Irony, Métis Style: Reading the Poetry of Marilyn Dumont and Gregory Scofield

by Jennifer Andrews

> I'm not soley a First Nations act
> Or Canadian act
> But a mixed breed act
> Acting out for equality
> (Gregory Scofield, *Native Canadiana* 57)

> In her preface to *Writing the Circle*, Emma LaRocque asks "These are our voices—who will hear?" Perhaps the time has come when non-Natives will stop negating our identities and silencing our voices. Perhaps with the border crossings of mixed-bloods they will finally hear us.
> Kateri Damm, "Says Who" 24

In "Says Who: Colonialism, Identity and Defining Indigenous Literature," Kateri Damm claims that mixed-blood writers are adept at exploring and bridging the gap between Indigenous and white societies, because they can "see and speak [about] the strengths and weakness[es] of both" (19). It is this cross border perceptiveness that makes the works of these authors an especially rich area of study. Some scholarly attention has been given to mixed-blood writers who straddle multiple racial and ethnic categories, focusing on either ethnic minority immigrants to Canada or on mixed-blood Aboriginal authors who are relegated to the larger category of First Nations writing.[1] However, the discursive strategies used by Métis authors to create and sustain positions of "in-between-ness" remain under-theorized. Published in 1996, Marilyn Dumont's *A Really Good Brown Girl* and Gregory Scofield's *Native Canadiana: Songs from the Urban Rez* show how two mixed-blood poets articulate their complex subject positions. Both texts examine questions of history, memory, and identity from a distinctly Métis perspective. In particular, these poets use irony to

explore what it means to be Métis, an especially challenging question because the Métis are neither white nor Native. Negotiating this position of doubled exclusion is a critical aspect of Métis writing. Irony plays an important but often unexamined role in the works of these poets by overturning stereotypical assumptions about the historical legacy of the Métis and the current lives of those who consider themselves to be "halfbreeds."

Defining the term Métis is extremely difficult, precisely because it refers to both a racial and ethnic group, and to insist upon the singularity of one or the other would be to ignore the complex history of the population's creation and development over several hundred years. The Métis were originally identified according to their racial heritage (as the mixed-blood descendents of Native women and Euroamerican men). But by the 1940s, academics like Marcel Giraud had altered the term,[2]

and were using it to refer to a distinctive ethnic group that first emerged in the 1860s consisting of the "French- and Cree-speaking descendents of the Red River métis" in Western Canada (Peterson and Brown 5). Membership was based on the "recognition of a common ancestry, a common set of cultural values and structured norms for intra- and inter-group interaction" (Burley, Horsfall and Brandon 6). Since the 1970s, the term has been used to encompass a much broader segment of the population, referring to "any person of mixed Indian-white ancestry who identified him- or herself and was identified by others as neither Indian nor white, even though he or she might have no provable link to the historic Red River métis" (Peterson and Brown 5).

Moreover, the capitalization of the word Métis has sparked its own set of critical debates. As Peterson and Brown explain, Métis follows the "English-language usage for national identities," whereas the "lower-case usage" reflects the "original French term" (6). The Métis National Council makes a similar distinction when pointing out the semantic differences between terms in their opening statement from *The Metis Nation* to the United Nations Working Group in Indigenous Populations: "Written with a small 'm,' metis is a racial term for anyone of mixed Indian and European ancestry. Written with a capital 'M,' Metis is a socio-cultural or political term for those originally of mixed ancestry who evolved into a distinct indigenous people during a certain historical period in a certain region of Canada" (qtd. in Peterson and Brown 6). Both Marilyn Dumont, a descendent of Gabriel Dumont, and Gregory Scofield, who traces his family roots back to the Canadian Plains, see themselves as part of this latter group. They employ the term Métis in a strategic fashion, as a hybrid racial and ethnic identity that involves a complex set of identifications, while making room for new kinds of self-articulation. Not surprisingly, their poetry negotiates

between specific historical, cultural, and geographical references to the Red River métis and their descendents, and a broader understanding of the term Métis as a unifying political tool in order to explore their individual identities.

