on employment as a cure for social ills has narrowed much of

the potential for political debate to questions of work. This has meant that investments in other programs for life-enhancement are essentially off the table, or even unthinkable.

As both Ferguson (1999) and Li (2007) have shown, questions rendered technical are simultaneously rendered nonpolitical. They almost always *exclude* the structure of political economic relations from both their assessments and interventions. From social science to media accounts, IBAs are usually portrayed as "viable approaches" in assuring Aboriginal people will reap the economic benefits of resource extraction (Gibson & Klinck, 2005). These kinds of arguments are nonpolitical. They exclude the various political and economic processes which rendered communities as "intelligible fields" (Ferguson, 1999; Foucault 1971, 1973).

Today, the motivations for the state to pursue modern land claims and IBAs are clear. According to the federal department responsible for these matters,⁵⁶ land claims aim "to promote Aboriginal groups' economic growth and self-sufficiency" (AANDC, 2012). The comprehensive policy held that "resolving land claims will benefit all northerners by creating a stable and predictable environment that will, in turn, encourage economic development in the north" (DIAND, 2000). What can be described as a deliberate exposure to "the full blast of market discipline" (Li, 2009, p. 80), the brief version of what self-government and land claims look like on the ground, in many cases, is the transformation of newly formed local governments into quasi-capitalist firms while the state withdraws social protections. Responsibility to shareholders is not merely involved to secure profits. The stakes are much higher.⁵⁷ Start-up funds allocated to groups by the state are meant to generate economic activities to then finance the provision of basic rights and services that would have previously been provided by the state (water, housing, health care).

While notions of self-sufficiency meet some indigenous political aims, they have also been responsible for the weakening of a federal social safety net. For certain communities, particularly

⁵⁶ At the time of the research, this department was named Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). In May 2011, the department's name was changed to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

⁵⁷ This process has international counterparts. In the United States, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act achieved much the same ends, and served as a model to the Canadian case (Dombrowski, 2001). In New Zealand, a similar process is underway (Rata, 2000).

those not working with industry (by choice or by chance), the results have been nothing short of disastrous (housing shortages, poor quality drinking water, limited medical services, etc.). Cowlshaw's observations for Australia seem equally applicable in the Canadian context. She notes, "the funding of autonomous Indigenous organizations was not recognized as itself carrying the weight of colonial history, the civilizing mission, and our intentions and desires for our others" (2003, p. 108). Under these particular conditions it makes sense that local communities in the NWT would quickly sign an IBA in order to get a much-needed infusion of capital.

5.6 Conclusion: On Having Something to Say on Suffering

Statistics of suffering like those in *Communities and Diamonds* spatialize the impacts of resource development to the immediate surrounding communities. In the process racializes certain spaces as distinctly Aboriginal thus spatializing Aboriginality as rural and remote. That is to say, the assessments are only conducted in the 5-7 communities that are closest to the extraction site. This overlooks the reality of local inequalities and the types of suffering that move people out of the region or to the streets of larger centers (ultimately, Destiny ends up in Edmonton, David in Fort McMurray and Ruth arrived from New Brunswick). It also overlooks the places from which industry is actually seeking its labour force (so-called skilled labour flown in from other parts of Canada and around the world). Hay River, the central field site I describe in the introduction and chapters four and five, is a community defined as *outside* diamond policy, despite many residents that have helped take 12 billion dollars of stones from tundra to market. Many are from smaller Aboriginal communities, while others, as I showed in chapter four, were from other parts of the world. Focusing on a 'hub' or peri-urban center like Hay River is useful in highlighting the limits that these kinds of assessments impose in shaping understanding of resource development.

The move to spatialize/racialize impacts is reductive on a second level. Attempts by diamond mining firms to control the supply of the commodity, thus securing its price, produces consequential global circulations of capital and goods. Returning to the arguments raised in chapter three, the corporations that own the mines are largest in the world. The concentration of capital required to build and maintain mine sites in the arctic is limited these few companies. Next, two of the three mining companies have portfolios that depend on other commodities.

Diamonds produce a small fragment of Rio Tinto's and BHP Billiton's earnings. Next, the only part of production that occurs in the NWT is the extraction of ore. Processing occurs at various sites around the globe (e.g. Botswana, Vietnam). Finally the international trade of diamonds implicates a whole host of people and places that are far removed from the circumpolar world.

To conclude, I return to the question of suffering in a slightly different way. Like most Canadians, suffering troubles me. Yet, I am never quite sure what to say when nervous new brides fiddle with their rings and look desperate for me to confirm that Canadian diamonds are "the good ones", that they "help the people there by making good jobs". Having nothing against one commodity, but many reservations about larger sets of relations of production and circulation, these conversations are always awkward. I have realized over time that what is most troubling are the ways in which their comments point to shapeless suffering in a faraway place.

While the contrast between these two circulations of suffering in section 5.2 and 5.3 revealed how sufferings are accorded disparate temporal modalities, it is worth noting that neither invites their audience to interrogate the long history of labour and capital fumbling about the frontier. While the two stories don't appear to share much beyond latitudinal co-ordinates, the shared node is Northern Development, specifically resource extraction.

Indeed, their comments index the nationally circulated sufferings I described, and share five problematic interconnected assumptions. First, wage work ends suffering. Second, labour for global extraction can be found locally on the frontier (or said differently the north is not a place where surplus labour shows up in search of livelihood, which it has been for the past 200 years). Third, the Indigenous population does not have an extensive history of supporting extraction as labour. Fourth, there is something "new" about this development strategy. Fifth, Northern suffering is separate from the rest of Canadian well-being. I return to these five assumptions in my conclusion.

The urge to write this chapter came from an observed resistance to holding the production and *circulation* of suffering and political economy in a single analytic frame. The usual choices have been to either decry suffering, in (unintended?) collusion, with industry and elite accounts or to ignore it in favor of the future anterior, the rough road of community resistance, and allusions to a time when this will all have made sense. But, as Yogi Berra reminds us, the future ain't what it

used to be. Present sets of relations (racialized class inequalities) give us the opportunity to read history backwards and understand that today is tomorrow. A willingness to talk of suffering as relational, and as the space of thereat to the dialectic of economic productivity and social regulation on which capital depends, may enable us to better explain the kinds of processes capable of producing concurrent increases in suicide rates and GDP. In the meantime, everyday sufferings (suffering for rent, steady employment, living wages) can be addressed in the present.

6 Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideology and Vocational Training in Canada's Diamond Basin

6.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, I showed how the problematization of rural poverty sets up a restricted range of technical interventions aimed at relieving poverty. One of the most common interventions is employment training for northern indigenous people. In this chapter I provide an ethnographic account of employment-as-intervention to show the limitations of such an approach to addressing socio-economic inequality. It unfolds across seven sections.

The chapter begins with my attempts to locate training programs for observation. Despite an abundance of promotional materials on job training for the mining industry, most courses and programs I tracked down had little or no enrollment. In section 6.2 "*A Long Way to Go*": *The Problematization of the Rural Underemployment in the Diamond Basin* I look at how the paradox of ample training funds and limited trainee participation is understood by training agencies. Specifically, their beliefs about rural populations as missing essential skills that prevent their successful integration into the labour market.

In section 6.3 *Neoliberalizing Northern Education: The Case of the Resource Training Circle* I show how local 'missing skills' talk is part of a national level discourse of a 'skills shortage' among Aboriginal populations. I link the discourse of an Aboriginal skills shortage to broader political economic changes falling under the rubric of neoliberalism. Specifically, I look at the increased emphasis on industry-driven training in lieu of other forms of education. To illustrate, I introduce the case of the Resource Training Circle (RTC).⁵⁸ The RTC is the primary industry-state training partnership in the Northwest Territories. It is the agency that organized the course being described throughout this chapter.

⁵⁸ This is a pseudonym.

Section 6.4 *Course Design and Delivery* provides a brief overview of the structure and funding of the underground diamond mine training I observed. Divided in three phases, the training begins with a two-week work readiness/soft skills program that I was recruited to teach.

The core of the chapter's argument emerges in sections 6.5 *Its all about attitude! Responsibilizing Bodies and Minds* and 6.6 *Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideologies in Northern Vocational Training*. Focusing on my training as a work readiness instructor and the content of the curriculum, I take a critical view of the skills the course attempted to instill. The major aim of the course was to help trainees acquire the 'right attitude' and 'become responsible.' Both of these tasks were to be performed linguistically. The expected embodied linguistic performance of the 'right attitude' and 'getting responsible' form what I am calling here a "register of responsibility."

In section 6.7 *Phase I: Regulating the Talking-Self*, I ask how the "the register of responsibility" is taken up by trainees in the work readiness program. Is it taken up at all? To illustrate the answer, yes and no, I introduce the trainees whose career trajectories I followed for over a year. Looking at my own experience teaching the work readiness course, I examine how personality tests, learning-style inventories and communication-style quizzes provided trainees with acceptable ways of knowing and expressing themselves as 'confident' and 'responsible.' In sum, trainees were asked to talk about the self as highly managed. This section closes by chronicling some of the dangers of industry-driven training. As the course coincided with the financial crisis of 2008, funding formulas quickly shifted. This change pushed half of the trainees out of the program.

Section 6.8 *Phase II: Flipping the Script and Missing the Point* follows those still in the program as they undertake the residential portion of the training. As trainees faced more disappointment regarding the training, they used the "register of responsibility" to critique the training staff and administration. The nature of the conflict was such that while trainees were able to articulate resistance to training methods and practice, it is *through* this resistance that the task of social reproduction is achieved (Ferguson, 1994; Willis, 1981). The trainees become the very objects of interventions that legitimized the program in the first instance (i.e., they are constructed as irresponsible and having the wrong attitude).

To conclude, section 6.9 *When the Road Doesn't Reach the Destination* discusses how, in the context of resource-dependent regions like the diamond basin, the promotion of responsible talk is crucial to the management of the (im)permanence of resource extraction. By promoting types of talk that eschew trainee critique and concerns, the instability of resource economies are turned back onto trainee's (racialized) psychological states.

6.2 “A Long Way to Go”: The Problematization of Rural Underemployment in the NWT

The abundance of diamond imagery in Yellowknife, coupled with the labour crisis in Canadian mining (see chapter one), meant that I arrived in the Northwest Territories fairly certain that a dissertation on labour recruitment and training would be easy to execute. I turned up in the capital city of Yellowknife in the summer of 2007 for preliminary work and to establish partnerships with the local training institutions.

I began by enquiring about the widely publicized diamond polisher program. As part of the effort to ‘diversify’ the economy, the state made massive investments to help set up a secondary industry in cutting and polishing. At Aurora College, the Territories’ only community college, Rick (the director of vocational programs) happily showed me wall charts depicting the cutting and polishing process. Behind a locked door was the delicate equipment. Rick flipped the light switch and I took note of the small wooden benches where would-be workers would sit. “How many people are in the course?” I asked.⁵⁹ “None at the moment,” he answered. “This course isn’t all that popular. We did have some people from Armenia come in and take the class. They finished up last semester. They were really focused. The facilities here are world class. We are thinking about doing more global marketing.”

This would be the first of a string of disappointments with respect to locating a training program to observe. Part of it was my timing; summer is not generally the time when programs are run. But, as I would learn, there was consistent difficulty obtaining local trainees to fill training spots

⁵⁹ The quotations here are not direct. Rather, they are recollections from my field notes.

for several programs. I asked Rick about the lack of local interest in polishing. He explained, “People around here, especially people from the communities, aren’t interested in detail work. It is too still, and it is all indoors. Plus, polishing doesn’t pay the big bucks. Work in the mines, even driving trucks, pays much better. We are getting a new program off the ground in underground mining that we think will have more appeal. We are bringing in an underground simulator worth millions. It is like being in a video game. We think it will get people really excited.”

Rick uses the term “from the communities” to reference rural Aboriginal populations. Scattered around Yellowknife there are a handful of small communities with populations ranging from 200-1000 people. Often, public servants (indigenous and not) use the gloss “from the communities” to mean either those who are more ‘traditional’ or those in need of intervention, and sometimes both. It is meant to inscribe ‘cultural’ difference/distance between rural have-nots and their urban counterparts.

Culturalist explanations for non-compliance with state and industry initiatives (Aboriginal workers are unable to keep still, stay inside, or focus on details) are common among non-Aboriginal public servants like Rick. Culturalist explanations and interpretations of labour issues dominate public policy even among “progressives” and Aboriginal actors working within and against state institutions to fix income disparity. This frame of analysis is also taken up in the scholarly literature (Gibson, 2008). This rhetorical and analytical strategy is troubling as it takes for granted capitalist relations of production and depoliticizes the struggle between labouring bodies and systems of capital accumulation. It also racializes labour issues in a way that re-inscribes ethnic segmentation of the workforce and prioritizes ethnic/racial solidarities over other possibilities (like occupation or class).

Rick’s second explanation, that polishing offers thin economic advantages as compared to other opportunities, is astute, yet I would only hear it one more time in my two years of work. Culturalist explanations were far more prominent. Even when intended as a critique of corporations, culturalist explanations assert that employee non-compliance (or resistance) is simply a lack of information on the part of the worker or the employer, which can easily be filled – either by an anthropologist or more often by a locally hired cultural consultant.

Rick explained that the difficulty in securing enrollments was only the first issue. Program completion also proved to be a challenge. At Yellowknife's other main training center, the Resource Training Circle (RTC), I learned about how some of these challenges were understood. The RTC is a public-private non-profit agency whose mission is to prepare indigenous labour to meet industry's demands through industry-driven training. The organization does not directly offer much in the way of training. Rather, their role is to seek out federal funding through indigenous employment development initiatives on industry's behalf. The RTC then sub-contracts training work to existing educational facilities like Aurora College or the Native Women's Center.

My appointment with RTC director, Cheryl, was brief. Her downtown office was cluttered with RTC paraphernalia: mugs, pamphlets, and playing cards. Almost everything in the room was branded with the organization's logo: the initials RTC with a diamond on top and three feathers dangling below.⁶⁰ "Take a mug," she said, stuffing the ceramic cup with a pen and deck of cards. She handed me two thick spiral bound reports. "It's all in there. That's what we do. We take the pulse of industry and we plan accordingly." The reports seemed to be a summary of a stakeholder meeting between her office and three operating mines.

Cheryl's background was in business. She owned stakes in one of the local polishing firms that would, over the course of my fieldwork, go into receivership. She wore a suit and sensible pumps, far less casual than most public servants in this self-identified 'laid-back' town. She walked confidently about her office searching for more things to turn over to me. "Program completion is an issue, for sure. People from the communities have a long way to go, for sure. But for the people we get through the program, it's worth it." If local people, or those "from the communities," had, as Cheryl suggested, "a long way to go" the question was where were they headed and by what means would they be travelling this "long way"?

⁶⁰ Hanging feathers likely aimed to have the logo look like a dream catcher which has become a pan-Native American symbol in the last twenty years.

I would come to learn that those with a “long way to go” were understood primarily as missing a range of skills, both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’. According to one federal human resource report, “in Canada, there is a simultaneous shortage of skilled workers and a disproportionate number of unemployed Aboriginal people. Creative ways to engage Aboriginal peoples in the Canadian labour market are needed to address this paradox” (Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada, 2003, p. 3). The more I came to learn about training in the NWT, the more I came to understand what defined ‘skills.’ There was a clear distinction between ‘hard skills’ (how to drive equipment, knowledge of safety procedures) and ‘soft skills’ (patience, flexibility, communication). As I began my field inquiries, I would learn that the NWT was moving towards incorporating more ‘soft skills’ in all vocational training.

As Urciuoli (2008) and has shown, soft skills are primarily commodified communicative acts that align with corporate aims and values. The commodification of language is key to the economic reorientations shorthanded as ‘neoliberalism.’ With the global north’s economies increasingly reliant on the service sector to carve out new spaces for the pursuit of profit, language increasingly becomes the means of production and is subject to new forms of workplace regulation (Cameron, 2000; Heller & Duchêne, 2012). Vocational training seemed like an unlikely place for an emphasis on ‘soft skills,’ but when set within the broader political economy, we can see how its articulation comes into being. Furthermore, the pre-requisite course I describe was initially designed for immigrant service sector workers.

6.3 Neoliberalizing Northern Education: The Case of the Resource Training Circle

The Resource Training Circle (RTC) is the major partnership between state, industry and community in the NWT. The RTC is a non-profit and an excellent example of what some observers have called “state hybridity” (Haney, 2010). Hybrid states draw together diverse actors (NGOs, community organizations, religious groups) to undertake forms of governance and social control (p. 86-114). They are a hallmark of neoliberalism, as states seek to minimize costs, while making use of diffused forms of power that are part of the governmental logic discussed in the introduction.

Even the most modest review of the literature on the anthropology of neoliberalism reveals that there is a large variation in meanings and applications of the term (Ferguson, 2009; Gledhill, 2004; Hilgers, 2011; Kingfisher & Maskovsky, 2008; Ong, 2006). Neoliberalism is a rather broad concept referring to an economic model that rose to prominence in the 1980s and drew heavily on the writings of economist Friedrich August von Hayek. Von Hayek's reconfigurations of classic liberalism in the 1930s and 1940s became influential following the last decades of the Cold War, largely in countries of the global north (Kingfisher & Maskovsky, 2008:116). Built upon a classical liberal ideal of the self-regulated market, neoliberalism comes in several strands and variations specific to local contexts. Common elements of neoliberal policies include deregulation (market freedom), liberalization, and privatization (Harvey, 2003). The anthropology of neoliberalism has sought to track crucial links between these types of economic policies and their accompanying or competing acts of governance, forms of ideology and culture (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000; Hilgers, 2011). For instance, Ferguson (2008) describes neoliberalism this way,

neoliberalism...puts governmental mechanisms developed in the private sphere to work within the state itself, so that core functions of the state are either subcontracted out to private providers, or run (as the saying has it) "like a business"...At the same time, new constructions of 'active' and 'responsible' citizens and communities are deployed to produce governmental results that do not depend on direct state intervention. The 'responsibilized' citizen comes to operate as a miniature firm, responding to incentives, rationally assessing risks, and prudently choosing from among different courses of action (p. 172).

Anthropologists have been quick to point out that neoliberalism is a process and not a fait accompli, and should be captured in all of its contradictions and limitations (Kingfisher & Maskovsky, 2008). Ferguson (2008) notes that analyses should focus on the "uses of neoliberalism," as techniques labeled as neoliberal can "migrate" across strategic camps and accrue progressive potential. To understand the outcomes of neoliberal policies, research must, as Brenner and Theodore (2002) suggest, build case studies of "actually existing neoliberalism." Rather than assume that neoliberal ideology manifests itself in the same way everywhere with the same consequences, it is imperative to emphasize "the contextual *embeddedness* of neoliberal restructuring projects in so far as they have been produced within national, regional and local contexts defined by the legacies of inherited institutional frameworks

policy regimes, regulatory practices, and political struggles” (p. 349). My investigation of training practices in the Northwest Territories is one such case.

The RTC is run like a business. Its core funding comes from two linked federal initiatives: the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy (ASETS) and the Aboriginal Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF). We see some of the elements described by Ferguson (2008) in the SPF’s mission statement,

The ongoing evolution of the labour market requires that governments and their partners continuously experiment and improve the programs and services required to develop a productive, skilled and adaptable labour force. The Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) is a demand-driven, partnership-based program that supports government priorities (federal/provincial/territorial) and strategic partnerships by funding projects contributing to the skills development and training of Aboriginal workers for long-term, meaningful employment (HRSD Canada, 2011).⁶¹

This downloading of state responsibility to more ‘local’ organizations may sound enticing, especially in the case of Aboriginal Canada, where local control is a central issue. However, its precarious funding structure put the RTC in the difficult position of having to please diverse funding interests under changing conditions (chiefly the economic crisis of 2008-2009). As I discuss later, this challenge became particularly acute for RTC during my fieldwork, and, ultimately, the Circle’s financial insecurity was offloaded onto the trainees. For now, it is important to understand that because RTC’s funding is drawn from competitive grants, they must show that they “provide a good return on investment” (HRSD Canada, 2011). Numbers of successful trainees are crucial to this type of “audit culture” (Shore, 2008; Strathern, 2000). As such, the RTC linked up with Aurora College (a public institution) to deliver two pre-requisite

⁶¹ The increased fragmentation of training funding for Aboriginal populations in Alberta and the Northwest Territories is the object of a study by Hodgkins (forthcoming).

courses, therefore allowing Aurora to take the blame (and some of the costs) for high rates of program incompleteness.⁶²

While the pre-requisites were thought of as providing the right foundation for training, the next sections show that they functioned as a major gate-keeping strategy. The result is not merely that the majority of the trainees were weeded out, although this was certainly the case (from ninety one in Phase I to twenty-eight in Phase II). Blame for program incompleteness was turned back onto individual trainees – and, by extension, their mental states and cultures – in ways that re-inscribed dominant ideas about ethnicity and difference, thereby simultaneously exerting what Ferguson (1994) refers to as a powerful “depoliticizing effect” (p. 20), meaning blaming proximate and local forces rather than looking at broader systems. By extension, diagnoses and prescriptions for Aboriginal unemployment come to exclude political-economic relations (Li, 2007, p. 7). I take this point in later sections.

The increasing emphasis on a ‘skills shortage’ is not restricted to the context of Aboriginal Canada (Meredith, 2011). There is a persistent, and arguably exaggerated, talk of skills shortage or even crisis that pervades much of public discourse. As I discuss in the introduction, ‘crisis’ talk is particularly salient in discussions of mining and oil development. Similarly, in Australia, Scott (2011) tracks the growth of a “wicked policy problem” whereby an alleged ‘skills gap’ bolstered support for putting trade centers in all Australian secondary schools even when, as she shows, the actual possibilities for employment are unclear at best. More generally, in the United States headlines communicate a pervasive skills crisis, with 21st Century Skills framing it in the following way: “Young people urgently need new skills to succeed in the global economy” (as cited in Urciuoli, 2008, p. 213).

Urciuoli (2008) tracks the growing fetishization of ‘skills’ in American education discourse. She takes ‘skills’ to be a keyword – in Raymond Williams’ (1983) sense⁶³ – and discusses the

⁶² This was perhaps a reason why the partnership between the two agencies caused a fair amount of tension.

⁶³ For Williams (1976/1983), keywords are the “shared if imperfect, vocabulary we use when we wish to discuss many of the central processes of our common life” (p. 15). Williams explains that “...the selected

clusters of meaning this term takes on in contemporary discourse. Whereas in the late 19th century, skills were conceptualized as parts of tasks over which workers had decreasing control (Braverman, 1974), economic shifts of recent decades re-conceptualized workplaces as “‘flexible’ and workers as ‘team members’ (Martin, 1994). Urciuoli argues, following Foucault (1988), that “skills” have become re-imagined as technologies of self, “as ways of being and acting that move tasks forward” (p. 212).

The promotion of “soft skills” is a key piece of the broader movement towards the regulation of North American labour through what Foucault called “technologies of the self” (Foucault, 1991). Rather than use direct forms of coercion or top-down management, conditions are set so that workers behave “as they ought”. Menochelli mentions that in human resource circles, “a soft skill refers to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness and optimism that mark each of us to varying degrees. Persons who rank high in this cluster with good soft skills, are generally the people that most employers want to hire” (as cited in Urciuoli, 2008, p. 213). It is against the backdrop of an increasing emphasis on “soft skills” that the undefined “skills” in federal policy (as in a national promise of ‘giving Aboriginal people the skills they need to succeed’) are translated on the ground into attitudinal or responsibility training.

6.4 Course Design and Delivery

In December 2008, posters went up all over the Northwest Territories asking “DO YOU WANNA BE A ROCKER?!”. The posters promised careers with salaries of up to \$100,000 a year. The advertisements were part of an Aboriginal employment initiative and announced a six-week pre-requisite course for a certificate in underground mining. The initiative was developed by the RTC. The posters’ reference to rocks signaled the intended shift in northern diamond-mining industry operations from large open pits, to the underground methods of extraction

words virtually forced themselves on to my attention because the problems of its meanings seemed to me to be inextricably bound up with the problems it was being used to discuss (p. 15).”

described in chapter one. Local media and industry enthusiasts had proclaimed the urgent need for labour with new sets of technical skills suitable for the underground work to come. The planned shift in operations from open pit to underground mining was promoted as a new opportunity for local labour to benefit from the booming industry. Before moving to an analysis of the “Rocker” program, I sketch here the program’s intended design and delivery. I hedge with ‘intended,’ as things did not go according to plan in the session that I observed, and which coincided with the 2008-2009 financial crisis.

The content and the components of the underground mining certificate were difficult for me to discern. The ambiguity would cause confusion on the part of the students I would later meet. There were many stages with different funding formulas and vague application procedures. The end goal was a certificate that was largely invented ad hoc by the RTC with industry input. The certificate was not part of the nationally regulated and recognized trades certifications (referred to as the “red seal”); however, there were some hints from RTC personnel that perhaps trainees could begin a 2-3 year long certified apprenticeship directly after achieving the certificate. The RTC described the certificate process as having three phases. Below is a table I made listing the phases, their duration and the number of students (Table 3).

Phase Number and Name	Duration and Delivery Location	Enrollment
Phase 1: Ready to Work North, Introduction to Underground Mining	6 weeks total Delivered in 8 communities around the NWT including Hay River	91
Phase 2: Underground Miner	12 weeks total Delivered in a simulated mine camp 40km outside of Yellowknife	28
Phase 3: Registered Apprentice Program	Up to three years Includes hours of work in mines and college training outside of the NWT.	1 (speculated)

Table 3: Overview of Underground Mine Training Program

Phase I was delivered in eight different communities around the Northwest Territories. It consisted of two pre-requisite courses. It started with four weeks of underground mining fundamentals that covered basic geology, mine life cycles and mining terminology. Next was ten days of soft skills and personal development training’ through a course called “Ready to Work

North” (R2WN). As part of my research, I attended the training session for instructors of R2WN. I was caught off-guard when, two weeks after the training, I was asked to deliver R2WN in Hay River. I wondered how I would – or if I even could – carry out a program that I had considerable objections about. At the same time, I knew that participating in this way meant a different type of access to the institutional side of the program. I accepted and quickly set about making a few changes to the syllabus: complementing the unit on having a positive attitude with Marx’s theory of surplus value, and swapping the workplace responsibilities section with workplace rights.

Successful Phase I candidates moved on to Phase II at a simulated mine camp 40km outside of Yellowknife. Trainees lived in an addiction treatment facility turned conference center nestled in the woods. Their educational time was divided between in-class work at the college campus in town and operating heavy equipment in an old gravel lot referred to as "the pit." The college component included safety and first aid exams as well as time on the simulator. The simulator’s price tag of 1.3 million dollars was one I heard repeated many times by RTC staff, college employees and, eventually, by trainees. Emphasizing trainee proximity to an object thought to embody that type of wealth helped to construe training as a gift and a privilege. I was told that the only other similar piece of equipment was in South Africa. Just as diamonds accrue value based on their believed rarity, so too was time with the simulator. Everyone was eager to use the rare and costly piece of equipment. While half the trainees were out at the pit, the others eagerly awaited their turns on the simulator. The video game-like quality had appeal. Trainees sit in a seat that replicates rough terrain and movement while surrounded by three screens. The simulator could be set up to be various pieces of heavy equipment. As trainees wound their way through underground tunnels, safety hazards were thrown their way, such as a fire or a flat tire. Trainees rehearsed appropriate responses while the simulator kept score. Out at the pit, trainees worked with two instructors on various pieces of equipment: a scoop tram, an underground haul truck, a roof bolter, and a service Jeep.

Phase II was to be marked with a grand graduation ceremony. The cohort I observed was told repeatedly that the last class had graduates get job offers on the spot. If trainees made their way through the phases and into a career in mining, they would be “set for life.” At least, that was the official story.

Phase III was the most difficult to learn about. I was not able to observe (or even discern) the third phase, and none of the trainees I discuss here moved on to this part of program. In some promotional materials I saw, Phase III was the job itself – the finish line. In other instances, it was the beginning of an apprenticeship (an apprenticeship in what exactly, I cannot say for sure).

If course delivery sounds confusing, that is because it was. The content, funding, and timeline of the course were a mystery to me and to the trainees I followed throughout the program. Part of the confusion stemmed from the institutional structure of the program that brought together state, industry and non-profit funds. Phases I and II taken together involved a total of eighteen weeks of training. The delivery I observed stretched out over six months (twenty-four weeks). I observed the delivery of Phase I in the community of Hay River. This included teaching the ten-day R2WN segment. During phase II, I visited the trainees in the ‘camp’ three times, observing what I could and talking at length with the Hay River graduates. The camp was roughly 300km from Hay River. Making the trip along a partially paved, bison-laden road was challenging. I usually met up with trainees on weekends. However, I made one weekday visit so that I could observe them in-class. Finally, I attended the graduation ceremony at the end of Phase II. The next section takes an up-close look at my training to teach “Ready to Work North.”