In their collections, Dumont and Scofield each develop a distinctive poetic voice that reflects the poets' self-conscious awareness of being raised outside of a traditional community. Both were born in urban settings and had little contact with a Métis population while growing up;[3] as adults, both have chosen to identify themselves as Métis. These writers go a step further, employing this already marginalized urban stance to explore specific issues of gender and sexual difference; Dumont examines her position as a dark-skinned Métis woman, and Scofield incorporates his experiences as a homosexual. After briefly outlining how irony has been theorized in a Native North American context, this paper argues that both authors use a form of strategic essentialism to assert the official ethnic/racial category of Métis[4] but paradoxically couple this assertion with irony. Strategic essentialism, or "the risk of essence" as Stephen Heath puts it, allows Dumont and Scofield to "align themselves with the very subjects who have been written out of conventional historiography," the Métis whose presence has been depicted negatively or ignored altogether within traditional narratives of Canadian history (99; Fuss 31). At the same time, both poets are aware of the limits of essentialism, and the danger of making what is a useful "interventionary strategy" permanent by retrenching the very values that they are trying to challenge (Fuss 32).[5] Moreover, because definitions of Métis identity are still shifting, claims to essence are inherently provisional, and subject to renegotiation.[6] But rather than seeing this as an impediment, Dumont and Scofield recognize its "interventionary value," and have coupled strategic essentialism with a healthy dose of irony to ensure that the individuality of their speakers is acknowledged in all of its complexities (Fuss xii). Such an approach complicates current work on Native poetry, in which the distinctiveness of Métis culture and Métis writers' use of irony is rarely considered.

Many scholars and writers in the field of Native studies—from Vine Deloria Jr. to Gerald Vizenor and Allan Ryan[7]—see irony as an extremely effective tool for Aboriginals. As Paul Chant Smith, a Comanche writer, curator, and critic claims in his playful essay, "A Place Called Irony," it is a crucial means of survival for Aboriginal peoples:

> Dead? I don't think so. Wherever Germans build teepees, government officials announce BIA reorganizations, Indians

> star in Westerns and tribal chairman argue that high stakes casinos are a traditional affirmation of sovereignty, Irony lives. After all, it's his [Irony's] world. We just live in it. (17)

Smith's argument enacts the very technique that he describes by using irony, which he personifies and celebrates, to mock those who continue to ignore Irony (with a capital "I") as an integral part of Native cultures. Yet he also cleverly refuses to take full responsibility for irony's survival by insisting that he is merely a pawn in what is a much larger game—this self-deprecation and passivity disguise his ingenuity and creates a protective frame for otherwise biting critical commentaries. What Smith suggests, through his strategic personification of Irony, is that the historical stereotype of the "stoic Indian" is only one vision of Aboriginal peoples, and limited at that. Moreover, by invoking examples of irony from a Native perspective, Smith highlights the ways in which Aboriginals live through irony, reading and interpreting symbols that would otherwise relegate them to the status of a dying breed by exposing the ludicrousness of such thinking.

Certainly, to define irony—even generally—is difficult. It has a lengthy history, dating back to Quintilian who claimed that irony is "something which is the opposite of what is actually said" (qtd. in Cole 295). Recent work on irony, however, emphasizes the difficulty of reducing this discursive strategy to a simple exchange of one meaning for another, because of the "dynamic and plural relations among the text or utterance (and its context), the so-called ironist, the interpreter, and the circumstances surrounding the discursive situation" (Hutcheon 11). There is no guarantee that an audience will receive and understand the irony as it was intended. Hence, irony can be more accurately understood as the layering of different perspectives that create multiple voices or visions. Allan Rodway's photographic analogy is helpful in this respect: "irony is not a matter of seeing a 'true' meaning beneath a 'false,' but of seeing a double exposure . . . on one plate" (113). His description foregrounds the interactive and pluralistic dimensions of irony; it may draw attention to the distance between two viewpoints but it can also be used to express differences within a single utterance. The process of interpretation is a critical part of irony, and one that is obviously shaped by the audience's perspective. My readings of how irony operates in selected poems by Marilyn Dumont and Gregory Scofield, for example, are influenced by my position—as a white female Canadian academic—and thus offered here as one interpretation of their works, intended to open up discussion and encourage dialogue among many different readers.