6.5 It’s all about attitude! Responsibilizing bodies and minds

A three-pound grouper sails through the air at Seattle’s Pike Place Market. Effortlessly, an employee behind the counter catches the flying fish and wraps it up for a customer to the delight of a growing audience. “Holy Mackerel!” shouts another employee before launching the next fish to the counter staff. This scene, likely familiar to anyone who has travelled to Seattle as a tourist, opens the world’s best selling general employee training video, “*Fish!*” (Charthouse, 2012). Translated into eighteen languages and sold in thirty-eight countries, the Fish Philosophy is stated simply as “Catch the Energy, Release the Potential!” Advertised as boosting employee retention and improving customer relations, *Fish!* has four guiding principles for cultivating effective workplace culture: 1) play; 2) make their day⁶⁴; 3) be there; and 4) choose your attitude.

⁶⁴ ‘Their’ refers to the customer.

My training session to become an R2WN instructor opened with a screening of the twenty-minute *Fish!* video. Marilyn, the head trainer, said that we would be able to borrow it for our deliveries of R2WN. She felt it was a good teaching tool that addressed the supposed main issue of trainees “from the communities” when it came to successful participation in job training and work placements: attitude. “Trainees have to get the right attitude if they want to be prepared for the reality of the market,” Marilyn explained to me.

Marilyn handed out copies of the curriculum to the six trainers-in-training and me. We were seated at folding tables set up in a square in one of the college’s classrooms. Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC) had originally developed the curriculum for use with new immigrants to Canada, working in the service sector.⁶⁵ Marilyn emphasized that the curriculum standards were transferable skills, set out by HRDC. “I didn’t make these up,” she said, “they are *national* standards.” By tying curriculum objectives to a national body like HRDC, Marilyn attempted to erase any sense of the curriculum’s authorship and the social and political process through which it emerged, effectively casting it as neutral. Marilyn drew on the curriculum for support. Its opening pages state,

These skills are called transferable skills because they can be used in all types of jobs and are the building blocks of technical or job-specific skills. In fact, these skills are needed at *any job level, in any organization, in any industry and in all aspects of people’s lives: home/family, work, school/learning and the community*. Having these skills as a foundation will get you started and help you stay in your career... [the curriculum standards are] organized into three main areas – **attitudes**, skills and industry and company knowledge- and combined with research about how these transferable skills are used in the workplace. This is just the right combination to help you succeed (GNWT 2006, p. 1, my emphasis)

⁶⁵ The curriculum had been adapted for the ‘local’ culture by replacing photos of Filipina workers in hotel cleaning scenes with Aboriginal workers in mines or offices. This substitutability of bodies to fill the ‘labour gap’ is striking. Some of the examples in the trainee workbook were adapted as well to the local context. For example, in the sub-unit on ‘ethics’ a story of a hunter disobeying game regulations was meant to teach the importance of being ‘honest’. This is rather bold, as many of the local land disputes began over the introduction of these very regulations. Many local Aboriginal people argue that fish and game regulations are a breach of their Treaty rights (see chapter two).

By stating that the course's contents were necessary at "any job level, in any organization, in any industry and in all aspects of people's lives," the course aimed to socialize people into becoming not only 'good' workers, but also good people. These were not simply job skills; they were 'life skills.' In projecting the curriculum's vision of how individuals, families and communities should talk and behave to all realms of the dimensions of the social world, the language of 'national standards' worked as a national standardization project where other ways of being are understood as direct obstacles to success.

Marilyn zeroed in on the relationship between 'positive attitude' and 'taking responsibility' after screening the *Fish!* video. She told us that a major issue was that people from the communities needed "to stop blaming others for their problems." Placing blame, here, is understood as having a false understanding of who is responsible for a situation. With a strong individualizing ethos, trainees were reminded again and again by trainers and staff that "they needed to be responsible for their actions." Blaming was seen as a sign that trainees were not yet able or willing to see the situation as a result of *their own* actions. It was a reflection of not only the wrong reasoning, but of the wrong state of mind.

People with positive attitudes do not blame others for problems. They think about a situation, determine what is within their control and authority, and then decide what actions to take.

A positive attitude is a state of mind. Individuals with positive attitudes approach activities and people with expectations of positive outcomes. This optimism motivates them to work hard within their families, schools, jobs and communities. It also gives them a sense of purpose and confidence. (GNWT, 2006, p. 7)

'Having the right attitude' and 'taking responsibility' were the explicit training outcomes for Phase I, and were implicitly enforced throughout Phase II. When it came down to it, Cheryl's "long way to go" for would-be workers began with an adjustment of their individual psychological states. The above quotation, taken from the curriculum's "Attitudes" unit, makes strong individualizing gestures to trainees' emotional states and psychological compositions (cf. Haney, 2010, p. 14). It places the 'problem of attitude' squarely in the minds of trainees. Sharing

many similarities to the discourses described in ethnographies of North American clinical spaces directed at the poor (Carr, 2011; Haney, 2010), northern training discourse mobilizes a strikingly therapeutic self-help -style lexicon. If we understand governance to be the patterns of power and regulation that shape, guide and manage social conduct, then we can begin to see that training participates in a form of state regulation based on incursions into people's individual psyches. This is not altogether surprising. Anthropologists such as Cruikshank (1999), Fairbanks (2009), and Maskovsky (2001) have tracked the increasing hybridization of self-help and formal modes of social service in the United States. They see this co-mingling as, "clearly symptomatic of late twentieth century post-welfare state politics" (Carr, 2011, p. 14).

Poor attitudes, defined largely as 'blaming' or 'not taking responsibility,' were understood as signs of a failure to produce the proper state of mind. It was this improper state of mind, then, that was used to explain why more indigenous workers were not climbing the ranks of a high paying industry like mining. Carr's (2011) study of a state-funded women's addiction treatment center in the mid-western United States highlights the dangers of casting political and economic issues of poverty and homelessness as essentially therapeutic concerns. As will become clear over the course of this chapter, her warnings should be heeded for Aboriginal underemployment and unemployment.

The rise of an 'Aboriginal 'healing' discourse in Canada has worked to enshrine a causal connection between racialized poverty and 'mental health' (Waldram, 2004). This connection makes processes of everyday discrimination harder, rather than easier, to see (Alfred, 2009). Trainees who did not meet course expectations for 'responsibility' were simply removed from the program. Any reasons why they may have been unable to fulfill course expectations were reframed as problems of 'dependency' (on the state, on other family members, or on substances) or 'low self-esteem' (discussed below). In short, formal explanations for why trainees did not finish the course usually came back to their supposed 'mental health' issues. 'Dependency' seemed to be at once a moral issue and a consequence of mental health.

The correlation between 'taking responsibility' and 'not blaming' is important to look at closely in the context of a training program directed at Aboriginal workers. With many outstanding legal and political battles between Aboriginal collectives and the state regarding historical – and

enduring – inequalities (such as residential schooling, land seizure), there is a public sentiment that Aboriginal people are ‘blaming’ the government for things that happened long ago. There are often remarks amongst northerners, and even among some indigenous people, that Aboriginal people need to simply “get over it” or “just move on.” The linking of ‘blaming’ to the acquisition or maintenance of ‘special rights’ for Aboriginal people is part of the tension.

If attitude is a ‘state of mind,’ how can external agents like trainers and employers assess it? The training manual focused on shaping behaviors and ways of speaking which would communicate the ‘right attitude.’ Without these externally legible forms of ‘attitude,’ it was to be assumed that trainees did not have the right ‘state of mind.’ To display a ‘positive attitude’ was to speak in, what I propose to call, a “register of responsibility”. While trainers often tried to shape the ways trainees were thinking (about themselves or their situations), what they were actually shaping was a way of speaking.

I use the term “register of responsibility” to bring together a set of linguistic and embodied practices that were used to assess individuals as having (or not) ‘the right attitude’ and as ‘being responsible.’ First, the register of responsibility was characterized by a high degree of self-referential talk that prioritized the speaker as agent (detonated by using primarily first person constructions) and positive self-assessments. For example, we were to ask students to speak using “I statements” (e.g. “I am very frustrated with the assignment” and not “The assignment is frustrating”).

Second, the register of responsibility involved the alignment of workers’ bodily habits with employer expectations for deference. Attitude was assessed not only by word but also by deed. Dress and hygiene were also to be sites of scrutiny. A section on “professional appearance” instructed trainees to avoid showing the four B’s – bellies, buttocks, backs and boobs – and to wash regularly. Marilyn said one previous trainer had made her trainees hygiene kits to take out to their lockers at the mines. She encouraged us to do the same by filling plastic bags with deodorant, a razor, and a comb.

Besides ‘appearance,’ bodily comportment was to be monitored and regulated. Marilyn warned us that “the young guys like to wear their pants low and pull their hats over their eyes.” It was

our job to enforce a ‘no hat’ policy and to make sure the young men understood that these things made them ‘unapproachable.’ Other stated rules included not having underwear showing, no feet shuffling, no cracking knuckles, no hooded or oversized clothing: many of the very things crucial to contemporary working class Native identity, with elements borrowed from hip hop or ‘street’ culture. While the curriculum cheerfully exploited certain cultural norms, it blatantly outlawed others. For example, the adage “respect your elders” was used strategically to teach trainees to listen to their superiors, an already sanctioned cultural practice.

Third, the register of responsibility involved expressions of desired independence. There were frequently ‘success stories’ published in promotional materials where independence was defined by the purchase of goods (usually vehicles) and holding private property (something that is not possible in smaller communities). Trainers stressing the ‘luxuries’ of independence were a common occurrence in classroom instruction. I saw this type of encouragement several times during my fieldwork. Derek was the instructor of the general mining introductory course that preceded mine. Originally from Alberta, Derek moved north long ago to work in the gold mines around Yellowknife. His blond hair was graying. He maintained a muscular build, despite significant back injuries from years of hard labour. He had an excellent rapport with the trainees, and put lots of energy towards motivating them to stick with their course. Derek tried to cultivate their ‘need’ for independence in positive, not punitive, terms. At the outset of the course, Derek sat up on his desk at the front of the small classroom and asked the trainees to “imagine walking into a bike shop, or a snow machine shop, or whatever. Imagine walking in and paying cash for what you want. Just straight out buying it. Now that is freedom.”

Finally, the register of responsibility was largely prescribed through interventions targeted at what was perceived to be the root cause of ‘bad attitudes,’ namely ‘low self-esteem,’ or an inaccurate understanding of the self. The curriculum enforced this connection: “[P]eople that have positive outlooks (and the accompanying attributes of confidence, honesty, respect and initiative) put effort into their work, relationships and other endeavors to encourage good outcomes for both themselves and others” (GNWT, 2006 p. 17).

The program’s priority was to help trainees see themselves, and thus speak about themselves, differently. Trainees needed new visions (or likely versions) of themselves if they wanted to get

one of the “100 grand” jobs. Activities included in the curriculum were designed to help trainees access their ‘true’ interior states and then relay that information through talk about themselves to trainers, and eventually prospective employers. This resonates with a national Aboriginal human resource program, “Guiding Circles,” that aims to help close Aboriginal’s ‘self-awareness gap.’ The program describes this gap thus:

Many Aboriginal people do not have the resources necessary to make appropriate career choices. This is one of the major reasons for the population’s high unemployment rate. Without the tools needed to relate life experiences to the world of work, many Aboriginal people remain unaware of their career potential. (AHRDCC, 2003, p. 6)

The assumption here is that Aboriginal people do not know about themselves – more specifically, they do not know how to talk about themselves or their ‘potential’ (said differently, they are unable to prioritize their capacities as labour in everyday speech acts). Personality tests, learning style inventories, and communication style quizzes provided students with acceptable ways of knowing and expressing themselves⁶⁶. For example, students spent a half day discovering their ‘true colours’(TM). From the company’s website, we learn that, “[t]rue Colors™ is a model for understanding yourself and others based on your personality temperament. The colors of Orange, Green, Blue and Gold are used to differentiate the four central personality styles of True Colors™” (True Colors International, 2009). Students were guided through a process to determine which of the four colours they were.

Self-visions required that trainees narrate themselves as individual, autonomous and ultimately free of any (voiced) assessments of the social world that conflicted with the staff’s. Conflicts could be resolved by understanding other people’s ‘true colours’(TM) and managed by simply identifying the two different personal temperaments at play (e.g. “I am a blue and she is an orange. I am likely being too sensitive!”).

⁶⁶ True Colours is of course not only used with Aboriginal students. It is a wide spread practice that came out of ‘organizational behavior’ and management studies. I myself was diagnosed as orange in 1999 as part of my staff training at the summer camp where I worked as a young adult. The difference is the number of these types of diagnostics aimed at the underemployed and their mal-alignment with industrial workplace communicative practices.

The suggested strategy for avoiding these signs of ‘bad attitude’ was ‘self-talk’ or ‘think before you speak.’ Self-talk is an internal dialogue a speaker is supposed to have in order to “prevent emotions from overrunning reason...thinking about how you can improve the situation rather than worsen it” (GNWT, 2006, p. 13). But improve the situation for whom?

While the issue of ‘blaming’ was not directly attended to in the curriculum, it gained traction in everyday interactions, as trainees’ concerns were often reframed by staff as ‘not taking responsibility for themselves.’ For example, being late for class was always interpreted by staff as having ‘the wrong attitude.’ Any structural reasons for lateness or absence were to be treated with the utmost suspicion and were usually interpreted as ‘blaming.’ Trainers (sometimes, myself included) felt that trainees were ‘just making excuses.’ When one trainee missed several days of the program after having been sexually assaulted, staff debated whether it was ‘really that bad’ and were hesitant to let her back in. She did not pursue the course after one attempt to negotiate her return.

The register of responsibility is thus defined by a series of speech acts that are *not* permitted, specifically: making excuses, blaming, complaining, and being ‘too sensitive’ to feedback. It was completely within the staff’s discretion to categorize any utterance in any of these ways; there was no formal system.⁶⁷ What course instructors stressed was that what trainees ‘needed’ was to become confident, independent, and ultimately responsible for their futures.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ I realize an ethnographic example would be useful here. However I don’t have one. There are a few issues. First, while I was working as a teacher of this course it was difficult to write exceptional field notes. Next, a lot of these conclusions are drawn from my interviews with students on weekends in Yellowknife. These are my interpretations of the conflicts they described to me. In the interest of their anonymity being too specific would reveal who was describing which conflict.

⁶⁸ Haney (2010) explores how “needs talk” can be used as a strategy of governance. For example, the staff in the correctional facility she studied attempted to convince female inmates that they needed to become self-sufficient and independent as a mean of to delimiting what inmates felt entitled to, vis-à-vis state resources.