For Aboriginal peoples, the ironic slippage between stated and unstated meanings is useful because irony "is a self-conscious mode of

understanding and writing, which reflects and models the recognition that all conceptualizations are limited, [and] that what is socially maintained as truth is often politically motivated" (Fischer 224). Irony offers a powerful tool for critiquing dominant discourses by exposing the discontinuity between an author's stated intentions and the manner in which the spoken and written word may be interpreted and reconfigured, depending upon the discursive community in which it circulates. It enables Native North Americans to register their frustrations, assert their survival, expose "oppressive hegemonic ideologies," and affirm life in the face of objective troubles (224). Irony also, as Anishinaabe writer and critic Gerald Vizenor points out, becomes a means of contradicting the singularity and isolation of "the *hypotragedies* [that non-Native readers traditionally have] imposed on tribal narratives" ("Introduction" 11).

Writers and scholars in the field of Native North American literature have repeatedly emphasized that most contemporary Aboriginal writing has a distinctively ironic "bite" (Lincoln 26). This quality is not surprisingly, given that irony is "a 'weighted' mode of discourse in the sense that it is asymmetrical, unbalanced in favor of the silent and the unsaid" which "involves the attribution of an evaluative, even judgmental attitude" (Hutcheon 37). Irony may be a means of playful teasing within most Aboriginal cultures, but it is also a powerful tool for examining a legacy of destruction and poverty that cannot be ignored. Paula Gunn Allen outlines the significance of this ironic bite when she talks about the "transformational" nature of much Native American writing: "It creates a metamorphosis in the reader, if the reader can understand what's being said and what's not being said" (Coltelli 22). Gunn Allen suggests that such a metamorphosis or change in perspective can have a fundamental effect particularly on non-Native readers who are often unfamiliar with Aboriginal viewpoints.

Allan's observations are complicated by a strategy that many Aboriginal authors use in their texts called code-switching. It is itself ironically-charged. Code-switching is the movement between two or more languages by individuals who are proficient in both. This "indirect form of social commentary" usually involves the juxtaposition of an Aboriginal tribal language with English, the dominant tongue for white Western publishers and much of the reading public (Basso 8). Such "language alternations" become a means of communicating "the aims and sentiments of the persons who perform them" and signal the need for a certain kind of implicit response or interaction (8). In the case of Dumont and Scofield, as we shall see shortly, code-switching between Cree, which itself varies from region to region,[8] and English allows these poets to mock presumptions of dominance by a variety of

populations (Anglophone, Francophone, and other Native language groups) and to articulate a distinct sense of their identities in linguistic terms. Membership depends on the ability to move between a specific dialect and an institutionalized language; knowing aspects of a Cree dialect *and* English, rather than just English, offers a way to gain access to the Métis community.[9]

The work that has been done in recent years on Aboriginal uses of irony provides a context for exploring how this discursive strategy functions in the poetry of Dumont and Scofield. However, the changing status and lengthy history of the Métis in Canada complicate this analysis. In particular, as suggested above, the terminology used to describe this racial/ethnic group reflects a fundamental uncertainty over how to categorize and name the population. As Howard Adams explains, being Métis historically meant being classified by whites in Canada as a "light-coloured Indian" and thus being relegated to Native status without any differentiation (ix). But until recently, it has also signified the denial of rights given to status Aboriginals.[10] Adams notes that the shift from "halfbreed" to "métis," the French expression for a mixed blood person, was an attempt to replace a vulgar term with a more neutral one (ix). Presumably by renaming this racial/ethnic group, what was undesirable and overtly critical about the label "halfbreed" would be concealed in another language, though paradoxically both terms continue to be used to this day.