6.6 Registers of Responsibility: Language Ideologies in Northern Vocational Training

The “register of responsibility” carries with it ideas about the very nature of language itself. In other words, it emphasizes a particular language ideology. The concept of language ideology is broad and captures many facets of how linguistic and social worlds are created and connected. The literature on language ideology in linguistic anthropology is vast and internal debates are numerous. I do not intend to rehearse that literature here (see Kroskrity, 2000; Blommaert 1999, Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Woolard, 1998 for extensive review). However, a useful definition for my discussion is one provided by Kroskrity (2000): “language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group” (p. 8).

The two defining ideological features of the register of responsibility are 1) speech is simply referential, and 2) talk is a direct reflection of mental states or individual intention, or what Carr (2011) terms an “ideology of inner reference.” The notion that speech is simply referential was enforced throughout the training session I attended. Marilyn warned us that trainees were likely to have a problem with the ‘level’ of the language in the curriculum. Tapping her brightly painted red fingernails on the spiral bound curriculum document, she explained, “many people from the communities think that the language in here is just too high, but I tell them, ‘these are *national standards!*’”⁶⁹.

When Marilyn repeatedly defers to the notion of a “national standard,” what ideas about language are being invoked and whose interests do they serve? Not simply a reflection of Marilyn’s personal ideas about language, the pronouncement and promotion of a ‘national standard’ is an intertextualization (meaning it refers to previous texts and authors; see Kristeva, 1980) of elements of dominant North American language ideology. Specifically, in striking

⁶⁹ Phase I depended on trainees passing two lengthy multiple choice exams. Marilyn warned us that this would cause a lot of stress, but the standards could not change. Because of the difficulty many trainees had with the exam, the college recently changed the R2WN grading scheme to have the exam make up only 30% of the trainees final grade.

similarity to what Haviland (2003) found by observing US criminal court room interaction, the language ideology privileged by training staff and materials was one in which language is identified as transparent, and can be conceived of as unmarked or functionally neutral. The privileged language ideology was also one that relied on notions of speech as simply referential (e.g. ‘clear speech’).

While the value of ‘unmarked speech’ (usually described as ‘using words that are not confusing and not offensive’) was part of the official program, the practical enforcement of this ideology came about through discussions of safety in the workplace. A consistent message was that clear communication is essential for safety. My point here is to illustrate that how one speaks in an educational setting, or in a workplace, is both thoroughly cultural and inherently political. Like research on ‘standard languages’ (Irvine & Gal, 2000), national standards for workplace comportment are neither neutral nor readily picked up by otherwise willing would-be workers.

The communication style promoted by the curriculum was one that discouraged conflict and promoted docility on the part of the worker. Its reliance on ‘national standards’ and ‘safety discourse’ naturalized the forms of talk it privileged. Part and parcel of what Bourdieu (1991) identified as symbolic domination, favoring certain speech styles of vocational training participates in a form of social/cultural domination. The misrecognition of these forms as ‘neutral’ or ‘natural’ defuses power relations such that those who support a particular hierarchy of valued forms (in this case Marilyn) do not see themselves in a position of authority or engaging in an act of domination.

Next, the ideology of inner reference presumes that first, “healthy” language refers to preexisting phenomena and second, that the phenomena to which it refers is internal to speakers (Carr, 2011, p. 4). In my case, ‘positive attitudes’ were phenomena that were not necessarily preexisting, but were understood as always possible or immanent. Possible positive attitudes, such as the use of ‘healthy’ language, were assumed to be inherent in speakers.

Dependent on the ideology of inner reference discussed above, promoted forms of talk directed trainee attention inwards. In this way, standards of responsibility – such as being on time, or of keeping promises, or being transparent – could not be measured against the staff. While a

register of responsibility provided a channel for trainee concerns to be voiced, prioritizing talk that can only reference inner states meant that trainee concerns could easily be dismissed as ‘blaming.’ The adoption of certain meta-narratives of the self was tied to the allocation of resources (to be kept in the program; to be promoted through the phases or not kept promoted at all) and therefore stakes were high for mastering the talk. In sum, rituals of speaking and communication produced highly personalized talk that not only affected how educators and employers evaluated people and their potential, but also directly and indirectly impact how basic goods and services are delivered (Carr, 2011). For example, when Destiny is determined to be ‘less committed’ than her classmates, she is pushed out of the training and ultimately her housing (see chapter two). It is important to note that being registered in training was a condition of some trainees’ ability to access other social supports, such as housing. Registration in training could also serve to defer a trainee’s corrections sentencing, as was the case for David.

The risk for an institutional narrative⁷⁰ of the making of responsibility vis-à-vis Aboriginal trainees is that it might easily fall prey to being assessed as assimilationist, or, worse, as racist. These tensions are avoided, or at least neutralized, through the program being delivered by an ‘indigenized’ agency (the RTC) and in large part by trainers who identify as indigenous. More powerful perhaps in the neutralization and naturalization of the course’s content was the language of ‘national standards’ and ‘transferability’ in the delivery the institutional narrative by educators. Because the program made occasional nods to ‘traditional’ culture (e.g. using examples about hunting), and held a distinctly ‘culturally appropriate’ narrative, it wasn’t seen as assimilationist, even if it aimed to be.

⁷⁰ Lynne Haney’s (2010) definition of institutional narratives may be useful here,

Like individuals, social institutions develop narratives about themselves: they produce scripts to relay their definition of the situation and to explain why they do what they do. For state institutions, these narratives can be produced by national-level politicians or bureaucrats and then sent down to be perfected and enacted by their underlings. Yet more often these scripts get written and rewritten in actual institutional settings, through ongoing negotiation and struggle between state actors and their charges. What is more, these narratives are not only expressed through words; they are also articulated through daily practices and rituals. Institutional narratives thus have quite practical effects and form boundaries around those aspects of clients’ lives that state actors attempt to manage and treat (3-6).

6.7 Phase I: Regulating the Talking-Self

While course objectives and materials sought to produce docile labour through the “register of responsibility,” in-class observations and yearlong follow-up interviews revealed that such powerful discourses did not effectively produce neoliberal subjects. Rather, ‘successful’ trainees were ones that already possessed and inhabited, to some degree, the values that the course purported to teach. Programs like the one I observed do not assimilate Aboriginal persons into dominant market logics. Rather, they legitimize keeping them out. Four of ten trainees had proven themselves ‘not committed enough’ for success in the first course. These were primarily trainees from the reservation adjacent to the town of Hay River. With only one exception, nobody left in the course was from the immediate community.

On my first day of class, trainees eagerly told me about what type of life a mine job would afford them. I should note that mine work was not foreign to most of them. Ruth, (the 50-year-old woman from New Brunswick)⁷¹ and David, (23-year-old Métis man from Saskatchewan) who I described in the introduction, had both been cooks in the mines. They heard about the mines’ high salaries and applied to cook positions just to get their foot in the door. They soon found out it was difficult to be promoted from feminized work (cooking or cleaning) to the high-paying spots driving heavy equipment. Twelve hour shifts on their feet at \$14 per hour eventually pushed both of them back to school so that they could return for one of the coveted “100 grand” positions. Ruth told her classmates, “the food is nothin’ like you get here in town. They got steak, lobster... it’s four stars all the way.”

Charlie, an Inuvialuit man from Tuktoyuktuk, and Scott, a Métis man from the neighboring town of Fort Smith, were both involved in mine construction. They worked for a German engineering firm to build the initial dikes needed to drain the lakes that would later be drilled for diamonds. As I discussed in chapter four, sub-contracting is the primary means by which mines minimize labour costs. The last two trainees, Destiny and Victoria, were 20-something local women who – much like myself at that age – liked to skillfully work at their feminine appearance, listen to hip

⁷¹ Ruth is a “status Indian” which is a category she never associated with so I hesitate to use it to describe her here. See Lawrence (2004) for a description of the long lasting consequences of imposed state categories for organizing Indigeneity and the multiple ways in which people relate to these today.

hop music, and spend their weekends ‘partying.’ They did not immediately strike me as the mining types, but who was I to gender them in that way? As I elaborated in chapter two, for Destiny mining work wasn’t a priority; housing was. Her ability to secure an apartment was based on school enrollment. For Victoria, the imperative was work of any kind. She did not start the course interested in mining, but by the end was very enthusiastic about a possible career in the field.

The trainees had spent four weeks together in Derek’s introductory course before I showed up to start teaching. They shared inside jokes and traded homework answers like a tightly knit high school clique. They were determined to pull each other through the last two weeks. For example, despite David’s best attempts to distance himself from me through obscene jokes and an outwardly “tough guy” performance, every day he would show sensitivity in his efforts to include Charlie in classroom activities. Charlie had difficulty reading and David had taken to masking Charlie’s needs by insisting on reading aloud to himself (with Charlie at his side). He partnered with him for every task, making it his duty to allow Charlie to save face and never have to explicitly let me know that reading was a source of struggle for him. Similarly, Scott and Ruth paired up as “the older trainees,” and studied after class so as to help each other keep up with “the young minds.”

By the time I began my course, the financial crises had started to affect the mining industry and the diamond mines had started lay-offs. The remaining six trainees were proud to have passed their first round of exams, and did not share my sense of uneasiness with the current state of the declining industry. I passed out articles about the financial crisis that I had printed from the Internet, as many of the national papers are not available in town. These readings served as my adaptation of the “knowledge of the industry” unit. David finished reading the article first. He folded his arms, balancing his chair on its two legs. “Miss,” he began, “this doesn’t really apply to us. We are from here; they want us in those jobs. Plus, diamonds are something people will always want. They will always be in demand.” David’s classmates shared his optimism, and rightfully so: Derek had reported that the last graduating class all got jobs immediately. Ruth chimed in with more perceived benefits of working in diamond mines: “you don’t even got to do your own laundry!” Scott reminded the class of what their first instructor had told them: “if we stick with this class we will be getting the works at our graduation. They say they will be taking

us all to the River Run for dinner.” With only four places to eat in town, promise of an evening at the one ‘nice’ restaurant got the trainees talking.

The six trainees in my R2WN were proud to have passed their first round of exams, putting them one step closer to being ‘set for life.’ I began to share their optimism despite the grinding sensations that filled me with doubt about their futures. We laughed our way through the mandatory workbook and prepared for the standardized exam that would decide who would move on and who would stay behind. My cynical leftist attitudes seemed out of place in the classroom. And while I did my best to try to point the trainees to the types of skills I thought were most transferable (basic numeracy, computer literacy, interview practice), I had to honor their desire to pass the final exam. I found myself hoping that I was wrong about how things would unfold. Normally, a scientist wants their hypothesis to be proven correct. In my case, the day-to-day interactions with people who were eager and excited about the possible, or those who felt they were, as David described, “at a crossroad,” made it such that I wanted my ideas about the nature of resource work to be utterly wrong.

As we moved through the course, I saw that the level of the course’s language turned out to not be the major issue for the trainees I worked with. Following Marilyn’s warnings about low literacy levels, I prepared my course activities in a way that approached reading-based tasks with care so as to not put anyone on the spot. To my surprise, only Charlie showed any signs of difficulty with decoding. The other trainees all made their way through assigned readings rather efficiently. Nevertheless, they struggled with many activities in the course’s workbook. The difficulty stemmed from the genre of prescribed talk, and not its linguistic forms. A look into the curriculum’s language ideology reveals that ‘personal development’ curricula rely on ideas about self-representation through words, gestures and clothing. Specifically, trainees needed to learn to talk about themselves and to ‘be themselves’ in sanctioned ways. Ultimately it was the ‘self-help’ genre that caused the most confusion. On the one hand, these ways of speaking were (correctly) seen as particularly irrelevant to entry-level industrial work; on the other, abundant self-talk was thought of as bragging and was therefore very foreign and uncomfortable for trainees. As Ruth put it, “so you mean, like we are supposed to brag about ourselves?” Destiny understood it differently. She later told me she “[didn’t] want to have to speak White.”

Reflecting on the “I statements,” Scott said, “if you talked like this on a job site, you’d get knocked out!”

When asked, the trainees showed highly sophisticated “metalinguistic awareness” (Cazden, 1974). Metalinguistic awareness refers to the ability to reflect consciously on the nature of language and the social functions it carries out. For example, trainees knew that certain ways of talking were favored by employers. Their job, as they saw it, was not only to learn technical mining facts, but also how to present themselves in the right way to potential employers. When I asked the trainees what would be most helpful for the course’s focus, everyone agreed: “interview practice!” Ruth, who spoke with speech features characteristic of working class people from the maritime provinces, explained it thusly: “we’s can get alls’ [sic] the training we want, but when we open our mouths, they’re gonna think we are uneducated.” Scott felt he “wasn’t great at talking about [himself].” He was not alone. The idea that one had to speak about one’s self was the piece that most trainees disliked. This type of self-referential speech also posed a problem when I helped them with resume building. The trainees were very concerned about ‘bragging.’ For them, course expectations of performances of ‘self-esteem’ were at odds with cultural rules against ‘bragging.’

Despite these tensions around what linguistic habits could and should be cultivated, we were making our way through the prescribed curriculum. Everyone was keen on passing their exam and earning their promised ‘fancy dinner.’ Two days before their exam, a cardboard box arrived to the college addressed to me. Inside were graduation certificates and baseball hats with the RTC logo. I called the office in Yellowknife. The RTC decided to replace the fancy dinner with the more cost-effective hat. The RTC secretary sympathetically reassured me that this was “no big deal” because “for those who are selected for the next stage of the course, they will get a full graduation ceremony and eventually be making a hundred thousand dollars a year.”

The news that only selected trainees would move came to me as a surprise. The trainees all shared my impression that if they passed the two courses then they automatically qualified for the full certificate program. Because industry was hesitant to renew funding, the RTC was faced with declining resources and was not sure itself what it could afford for the upcoming course. The dwindling funds and the insecurity it caused were ultimately downloaded to the trainees.

Through a long and drawn-out period, the RTC tried to assess its financial situation. During this time, the trainees were unable to claim any social assistance or seek work, as they could be called to the next stage of the program at any time. After three months it was decided that four of my six trainees would go to Yellowknife. They were all to receive student financial assistance (SFA)⁷² to cover their costs. For Ruth, being from New Brunswick meant that she did not qualify for SFA and had to take out a personal loan at a higher interest rate. She and her husband decided it was worth the investment if she was to receive one of the coveted “100 grand” jobs at the program’s end.

Phases I and II were both characterized by a high level of disorganization, which was exacerbated due to changing funding constraints. Strained communication between the RTC, the college in Yellowknife, and the smaller community campus in Hay River was part of the issue. Although advertised as a partnership, college employees felt at the mercy of the RTC agenda, as the RTC was better positioned to access funding. For Tim, the campus director in Hay River, the RTC/College alliance seemed to be “pushing their own agenda” and constantly “telling” rather than “asking” him to run programs at his small branch.

Inter-institutional power struggles were only part of the picture. The relationship between the Phases was unclear to say the least. While the trainees were told that passing the first two Phase I components would be enough to have them move on, the story turned into “only the best” will be selected when the reality of the financial crisis began to sink in and industry contributions to training initiatives were on the rocks. The timing of the multiple phases of the program was also moving target that caused more confusion for the trainees. The start date of Phase II was put on hold for some time while the RTC made decisions about how many trainees to take on given the changed economic conditions.

One of the earliest and strongest contentions of the course was the issue of subsidies. The course advertised itself to hopefuls as allowing them to get paid while they trained. Phase II was

⁷² SFA is a student loan which does not have to be repaid if you return to the North to work for six months upon graduation.

consistently spoken of as being all-expenses paid. Funding for Phase I was fifty dollars a day. To ‘motivate’ trainees, I was to take attendance every day before and after lunch. After fifteen minutes, a trainee was to be considered absent. For every half-day trainees attended, they received twenty-five dollars. This may seem like a substantial subsidy, however the local cost of living needs to be considered. For example, with perfect attendance, one could receive \$1000. Destiny was one of the few single people in the course. Her rent in the High Rise (see chapters two and four) was \$930 a month. One thing many ‘successful’ trainees had in common was a dual-income household, with either working parents or spouses.

Every Friday, I was to fax my attendance sheets to Yellowknife. Cheques for up to \$230 arrived by plane every Monday... except for when they didn’t. When cheques did not arrive at all, the class would be thrown into a tailspin. I twice spent my Monday lunch hours calling trainees’ landlords to explain the situation of the absent cheques. I called the head office to express trainee concern about the unpredictable cheque delivery and was told that the trainees’ did not need to get so upset, as “eventually they will be making good money.” When the trainees later brought up the issue of untimely (and ultimately ceased) subsidies, Cheryl, the manager of the RTC, explained to the trainees how she and her husband had to go into debt to send their three children to university in “The South.” As Cheryl put it, “this is an investment you are making in your future, and debt is a part of it.”

For many non-Aboriginal northerners, the issue of ‘free’ education for Aboriginals is a source of tension. Cheryl’s comments were not simply a way of normalizing ideas about debt; they were also a subtle way of reinforcing the idea that Aboriginal people have undeserved ‘special rights.’ Indeed, there are educational subsidies for Aboriginal Canadians, but they are neither abundant, nor straightforwardly accessible. Worse, they often carry particularly punitive baggage if trainees are unsuccessful in their training and/or education efforts. This tension between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people was eased to a certain extent in the NWT by introducing favorable territorial student loan structures for non-Aboriginal ‘northerners.’ These northerners were defined as such by having a high school diploma from the NWT. The condition of the loans was that for every six months worked in the NWT post-graduation, a year of student debt was forgiven. This could be continued until the full loan was re-paid through labour. Cheryl, of course, did not mention this in her explanation of the sacrifices her family made for education.

When I communicated to the trainees that not all of them who passed would move on to the next phase, I felt the classroom dynamics shift almost immediately. Some trainees harnessed the language of ‘responsibility’ to make themselves more marketable. Their shared fight to pass the courses was now a competition. For some, this meant constructing their classmates as “not really serious.” In the end, four out of six were selected to move onto the final training, although all six passed the standardized exam. Destiny and David were the two pushed out. It is hard to know why these two were not selected. I don’t know how either scored on the final exam (and neither do they) but I don’t believe they would have had the lowest scores. I wrote reference letters for those who asked for them. Destiny did not ask me for one, while David and all of the others did. I described the outcomes for the failure of the course to provide Destiny with a future in mining in chapter two. David moved back to Saskatchewan and eventually landed a job in Alberta’s oil sands driving heavy equipment. Since the training in 2008/2009, he has become the proud father of two young girls and does two-week rotations between home and work.

6.8 Phase II: Flipping the Script and Missing the Point

I visited the trainees ‘in camp’ twice during their twelve week training. They told me the training was meant to mimic mine life as best as possible. This included some positive things, such as three cooked meals a day and a comfortable place to stay, and some negative things, such as strict curfews, a long list of rules including “no alcohol,” and a security guard who tracked their comings and goings.

Several times during my fieldwork, trainees and mine workers made comparisons between mine work/training and incarceration. Scott said of the program, “it’s sort like jail, but in this case you are trying to stay in.” Brice, a young welder’s apprentice, often echoed this sentiment; he referred to his shifts as his “sentences at Broken Hill Penitentiary” (BHP owns the mine where most of his assignments have been). Despite this seemingly dark choices of metaphors, trainees found much to like about their experience –, most notably the connections they made with each other. In two studies of northern Indigenous vocational training, similarly positive perceptions of training programs have been documented (Abele, 1989; Hobart & Kupfer, 1974). The

incongruity between program outcomes and program experience is precisely what sustains education as a largely uncontested political terrain.

Institutional practices were used as forms of governance. Security guards, curfews, punitive attendance, and cash payments (that were unreliable and dwindled) were all intended to guide and manage conduct but also to orient individual to market. Any failures were deemed personal. The course aimed to have trainees become conversant in the language of individual responsibility. But what did the trainees take from RTC's practices? Did they become governable subjects? Did they become market-ready individuals?

The answer is yes and no. By and large, it was only the trainees who already possessed some of the values and behaviors favored by R2WN who showed up to, and 'stuck with' the course. In this way, R2WN did not create governable subjects; it simply located and identified them as such. 'Successful' students had strong histories with wage work and their values aligned with those of potential employers more closely than their 'unsuccessful' counterparts. This was not due to their training – these differences were largely pre-existing. As a result, these existing local class/race differences were re-inscribed. The process itself, with all of its gate-keeping strategies, participated in the deeper racialization and spatialization of poverty as those who were from the reservation were more likely to be excluded and those who were 'mixed-race' were more likely to be successful.

During the 'in camp' phase, the collective strategies of the trainees returned with new rigor and the larger group of 28 trainees from around the Territories gelled into a cohort. At one point, trainees flipped the script of responsibility on the RTC staff. According to the trainees, the RTC staff never followed their own rules or made good on their commitments. They were frequently late and made promises they did not keep. Previous letdowns (a canceled graduation dinner, the funding changes) became evidence that the staff were themselves 'not responsible.' Trainees noticed the start times of meetings with staff diligently and Ruth, who had taken charge of the mounting complaints, rigorously recorded any lateness on the part of staff. Towards the end of the program, trainees were scheduled to meet with RTC staff to go over the final exam schedule. After thirty minutes of waiting with no sign of the staff, they decided to stage a lock out: they

lured the security guard away from the front desk and bolted the front door. They said if they were not allowed to be more than fifteen minutes late, then neither should the staff members.

These acts of resistance formed intense bonds of solidarity between people who could have just as easily become rivals (as they do in the local correctional facility where regional-ethnic oppositional groups sometimes form). However, it is easy to see the limitations of such resistance to make significant change (cf. Scott, 1987). The everyday battles that the trainees had with the staff ultimately missed their targets. The problem was that the trainees had begun to think of staff as ‘irresponsible individuals,’ instead of questioning larger structural problems that affected resource extraction work. In using the curriculum-sanctioned register of responsibility, student critiques were largely apolitical.

As it turned out, there was not a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. There were no jobs available to the trainees on graduation day. RTC staff naturalized this as ‘the cycle’ of the market, and trainees’ newly developed “soft skills” of patience and flexibility were called on to weather the storm. It is important to note that none of the staff or the industry representatives lost their jobs during the recession. How, then, did staff legitimize the lack of jobs at the end of the training program?

6.9 Conclusion: When the Road Doesn’t Reach the Destination

A level of disorganization that was standard to the program marked the graduation ceremony. Trainees were having their photos taken out front while staff scrambled to organize the details of the barbeque that was supposed to follow. When the trainees came in and took their seats, a few key personnel had not yet arrived, although it was fifteen minutes past the start time. Tiffany, the master of ceremonies and an RTC staff member, came up to announce that they would be starting shortly and that the event was running on “Indian Time”. Despite the fact that the twenty-six “Indians” who had not missed a single minute of class time were all seated directly in front of her and that the two missing personnel were not from the Northwest Territories, the comment still got a few light laughs from the guests.

Throughout their training, the trainees were told repeatedly that mine employers would be present at their graduation. Many had, as instructed, come with their polished resumes in hand in

the event that they were hired on the spot. Only one representative from a mine was present at the graduation. He congratulated the group and talked of the ‘downturn’ and said it was an “opportunity to exercise patience and flexibility.” His estimate was that hiring would begin again in six months and encouraged them to keep “getting out of bed every morning” and to “stay on the right track.” With those words, I watched Ruth roll up her printed resumes and stuff them in her purse. Her husband, who had travelled the 400km to the ceremony, reached for her hand.

Tiffany returned to the front and closed by telling the trainees “the most difficult chains to break are the ones inside of us.” “Don’t be a victim of circumstance,” she warned. Her words echo what I heard elsewhere about the ascription of contemporary issues as ‘internal,’ though they might be more aptly linked to poverty and legacies of colonialism. This closing remark – and the event as a whole – illustrates how structural deficiencies of social programming through resource work can be turned into personal battles that responsible individuals need to face. After a year, none of the trainees had one of the promised \$100,000-a-year jobs (only one got a related job at all).

In the context of resource-dependent regions like the diamond basin, the promotion of “responsibility talk” is far from being a neutral employment skill. It is crucial to the management of the (im)permanence of resource extraction. By promoting types of talk that eschew trainee critique and concerns, the instability of resource economies is turned back onto trainees’ racialized psychological states. Specifically, moralizing dimensions of vocational training in classroom text and talk are registers of responsibility that re-map structural instabilities of resource development onto individual and household aspirations for ‘the good life.’

This chapter has provided an ethnographic account of job -training as intervention. While the particular program I observed was not successful in providing Aboriginal labour with stable employment, it is productive in the sense that it maintains the apolitical nature of education and reinforces ideas about individual moral failings that re-inscribe powerful ideas about race.

7 Conclusion: What Ought to be Done

7.1 Introduction

In this dissertation, I have argued that Canadian natural resource extraction in the North depends on dialectic of suffering and opportunity. There are five interconnected assumptions at work in the dialectic of suffering and opportunity as I understand it. These deserve some attention. The first is that wage work ends suffering. Second, labor for global extraction can be found locally on the frontier (or said differently the north is not a place where surplus labour shows up in search of livelihood). Third, the Indigenous population does not have an extensive history of supporting extraction as labor. Fourth, there is something “new” about this development strategy. Fifth, Northern suffering is separate from the rest of Canadian well-being. By way of conclusion, I will unpack some of these in connection with one another.

First, with respect to northern Canada, the relationship between employment status and quality of life is unclear (Dombrowski et al, 2012). Correlation and causality aren't interchangeable analytic terms. The statistics of suffering I described in chapter five don't simply measure the difficulties of endurance; they also interpret what they measure in order to make recommendations. If those who have unstable employment experience high rates of housing insecurity, then it becomes *necessary* to improve employment levels. What is at stake here is not simply whether or not the assumption that ‘jobs improve quality of life’ is true, rather it is what this presupposes, namely, that we might know *in advance* what it means for others to live well (Ahmed, 2010). It makes a future horizon out of market-friendly aggregate items (traditional language use, employment, housing) to which (some people) must learn to orient.

Second, the racialization of suffering, and the spatialization of race leaves out much of the population living in, and moving around, the north. In chapter four, I illustrated the racialized-gendered class composition of Hay River – specifically, the dependence on labor from the Eastern provinces of Newfoundland and New Brunswick, and increasingly temporary foreign labour from the Philippines. What's more, Aboriginal labor moves in and out of the region in ways that are crucial to social reproduction. I think these movements are largely underestimated and understudied. My aim here has been to show that pulling these threads together is essential

to understanding local and larger forms of social reproduction. This pulling together is captured by the High Rise/Inukshuk photo I began the dissertation with, and returned to in chapter four.

Next, let's revisit the assertion that education and work are 'innovative' and effective strategies. The bulk of my direct fieldwork was focused on studying job training programs for the diamond industry. In chapters two and six, I showed how these types of interventions have a long history and have marginal results at best. In chapter six, I showed how contemporary training interventions fail to meet their own aims. Nevertheless they are effective in that they orient individual aspirations and public sentiment towards a future anterior, while everyday forms of racism are legitimated through a moralizing "register of responsibility." The notion of 'underemployed' is insufficient for capturing the amount of activity people do to ensure the reproduction of their networks; some of this involves wage earning, but largely it does not.

A final comment on the assumption that Northern suffering is separate from the rest of Canadian well-being. Given that resources produce the bulk of the nation's wealth, Canadian citizens far from sites of extraction benefit from their sale to private capital by the state. By circulating suffering in the national media and everyday talk, middle class settler-Canadians needn't confront their complicity with exploitative sets of economic relations. Rather, "nothing but problems" narratives justify and legitimize Northern resource extraction while pushing ethical responses (something ought to be done) into the realm of the market (e.g. buying Canadian diamonds).

My point is this: a diamond doesn't produce rainbows, it simply allows us to see them. In the same way, mining alone doesn't produce poor housing, high food costs, or diabetes. What mining does do, through public culture, politics and practice, is make visible the contradictions of economic and governmental forms (extractive industry, multicultural recognition).

In the winter of 2012-2013, as I was preparing the final draft of this dissertation, the ice road that leads to the only diamond mine outside in the NWT was blocked by a small group of residents from Attawapiskat, Ontario. Attawapiskat is a small remote Aboriginal community on James Bay. In accounts about the blockade, portrayals of rural poverty are juxtaposed with extensive resource wealth, heightened by the particular mythologies of diamonds as the pinnacle of luxury and excess. This stark contrast renders evidence of differentiated social suffering somehow more scandalous, more reprehensible than if it were to appear on its own.

What I am arguing in the dissertation is that while contrasts like these enable us to see disparity, they also foreclose other ways of approaching the issues at hand. As I argued in the introduction, these foreclosures are spatial, racial and temporal. I showed how such foreclosures are put into practice as policy through IBAs/ SEAs in chapter five. These instruments miss vital components of social reproduction. Specifically, they cannot account for the important and conflicting roles that labour mobility and urbanization play in how northerners (old and new) manage the highs and lows of resource work (chapters 2, 4 and 6). At the same time, these standard mechanisms of ‘impact assessment’ miss the nuances of how northerners on the economic and social margins of their communities endure everyday life in and out of the places they most closely identify with. Destiny, David and Ruth’s stories are meant to give a sense of how the lives of others exceeds these foreclosures, even as they might be bracketed by them.

7.2 “Nothing but problems” and Canadian Multicultural Nationalism

The commonsense linkage between “nothing but problems” and “good jobs” outlines how a relationship between racial categories of personhood, political economy and quality of life assessments come together to create a powerful structures of expectation with regards to northern Canada. Throughout this dissertation I outlined some examples of this ideology. I began with my story of the jewelry store salesman (introduction), elaborated through my discussion of the *Mean Streets* media coverage (chapter five), and showed how has real consequences when it comes to the measures said to assess the impacts of mining (chapters three and five). My aim throughout, and specifically through my analysis of “Northern Circulations” in chapter five, is to show the ways in which indigenous suffering becomes a political commodity outside of the place that it is actually happening.

Assessments of failed northern life can, and do, invigorate development processes. Implicit in almost all media accounts of mineral projects in Canada are their assumed capacity to end rural poverty via the provision of work to indigenous persons. Destiny, Ruth, and David’s trajectories reveal the limits of crafting futures based on fragile commodity production. Yet, these programs’ failures to produce workers – or to connect workers with jobs – is only part of what is at stake.

Although the unequal distribution of wealth in liberal democratic states is not a secret, there is something about the proximity of perceived resource wealth to Aboriginal poverty in particular

that strikes a chord with local, national and transnational publics. It conjures up an ethical impulse – on the political right as well as on the left – that something *ought* to be done. Disparities in health and household incomes, particularly among the region's Aboriginal populations, generate resource futures that necessarily configure ideas about race, space and citizenship. In chapter five, I explained how the problematization of the north is galvanized in public culture largely as concerns over child welfare and individual deficiencies of mental health. Such contemporaneous circulations of suffering imply that 'problems' are caused by limited access to work opportunities. Northern rural poverty amidst resource wealth is not simply a problem for those whose lives are shaped by such conditions: it is a problem for Canada itself.

Although approximately half of Canada's Indigenous population now lives in urban centers, ideas about remote Aboriginal communities dominate the public imagination. These remote places are often constructed as 'having nothing going on,' leading to the conclusion that people in these places have 'nothing to do'. There is an idea that in this absence of 'anything to do,' people fill their time with self-destructive activities such as alcohol consumption. 'Development' in the form of wage work is often thought to bring social change to these areas by giving people 'something to do.' However, resource developments in the North, as I outlined in chapter two, are not novel concepts. Capital has come and gone from different points across circumpolar and subarctic regions of Canada over hundreds of years.

Both education and wage work have been available, to varying degrees, in Hay River and across the north for over a century. Lack of schooling has consistently been used to explain political and economic marginality of indigenous persons in the Northwestern Territory. At the turn of the 20th century, a number of industrial schools were set up across the land that would become the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba (Wasylow, 1972). These schools were meant to guarantee the right to education sought after by some indigenous groups through Treaty negotiations. These schools were largely closed due to inconsistent state funding after World War I.⁷³

⁷³ While early industrial schools were residential, they were not mandatory. They did, however, provide a frame for later mandatory residential schooling policy in the 1950s for all 'Indians.' As chapter two explained, this timeline coincided with the arrival of more white southerners in the north and the era of 'high modernist' state planning, as well as several forced community relocations to facilitate goods and

Within recent academic literature, various scholars have tried to assign blame for the conditions of indigenous life within Australian and Canadian national publics. Most controversial of these accounts are Peter Sutton's *The Politics of Suffering: Indigenous Australia and the End of Liberal Consensus* (2001, 2009) and Widdowson and Howard's (2008) *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry: The Deception Behind Indigenous Cultural Preservation*. Both volumes aim to 'call it like it is' and argue that social movements of the 1970s and the rise of indigenous recognition by their liberal states failed to improve the quality of life for most indigenous people in Australia and Canada.

Widdowson and Howard (2008) argue that for Canada, the rise of recognition has not ended indigenous suffering. Rather, it has merely made room for a cottage industry specialized in the fine art of recognition. This industry employs lawyers, consultants and armies of bureaucrats, all of whom fail at the task of ameliorating life.⁷⁴ These two interventions are deeply unsatisfying and troubling. While ordinary, day-to-day suffering is indeed endemic to some northern places and should be known, such 'critiques' often form the justification for new state interventions in the daily lives of those on the margins. Further, they plainly ignore the role that many of these same actors (states, industries, non-government agencies) have played in the production of the very suffering they decry.⁷⁵

Even a brief historical overview of concern for 'Others' would suggest that benevolence was, and remains, a crucial component of Canadian state making. Governmental aims can and have come in contradiction with economic imperatives. For example, when in the early part of the 20th century, mineral exploration and development began in earnest in the NWT, The Edmonton Journal of August 30, 1939, reported the following:

labour moving in and out of the region. The devastating effects of these policies continue to be documented today (Legacy of Hope, 2010; Milloy, 1999).

⁷⁴ For lengthier discussions of these works see Dombrowski (2010) for an exceptional review of Sutton (2008) and Alfred (2009) for a critique of Widdowson and Howard (2001).

⁷⁵ See Tess Lea (2008) *Bureaucrats and Bleeding Hearts: Indigenous Health in Northern Australia* for an excellent discussion of the powerful effects of benevolent state ideology directed at indigenous citizens in Australia.

There are a hundred people rotting on the ore-rich rocks of Great Bear Lake. They are Indians, so sodden with tuberculosis that they can hardly support themselves.... Nine out of ten of them will die of tuberculosis unless something is done - and nothing seems to be possible (as cited in Fumoleau, 2004, p. 360).

Here, imminent death is reported in proximity to wealth (ore-rich rocks) yet severed from its wider conditions of production; in particular, the massive in-migration of mineral prospectors that brought extensive epidemics throughout the period of 1890-1930s. Also important is the ways in which a racial category of personhood (Indian) is associated uniformly with disease. This immediate association works to erase the uneven effects of illness across various groups and around the region. The association with northern Indigeneity and tuberculosis remains today. Tuberculosis testing was still mandatory when I took my first teaching job in the NWT in 2002. Powerfully, this iteration – like the boys asleep beside the garbage can in *Means Streets* – demands an ethical response: something ought to be done.

In the 1930s, state solutions to the problems of indigenous life (or death as it was) were not focused on wage work. Rather, strong Keynesian-style policies aimed to provide populations with subsidized means of production to continue producing commodities for merchant capital (providing traps and ammunition to assist with trapping furs, and also fish sold to mining camps: see Piper, 2009). The strong presence of missionaries contributed to the support of ‘traditional’ livelihoods, as mining was thought to breed sinful behaviors. From the diaries of missionaries in the region, it was clear that Indigenous persons were to be protected from this kind of development at all costs (Ladies Auxiliary, n.d.). Today, the imperative is the opposite: market integration at all costs.

The state, of course, does not have a monopoly on improvement schemes and never has. Missions, NGOs, and charitable organizations have had a long-standing stake in such matters. For example, The Aborigine Protection Society, one of the first international human rights organizations, was formed in 1837. Its membership was largely Quaker and its mission was “to record the history, and promote the advancement, of Uncivilized Tribes” (Samson, 1998). It had chapters in all of the liberal diasporic states: Canada, Australia, the United States and New

Zealand. In Canada, it became active in speaking against the Hudson's Bay Company, which it believed to hold indigenous populations in quasi-slavery.⁷⁶

In this way, indigenous suffering was a precursor to Canadian state-making and modernity (c.f. Povinelli, 1999). This was particularly true for the westward expansion of the state that took place in the 1870s. During this time, the large parcel of land then known as the Northwestern Territory was purchased by the nascent state from the colonial power (the Hudson's Bay Company). This humanistic position found support with an emerging Canadian elite who wanted to gain further control over land and resources. The economic motivations of the era were immediately coupled with a sense of obligation towards an 'Other.' Canadian state-making was not solely about the destruction of indigenous persons. On the contrary, it was based in benevolence and paternalism. This is not to say the outcomes were favorable for those who received different forms of state 'care.' My aim is to simply underscore the nature of the indigenous-state relation and to situate today's dialectic of suffering/opportunity in the longer history of liberal state formation. This history is what allows for contemporary forms of criticism of the north to find deep resonance with non-indigenous publics.

7.3 Technically speaking

Natural resource development has been central to rendering poverty technical in the Northwest Territories. As I explore in chapters three and five, the instruments used to assess indigenous quality of life, and ethics of mining more generally (Impact Benefit Agreements and Socio-Economic Agreements) place strict temporal, spatial and ethnic constraints that bracket how we understand (or fail to understand) issues of social reproduction. They rely on simplified models of the world they seek to improve, in a way characteristic of modern state planning (Scott, 1998).

The very framing of the 'problem' of Aboriginal suffering vis-à-vis resource development is problematic in itself. As I described in chapters two, three, four and five, this understanding of northern poverty also racializes questions of inequality in ways that obscure rather than reveal the mechanics of social reproduction. As Cooper and Stoler (1997) have discussed, the

⁷⁶ The Aborigine Protection society merged with the Anti-Slavery society in 1909 forming the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society, which is today Anti-Slavery International, based in London.

production of ‘otherness’ in former colonial contexts requires social action in order to be successful. ‘Otherness’ needs to be defined and reproduced. In chapter six, I showed how Otherness is generated, in part, through the register of responsibility.

In Canada, ‘Otherness’ has been tied to disparate economic and governmental projects that, as chapter two elaborated, can come into conflict with one another. Throughout, I have detailed how certain differences became significantly different, under what conditions with an eye towards describing what specific processes of differentiation tell us about the ways in which broader social and economic changes are shaped and experienced. To those ends, I traced the history and changing significance of racial categories of personhood to Canadian state-making in chapter two.

The approach taken in this dissertation was my attempt to overcome what Brubaker calls “groupism.” Groupism is the tendency to take bounded groups as fundamental units of analysis, and as basic constituents of the social world (2004, p. 2; see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 228).

We see groupism at work in the regulatory agreements that enabled diamond development. It is most visible when assessing Impact Benefit Agreements. As discussed in chapter three, at the time of their discovery, the NWT diamond deposits were located on contested lands (Bielawski, 2003). To recall, the land cessation agreements that ceded the territory in question – from indigenous groups to the state in 1899 (Treaty 8) and 1921 (Treaty 11) – have increasingly come under scrutiny, reaching a boiling point in the 1970s when a proposed pipeline through the territory was met with substantial indigenous-led political opposition. Through a number of court proceedings, it was determined that land cessation had not been part of the agreements, and therefore the state needed to negotiate new claims. While initially the claim had been sought by a singular political unit, the 1986 Comprehensive Land Claims Policy, passed under the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney, promoted settlement with smaller ‘community’ groups, or ‘bands.’ Although land claims are generally understood as the means to repair damage from colonial exploitation (Hamilton, 1994), Aboriginal claims are a key meeting point for state-industry conjunction and negotiation (Dombrowski, 2001).

IBAs acknowledge and give meaning to varying degrees and forms of property ownership for groups involved in political struggles. They also determine which groups (communities) might

be measured and assessed for impacts and benefits of mining, and on what terms. IBAs and modern land claims are the second phase of state centralization in the Canadian north, following Treaty-making. I explored the details of the phases of state centralization in chapter two. It is important to observe that both phases have consistently arranged claims to land and rights in ways that allow for the transfer of significant resources from state control to industrial extraction.

As I showed in chapters three and four, increasing numbers of migrant Aboriginal workers travel to the region seeking access to work through priority employment agreements and policies (affirmative action). These agreements and policies hinge on racial categories of personhood (Aboriginal, in this case). From the beginning, representation through these types of monitoring mechanisms has been characterized by substantial contradictions. The goal of impact assessment is to measure the effects of development on the people who are in place. Yet, widely recognized and implicit in the documents themselves is the fact that large-scale resource extraction projects in Northern Canada have always depended on labor put in place by the development process itself (see chapters two and four). This has meant many people immigrating to, and emigrating from, the defined territory of impact throughout the development process (Morrison & Coates, 1994).

In chapter five, I contrasted two “Northern Circulations” of suffering to show how representations of the North bracket social relations of inequality both spatially and racially in ways that heavily dichotomize the Canadian political economy: they create discursive divisions between an “us” and a “them,” drawing an imagined border between the south and the North. In this way, the suffering that is reported in the media and inferred in casual conversation is always marked with different spatial and racial modalities. This separation of citizens and space is not a neutral one. Different people and different places, through such circulations, become subjected to different forms of state policy and intervention.

For some time, I debated about whether or not to write about the kinds of alarmist pieces that circulate in national media. In my mind, they were “not real” representations of the kinds of people and places I have come to know well in the past ten years. My aim here was not simply to deconstruct such representations, or prove them inaccurate in one way or another. Much like Mitchell’s (1991) discussion of colonial representations of Egypt, it is fairly simple to dismantle representations of the Canadian north. But, as I have found out in the process of writing,

providing an alternative is much more difficult. Part of the issue is that the people of the north, both Aboriginal and not, are themselves caught up in these forms of representation –even if only at the margins (p.83).

Representations are not merely discourses that float above the ‘real’ conditions of everyday life. There are observable consequences of the suffering/opportunity dialectic that I argued constitutes the north in public culture. By holding popular culture in relation to the ‘everyday,’ my aim has been to underscore the relationship between national circulations of suffering and the mechanics of the mundane in the daily search for livelihood. A large part of this work is dedicated to the decidedly ordinary story of people trying to get by: people trying to pay their rents or maybe even go out for dinner at the ‘nice’ restaurant; people trying to worry less and live more. As commonplace or everyday as these stories might seem, they are overwhelmingly absent in portraits of the Canadian north. This absence seems to me to be precisely the point of a critical intervention. Without circulations of sufferings, on what grounds could claims to rights be made? Or how might the diamonds-as-opportunity formulation seem sensible?

Jessica Cattelino (2010) has described this dilemma as “the double-bind of needs-based sovereignty.” Because sovereignty and accordant rights were awarded to native groups in the US and Canada on the basis of indigenized marginality, a lack of observable poverty throws these rights into question. Drawing on the case of successful gaming operations run by the Florida Seminoles, she explains how groups (or tribes, in the U.S.) who generate substantial wealth, often find their tribal legitimacy and citizenship challenged in law, public culture and everyday interactions (specifically accusations of having undeserved – or “special” – rights).

The problem of representation is one that I faced in this writing. While the ethnographic prose commonly used by anthropologists creates vivid images of peoples’ lives, it is limited in its capacity to explain and elucidate structural patterns of inequality. All too often, ethnographic representation, much like narratives derived from documentary photography, can be reduced by receiving publics to single cases, or to instances unique to individual people or communities (e.g. “that’s too bad for them”).

Conversely, the tools that readily elicit structural patterns, such as those borrowed from quantitative sociology, pre-configure ‘the problem’ to be addressed and subsequently fail to elicit ethnographic detail and miss essential affective dimensions and felt qualities of northern life. At

the heart of this dissertation was an attempt to address the conceptual and ethnographic problem of how to represent northern life neither as a sum of individual stories, nor as a series of lifeless statistical differences.

7.4 Politics without Guarantees⁷⁷

In 1999, Advertising Age magazine declared ‘A Diamond is Forever’ the best slogan of the 20th century. The 1947 DeBeers advertising campaign is often credited with changing how North American couples mark their timeless commitments to one another. While diamonds have become an iconic future-promise, all natural resources are entangled with experiences of time. From claims prospecting to source depletion, social and cultural expressions of natural resources inevitably frame ideas about the past, present and future (Ferry and Limbert 2008). Anyone who lives in a mining region knows very well that diamonds aren’t forever. Every opening of a mine contains the implicit promise of its closure. Yet mining’s impermanence doesn’t foreclose the possibility that communities and subjects imagine and build futures around natural resource development.

A month after the mine training course ended, Ruth called and asked if I could help her apply online for a job. She heard that one of the mines was hiring, and had also gotten a few other leads for work in transportation. We sat in front of the computer at the community college and worked together at ‘selling’ her new skills. As we re-read the draft, it occurred to me that something might be missing. Uncomfortable, I asked, “Do you want to say in the letter that you are an Aboriginal woman?”

“Why would I do that? Do *you* think I should?”

“Hmmm. Well, technically they are supposed to give priority hires to Aboriginals and Northerners”

Ruth interrupted, “Yeah, but I am not from here.”

Nodding, I said, “Right, but you have lived here for three years so that makes you a Northerner.”

⁷⁷ See Stuart Hall’s (1997) essay, *Race and the floating Signifier*.

“Ok, so I should say I am a Northerner. But, I mean, I AM Aboriginal. Is that better?”

Swiveling in my office chair, I admitted, “I don’t know. I have been trying to figure out how these categories work for the past year.”

Ruth sighed, “I just don’t want to make some big deal out of it. It might look like I am, trouble, you know, demanding. What do you think?”

“It’s up to you. We could say that a copy of your license and Indian Status Card are available upon request at the bottom of the letter. That way they would know, but you wouldn’t be making it a big deal. I know that contractors get more “points” if they have Northern and Aboriginal employees. More points means they have a better chance of winning bids. I wouldn’t want you to miss out if it really is an advantage. But, like I said, I don’t know”.

Ruth settled our debate: “Ok, let’s put it as the ‘upon request,’ then it’s there without really being there.”

As we worked to send out Ruth’s applications, the ambiguity of how categories of race/citizenship might work in the world was apparent to both of us, but only highly consequential for one of us. While the measures said to assess the impacts and benefits of mining take the categories Aboriginal and Northerner as axiomatic objects, our conversation reveals how these spaces are always negotiations, heavily traversed by relations of power (me being the ‘expert’ on categories), and related to the struggle over limited resources (in this case, jobs).

After a little more editing, we sent off Ruth’s packages. I checked in with her a month later. She had received no responses.

Two years later, she was working for herself cleaning private homes in Hay River. “I haven’t given up on the mines” she told me over the phone. “Cleaning is really good money, you know. My husband and I are going to go to Boston on holidays. I haven’t been back in ages, but my sister still lives there. Not to mention the Boston Bruins⁷⁸ will be playing.” I ask her if she or her husband plan on moving back to New Brunswick. “It would be hard. There is good-paying,

⁷⁸ The Boston Bruins are a hockey team in the National Hockey League.

steady work for my husband here. Back home you never know, and wages are less than half what they are here. Plus there is all the overtime. It adds up. It also means he doesn't have much time left to work on fixing up our place, but that's ok. It will come".

And for Ruth, it did. She got a job as a heavy equipment operator three years after her course ended. Over the holidays in 2012, she broadcast her Christmas menu via a facebook status update, "Lobster just flown in to the mines. A 12 hour shift, then we feast!"

Bibliography

- Abele, F. (1989). *Gathering strength: Training programs for native employment in the Northwest Territories*. Calgary, AB: The Arctic Institute of North America.
- Abele, F., & Institute for Research on Public Policy. (2009). *Northern exposure: Peoples, powers and prospects in Canada's North*. Montréal, QC: Institute for Research on Public Policy.
- Adelson, N. (2000). *'Being alive well' : Health and the politics of Cree well-being*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2010). *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Aiyer, A. (2004). In search of the Midas touch: Gold, Guiriseros and globalization in Nicaragua. *Anthropologica*, 46(2), 139-151.
- Asch, M. (1976). Some effects of the late nineteenth century modernization of the fur trade on the economy of the Slavey Indians. *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology*, 6(4), 7-16.
- Asch, M. (1977). The Dene economy. In M. Watkins (Ed.), *Dene nation: The colony within* (pp. 47-61). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Asch, M. (1979a). The ecological-evolutionary model and the concept of mode of production: Two approaches to material reproduction. In D. Turner & G. A. Smith (Eds.), *Challenging anthropology: A critical introduction to social anthropology* (pp. 81-99). Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Asch, M. (1979b). The economics of Dene self-determination. In D. Turner & G. A. Smith (Eds.), *Challenging anthropology: A critical introduction to social anthropology* (pp. 339-352). Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Asch, M. (1980). Steps toward the Analysis of Athapaskan Social Organization. *Arctic Anthropology*, 17(2), 46-51.
- Asch, M. (1988). *Home and native land: Aboriginal rights in the Canadian constitution*. Scarborough, ON: Nelson Canada.
- Asselin, J. & Parkins, J. R. (2009). Comparative case study as Social Impact Assessment: Possibilities and limitations for anticipating social change in the far North. *Social Indicators Research*, 94(3), 483-497. doi: 10.1007/s11205-009-9444-7
- Austin, A. (2005). *Canadian missionaries, Indigenous peoples: Representing religion at home and abroad*. A. Austin & J. S. Scott (Eds.). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogical imagination: Four essays*. M. Holquist (Ed.). (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Barker, J. (2005). *Sovereignty matters: Locations of contestation and possibility in Indigenous struggles for self-determination*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Barnett, C., Cloke, P., Clarke, N., & Malpass, A. (2011). *Globalizing responsibility: The political rationalities of ethical consumption*. Chichester, SXW: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bell, L., & Marlow, P. E. (2009). Visibility, healing and resistance: Voices from the 2005 Dena'ina Language Institute. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 48(1), 1-18.
- Bell, L.A. (2011). Economic insecurity as opportunity: Job training and the Canadian diamond industry. In M. Daveluy, F. Lévesque, & J. Ferguson (Eds.), *Humanizing Security in the Arctic* (pp. 293-304). Edmonton, AB: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press.
- Bell, L.A. (2012). In search of hope: Mobility on the Canadian frontier. In W. Lem & P. Gardiner-Barber (Eds.), *Migration in the 21st Century: Ethnography and Political Economy* (pp. 207-246). London, ENG: Routledge.
- Bestor, T. C. (2004). *Tsukiji: The fish market at the center of the world*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Berlant, L. G. (2011). *Cruel optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bielawski, E. (2003). *Rogue diamonds: The rush for northern riches on Dene land*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Blackstock, C. (2009a). Why addressing the over-representation of First Nations children in care requires a new theoretical approach. *The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*, 6(3), 1-18. Retrieved from www.socialworker.com/jswve/content/view/135/69/
- Blackstock, C. (2009b). After the apology: Why are so many First Nations children still in foster care? *Children Australia*, 34(1), 22-31.
- Blackstock, C. (2009c) First Nations children count: Enveloping quantitative research in an Indigenous envelope. *First Peoples Child and Family Review*, 4(2), 135-144.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Boykoff, J. (2011). The anti-Olympics. *New Left Review*, 67(1), 41-59.

- Brenner, N. & Theodore, N. (2002). Cities and geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism." *Antipode*, 34(3), 349-379. doi: 10.1111/1467-8330.00246
- Burchell, G., Gordon C., & Miller, P. (Eds.). (1991). *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality: With two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault*. London, ENG: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Burley, E. (1997). *Servants of the honourable company: Work, discipline, and conflict in the Hudson's Bay Company, 1770-1870*. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Byers, M. (2009). *Who owns the Arctic?: Understanding sovereignty disputes in the North*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Caine, K. J., & Krogman, N. (2010). Powerful or just plain power-full? A power analysis of Impact and Benefit Agreements in Canada's North. *Organization & Environment*, 23(1), 76-98.
- Canada Diamonds. (2012). Canada Diamonds: Wholesale Ethically Mined Diamonds and Fine Jewelry. Retrieved from <http://www.canadadiamonds.com/>
- Campbell, G. (2004). *Blood diamonds :Tracing the deadly path of the world's most precious stones*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Carr, E. S. (2011). *Scripting addiction: The politics of therapeutic talk and American sobriety*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Carrier, J. G. (2010). Protecting the environment the natural way: Ethical consumption and commodity fetishism. *Antipode*, 42(3), 672-672.
- Cavell, J. (2002). The second frontier: The North in English-Canadian historical writing. *Canadian Historical Review*, 83(3), 364-389.
- Coates, K. (1985). *Canada's colonies: A history of the Yukon and Northwest Territories*. Toronto, ON: Lorimer.
- Coates, K. (1993). *Best left as Indians: Native-white relations in the Yukon Territory, 1840-1973*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Coates, K., & Abel, K. M. (Eds.). (2001). *Northern visions: New perspectives on the north in Canadian history*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.
- Coates, K., & Morrison, W. (1986). *Treaty research report: Treaty Five 1875-1908*. Ottawa, ON: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- Coates, K., & Morrison, W. R. (1989). *For purposes of dominion: Essays in honour of Morris*. North York, ON: Captus Press.

- Coates, K. S., & Morrison, W. R. (Eds.). (1989). *Interpreting Canada's north: Selected readings*. Toronto, ON: Copp Clark Pitman.
- Cody, H. A. (2002). *An apostle of the north : Memoirs of the Right Reverend William Carpenter Bompas*. K. Coates & W. R. Morrison (Eds.). Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.
- Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. (1992). *Ethnography and the historical imagination*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (Eds.). (2000). *Millennial capitalism and the culture of neoliberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Cooper, F., & Stoler, A. L. (Eds). (1997). *Tensions of empire: Colonial cultures in a bourgeois world*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Coronil, F. (1997). *The magical state: Nature, money, and modernity in Venezuela*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Cowlshaw, G. (2003). Disappointing Indigenous people: Violence and the refusal of help. *Public Culture*, 15(1), 103-125.
- Cazden, C. B. (1974). Play and metalinguistic awareness: One dimension of language experience. *The Urban Review*, 7(1), 23-39.
- Das, V. (2007). *Life and words: Violence and the descent into the ordinary*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Davidson, P. (2005). *The idea of north*. London, END: Reaktion.
- Davin, A. (1997). Imperialism and motherhood. In Cooper, F. & A. L. Stoler (Eds.), *Tensions of empire: Colonial cultures in a bourgeois world* (pp. 87-151). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Dean, M. (1999). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dombrowski, K. (2001). *Against culture: Development, politics, and religion in Indian Alaska*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Dombrowski, K. (2002). The praxis of Indigenism and Alaska native timber politics. *American Anthropologist*, 104(4), 1062-1073. doi: 10.2307/3567096
- Dombrowski, K. (2010). The white hand of capitalism and the end of indigenism as we know it. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 21(1), 129-140.

- Dorais, L.-J., Genest, S., Mauger, L., & Université Laval. Groupe d'études et de recherches sur l'Asie contemporaine. (1994). *Autour des transferts Orient-Occident: Perspectives anthropologiques*. Laval, QC: Groupe d'études et de recherches sur l'Asie contemporaine, Université Laval.
- Dorais, L.-J. (1996). *Language in Inuit society*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College, Nunatta Campus.
- Dorais, L.-J. (2005). Comparing academic and aboriginal definitions of Arctic identities. *Polar Record*, 41(1), 1-10.
- Dorais, L.-J., & Watt, R. (Eds.). (2001) *Inuit identities in the third millenium*. (J. Rousseau, Trans.). Québec City, QC: Association Inuksiutiit Katimajit.
- Eagleton, T. (2003). *After Theory*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Eribon, D. (1991). *Michel Foucault*. (B. Wing, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Erlich, E. I., & Hausel, D. W. (2002). *Diamond deposits: Origin, exploration, and history of discovery*. Littleton, CO: Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration.
- Falls, S. (2005). *The configuring of diamonds: A study of consumption*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). City University of New York.
- Falls, S. (2011). Picturing Blood Diamonds. *Critical Arts*, 25(3), 441-466.
- Ferguson, J. (1994). *The anti-politics machine: "Development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Cambridge, ENG: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferguson, J. (1999). *Expectations of modernity: Myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Ferguson, J. (2006). *Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ferry, E. E., & Limbert, M. E. (Eds.). (2008). *Timely assets: The politics of resources and their temporalities*. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Seminar Series..
- Francis, D., & Morantz, T. E. (1983). *Partners in furs: A history of the fur trade in eastern James Bay, 1600-1870*. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Fumoleau, R. (2004). *As long as this land shall last: A history of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939*. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press.
- Furniss, E. M. (1997) *In the spirit of the pioneers: Historical consciousness, cultural colonialism and Indian/white relations in rural British Columbia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. The University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

- Furniss, E. (1997). Pioneers, progress, and the myth of the frontier: the landscape of public history in rural British Columbia. *BC Studies*(115), 7-44.
- Furniss, E. M. (1999). *The burden of history: Colonialism and the frontier myth in a rural Canadian community*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Furniss, E. (1999). Indians, odysseys and vast, empty lands: The myth of the Frontier in the Canadian justice system. *Anthropologica*, 41(2), 195-208.
- Foucault, M. (1984). *Language, Counter Memory, Practice*. D. Bouchard (Ed.). (D. Bouchard & S. Simon, Trans.). Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1990). *Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977-1984*. L. D. Kritzman (Ed.), A. Sheridan (Trans.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In Burchell, G., Gordon C., & Miller, P. (Eds.). (1991). *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality: With two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault*. London, ENG: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1991b). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M. (2004). *Sécurité, territoire, population : Cours au collège de France, 1977-1978*. M. Senellart, F. Ewald, & A. Fontana (Eds.). Paris, FR: Gallimard.
- Ghosh, A. (1994). *An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale*. London, ENG: Granta Books.
- Gibson, V. V. (2008). *Negotiated spaces: Work, home and relationships in the Dene diamond economy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Gibson, G., & Klinck, J. (2005). Canada's resilient North: The impact of mining on Aboriginal communities. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*, 3(1), 115–139.
- Gordon, T. (2010). *Imperialist Canada*. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing.
- Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. (2007). *2007 Diamond Industry Report: Diamond Facts*. Retrieved from <http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/publications/2008/Diamonds/diamond07.pdf>
- Gramsci, A. (1971). In Hoare Q., Nowell-Smith G. (Eds.), *Selections from the prison notebooks of antonio gramsci* (1st ed. -- ed.). New York: International Publishers.
- Grant, J. A., & Taylor, I. (2004). Global governance and conflict diamonds: The Kimberly Process and the quest for clean gems. *Round Table*, 93(375), 385-401

- Grant, S. D., & Wilson, J. (2010). *Polar imperative: A history of Arctic sovereignty in North America*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1979). The Retrieval of Socio-Cultural Knowledge in Conversation. *Poetics Today*, 1(1-2), 173-186.
- Hamilton, J. D. (1994). *Arctic revolution: Social change in the Northwest Territories, 1935-1994*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press.
- Haney, L. A. (2010). *Offending Women: Power, Punishment, and the Regulation of Desire*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford, ENG: Oxford University Press.
- Haugerud, A., Stone, M. P., & Little, P. D. (Eds.). (2000). *Commodities and globalization: Anthropological perspectives*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Haviland, J. B. (2003). Ideologies of Language: Some Reflections on Language and U.S. Law. *American Anthropologist* 105(4), 764-774.
- Helm, June. (Ed.). (1968). *Essays on the problem of tribe*. Seattle, WA: American Ethnological Society/University of Washington Press.
- Heller, M. & Bell, L. (2012). Frontiers and Frenchness: Pride and profit in the production of Canada. In A. Duchêne & M. Heller (Eds.), *Language in Late Capitalism: Pride and Profit*. London, ENG: Routledge, 254-285.
- Heller, M. (1999). *Linguistic Minorities and Modernity*. London, ENG: Continuum.
- Heller, M. (2001). *Éléments d'une sociolinguistique critique*. Paris, FR: Didier.
- Heller, M. (2011). *Paths to Post Nationalism : A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity*. Oxford, ENG: Oxford University Press.
- Hilson, G., & Clifford, M. J. (2010). A 'Kimberley protest': Diamond mining, export sanctions, and poverty in Akwatia, Ghana. *African Affairs*, 109(436), 431-450.
- Hobart, C.W., and Kupfer, G. (1974). *Inuit employment by Gulf Oil Canada: Assessment, and impact on Coppermine, 1972-73*. Edmonton, AB: Westrede.
- Hoogeveen, D. (2008). *What is at stake? Diamonds, mineral regulation, and the law of free-entry in the Northwest Territories*. Unpublished master's thesis for master's degree. Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

- Irlbacher-Fox, S. (2009). *Finding Dahshaa: Self-government, social suffering, and Aboriginal Policy in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Irvine, J. T., & Gal, S. (2000). Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation. In P. Kroskrity (Ed.), *Regimes of Language. Ideologies, Politics, and Identities* (pp. 35-84). Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.
- Isard, P. (2010). *Northern vision: Northern development during the Diefenbaker Era*. Unpublished master's thesis for master's degree. University of Waterloo, Waterloo.
- Kalant, A. (2004). *National identity and the conflict at Oka: Native belonging and myths of postcolonial nationhood in Canada*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kirmayer, L. J., & Valaskakis, G. G. (Eds.). (2009). *Healing traditions: The mental health of Aboriginal peoples in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Kleinman, A., Das, V., & Lock, M. (Eds.). (1997). *Social suffering*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Krajick, K. (2001). *Barren lands: An epic search for diamonds in the North American Arctic*. New York, NY: Times Books.
- Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Kulchyski, P. K. (2005). *Like the sound of a drum: Aboriginal cultural politics in Denendeh and Nunavut*. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.
- Kulchyski, P. K. (2007). *The red Indians : An episodic, informal collection of tales from the history of Aboriginal people's struggles in Canada*. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring.
- Kwiatkowski, R. E., & Ooi, M. (2003). Integrated environmental impact assessment: A Canadian example. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 81(6), 434-438.
- Lawrence, B. (2004). *"Real" Indians and others mixed-blood urban Native peoples and indigenous nationhood*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.
- Lea, T. (2008). *Bureaucrats and bleeding hearts: Indigenous health in northern Australia*. Sydney, AUS: University of New South Wales Press.
- Le Billon, P. (2006). Fatal transactions: Conflict diamonds and the (anti)terrorist consumer. *Antipode*, 38(4), 778-801. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8330.2006.00476.x
- LeGrand, J. (1980). *Diamonds: Myth, Magic and Reality*. New York, NY: Crown.

- Li, T. M. (2000). Articulating Indigenous identity in Indonesia: Resource politics and the tribal slot. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42(1), 149-179.
- Li, T. M. (2001). Masyarakat Adat, difference, and the limits of recognition in Indonesia's forest zone. *Modern Asian Studies*, 35(3), 645-676.
- Li, T. (2003). Situating resource struggles: Concepts for empirical analysis. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38(48), 5120-5128.
- Li, T. M. (2005). Beyond "the state" and failed schemes. *American Anthropologist*, 107(3), 383-394.
- Li, T. M. (2007). *The will to improve: Governmentality, development, and the practice of politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Li, T. M. (2009). To make live or let die? Rural dispossession and the protection of surplus populations. *Antipode*, 41(S1), pp.66-03.
- Littlefield, A., & Knack, M. A. (1986). *Native Americans and wage labor: Ethnohistorical perspectives*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Martin, E. (1994) *Flexible Bodies*. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Marx, K. (1974). *Capital: Volume I* (C. Paul & E. Paul, Trans.). London, ENG: Dent.
- Mbembé, A. (2003). Necropolitics. (L. Meintjes, Trans.). *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11-40.
- McCormack, P. A. (2010). *Fort Chipewyan and the shaping of Canadian history, 1788-1920s: We like to be free in this country*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- McElhinny, B. (2005). "Kissing a Baby Is Not at All Good for Him": Infant Morality, Medicine, and Colonial Modernity in the U.S.-Occupied Philippines. *American Anthropologist*, 107(2), 183-194.
- Meredith, J. (2011). Apprenticeship training in Canada: where's the crisis? *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*. 63(3), 323-344.
- Milloy, J. S. (1999). *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986*. Winnipeg, MB: The University of Manitoba Press.
- Mintz, S. W. (1985). *Sweetness and power: The place of sugar in modern history*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Mitchell, T. (1991). *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Moore, D. (2005). *Suffering for territory: Race, place and power in Zimbabwe*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Morris, R. C. (2008) The Miner's Ear. *Transition*, 98(1), 96-114.
- Morrison, W. R., & Coates, K. A. (1994). *Working the North: Labor and the Northwest defense projects, 1942-1946*. Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press.
- Mutersbaugh, T., & Lyon, S. (2010). Transparency and democracy in certified ethical commodity networks. *Geoforum*, 41(1), 27-32. doi: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.11.013
- Nadasdy, P. (2003). *Hunters and bureaucrats: power, knowledge, and Aboriginal-state relations in the southwest Yukon*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Narotzky, S., & Smith, G. A. (2006). *Immediate struggles: People, power, and place in rural Spain*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nash, J. (1981). Ethnographic Aspects of the World Capitalist System. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 10, 393-423.
- Nugent, D. (1994). Building the state, making the nation - the bases and limits of state centralization in "modern" Peru. *American Anthropologist*, 96(2), 333-369.
- Ollman, B. (2003). *Dance of the dialectic: Steps in Marx's method*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Pajuha, N., Becker, M. (Directors). (2007). *Diamond Road* [Documentary]. Canada: Kensington Communications Inc.
- Paperny, A. M., & Minogue, S. (2009, August 14). Life on the mean streets of Iqaluit. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/life-on-the-mean-streets-of-iqaluit/article4288422/>
- Paperny, A. M. (2009a). In Nunavut, the problems are familiar - and so are the solutions, *Globe & Mail (Toronto, Canada)*, p. A1. Retrieved online.
- Paperny, A. M. (2009b, October 20). Ten years in, Nunavut gets failing grade. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ten-years-in-nunavut-gets-failing-grade/article4294089/>
- Piper, L. (2009). *The industrial transformation of subarctic Canada*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Porter, J. (1965) *The vertical mosaic: An analysis of class and power in Canada*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Povinelli, E.A. (1993). *Labor's Lot: The power, history and culture of Aboriginal Action*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Povinelli, E.A. (1999). Settler modernity and the quest for an indigenous tradition. *Public Culture* 11(1), 19-48.

- Povinelli, E. A. (2002). *The cunning of recognition: Indigenous alterities and the making of Australian multiculturalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Povinelli, E. A. (2008). The child in the broom closet: States of killing and letting die. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107(3): 509-530.
- Povinelli, E. A. (2011). *Economies of abandonment: Social belonging and endurance in late liberalism*. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Rajak, D. (2011). *In good company: An anatomy of corporate social responsibility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Rata, E. (2010). Localising neoliberalism: Indigenist brokerage in the New Zealand university. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 8(4), 527-542.
- Rice, Karen. (1990). *A grammar of Slave*. Boston, MA: Walter de Gruyter.
- Roseberry, W. (1983). *Coffee and capitalism in the Venezuelan Andes*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Ross, K. N. (1975). *Hearing confessions*. London, ENG: SPCK.
- Sahlins, M. (1999). What is anthropological enlightenment? Some lessons of the twentieth century. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 28(1), 1-23.
- Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Sale, R. & Potapov, E. (2009). *The scramble for the Arctic: Ownership, exploitation, and conflict in the far North*. London, ENG: Frances Lincoln Ltd.
- Samson, J. (1998) *Imperial benevolence: Making British authority in the Pacific Islands*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sassen, S. (2009). Incompleteness and the possibility of making: Towards denationalized citizenship? *Cultural Dynamics*, 21(3), 227-254.
- Schiller, N. G. (2012). Unravelling the migration and development web: Research and policy implications. *International Migration*, 50(3), 92-97.
- Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Scott, J. C. (2009). *The art of not being governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Selleck, L., & Thompson, F. (1997). *Dying for gold: The true story of the giant mine murders*. Toronto, ON: HarperCollins.
- Sider, G. (1987). When parrots learn to talk, and why they can't: Domination, Deception, and self-deception in Indian-white relations. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 29(1), 3-23.
- Sider, G. (2003a). *Living Indian histories: The Lumbee and Tuscarora people in North Carolina*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Sider, G. (2003b). *Between history and tomorrow: Making and breaking everyday life in rural Newfoundland*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.
- Sider, G., & Smith, G. (Eds.). (1997). *Between history and histories: The making of silences and commemorations*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Slotkin, R. (1973). *Regeneration through violence: The mythology of the American frontier, 1600-1860*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Slotkin, R. (1986). *The fatal environment: The myth of the frontier in the age of industrialization, 1800-1890*. New York, NY: Atheneum.
- Slotkin, R. (1992). *Gunfighter nation: The myth of the frontier in twentieth-century America*. New York, NY: Atheneum.
- Slowey, G. A. (2008). *Navigating neoliberalism: Self-determination and the Mikisew Cree First Nation*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Solway, J. (2009). Human Rights and NGO 'Wrongs': Conflict Diamonds, Culture Wars and the 'Bushman Question'. *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute* 79(3), 321-346.
- Sosa, I., & Keenan, K. (2001). Impact Benefit Agreements between Aboriginal communities and mining companies: Their use in Canada. Calgary, AB: Canadian Environmental Law Association.
- Standing, G. (2011). *The precariat: The new dangerous class*. London, ENG: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Staples, D., & Owens, G. (1995). *The third suspect*. Red Deer, AB: Red Deer College Press.
- Stewart, K. (1996). *A Space on the Side of the Road*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Stevenson, L. (2005). *Life in Question: Inuit youth, suicide and the Canadian state*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of California, Berkley.

- Stevenson, L. (2012). The psychic life of biopolitics: Survival, cooperation, and Inuit community. *American Ethnologist*, (39)3, 592-613.
- Sutton, P. (2009). *The politics of suffering: Indigenous Australia and the end of the liberal consensus*. Carlton, VIC: Melbourne University Pub.
- Taylor, I., & Mokhawa, G. (2003). Not forever: Botswana, conflict diamonds and the Bushmen. *African Affairs*, 102(407), 261-283. doi: 10.1093/afraf/adg004
- Tsing, A. (1999). Inside the economy of appearances. *Public Culture*, 12(1), 115-144.
- Tsing, A. (2005). *Friction: An ethnography of global connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Urciuoli, B. (2008). Skills and selves in the new workplace. *American Ethnologist*, 35(2), 211-228. doi: 10.2307/27667485
- Vanderklippe, N. (2012, May 16). Reviving Arctic oil rush, Ottawa to auction rights in massive area. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/reviving-arctic-oil-rush-ottawa-to-auction-rights-in-massive-area/article4184419/>
- Wacquant, L. (2009). *Punishing the poor: The neoliberal government of social insecurity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Waldram, J. B. (2004). *Revenge of the Windigo: The construction of the mind and mental health of North American Aboriginal peoples*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Watkins, M. (Ed.). (1977). *Dene Nation: The colony within*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press/ University League for Social Reform.
- Weber, B., & Shields, R. (2011). The virtual North: On the boundaries of sovereignty. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(1), 103-120.
- White, R. (1991). *The middle ground: Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- White, R. (2011). *The middle ground : Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815* (20th anniversary ed.). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Widdowson, F., & Howard, A. (2008). *Disrobing the Aboriginal industry: The deception behind Indigenous cultural preservation*. Montréal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Wolf, E. R. (1982). *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Wolf, E. R. (1999). *Envisioning power: Ideologies of dominance and crisis*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Wolf, E. R., & Silverman, S. (2001). *Pathways of power: Building an anthropology of the modern world*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Zarchikoff, W. (1975). *The development and settlement patterns of Hay River Northwest Territories*. Unpublished master's thesis for master's degree. Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

Žižek, S. (2009). *First as tragedy, then as farce*. London, ENG: Verso.

Copyright Acknowledgements

Avalon Travel (2007) “Map of Hay River”. On behalf of Andrew Hempstead, from *Moon Western Canada*, 3rd Edition. All copyrights retained by the original author.