Both Marilyn Dumont and Gregory Scofield employ "halfbreed" in their texts in an ironic fashion to reclaim the word for themselves (in much the same manner that words like "black" and "queer" have been refashioned by other marginalized groups). They performatively reverse the negative stereotypes associated with it by including "halfbreed" in poems that stress their survival as a strong and distinctive population. Dumont's "Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald," for example, begins and ends with the assertion of the speaker's Métis identity: "Dear John: I'm still here and halfbreed, /. . . . we're still here and callin ourselves halfbreed" (52). The poetic "I" pointedly notes that Macdonald is dead and no longer able to dictate the terms of Métis dispossession; it is now up to the poet to depict him in whatever way she chooses. The individuality suggested by the opening line of the poem, "I'm still here and halfbreed," is countered by the conclusion, in which the speaker forcefully asserts her right and desire to use the term "halfbreed" (52). Dumont appropriates the derogatory name given to the Métis, giving an ironic twist to the connotations of "halfbreed" by claiming it as her own.

This coupling of strategic essentialism with irony is also integral to Scofield's collection. In "Mixed Breed Act," his speaker claims that

responding to the exclusion of the Métis from the *Indian Act* requires much more than writing a "rebel halfbreed act" (57). As with Dumont, Scofield contrasts the pre-Confederation existence of the Métis with the post-Confederation legalities of being neither white nor Indian: "So we end up scrunched in between / Suffocating ourselves to act accordingly / However we're told to act / But according to their act" (57). The tone of the poem and its inside jokes become forceful illustrations of how bureaucratic terminology has been used to keep the Métis silent.

In particular, Scofield incorporates multiple puns—in which "one signifier distinctly . . . [produces] two signifieds"—to reconfigure Riel's execution in a subversively playful manner (Purdie 40). As Susan Purdie explains in *Comedy: The Mastery of Discourse*, punning is a complex operation or utterance that requires the negotiation of several "contradictory significations . . . [which] are evoked, [and] . . . are all in some way valid, but cannot all be 'properly' fitted at the same time to the signifying event" (40). Puns thus can be seen as mirroring irony's structure and bite. In the case of "Mixed Breed Act," such ironic punning is especially overt. By asserting "Besides / I don't need to be hung," the narrator conveys his anger at Riel's hanging and celebrates his own manliness (57), turning a ghoulish image into a sexual statement that opens up alternative forms of self-articulation. Only by embracing "in-between-ness," Scofield suggests, can his speaker take control of how Métis identity is represented. Like Dumont, Scofield reverses the negative connotations of "halfbreed," but goes a step further by using irony to create a third space in which the Métis can speak for themselves, without being relegated to categories of either Native or non-Native.

It is not surprising that Dumont and Scofield use irony to ensure that their people are not forgotten. But what does this approach add to the study of Aboriginal literatures generally? The concept of hybridity,[11]

though vexed, offers a important framework for understanding Métis identity and subjectivity, especially given the history of the term, which has been used to describe biological and botanical instances of mixed parenting. The mid- to late-nineteenth-century *OED* definition of hybrid accurately describes the biological status of the Métis population: "of human parents of different races, half-breed" (Young 6). Recently, Julia Emberley has argued that "[t]he construction of Métis subjectivity as internally 'hybridized' destabilizes the law of representation in which hegemonic inscriptions of subjectivity are unified around a white centering of the subject" (63).

But the concept of cultural hybridity is typically associated with post-colonialism and the situation of colonized populations who, having encounter "two conflicting systems of belief" (that of the colonizer and

the colonized), form "a new entity" (Gandhi 130). Several Native writers (most prominently Thomas King) have insisted that post-colonialism is not a accurate term to describe the current status of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, precisely because it imposes Eurocentric values and concerns on these populations rather than reading them from an Indigenous perspective.[12] The history of the Métis does not neatly fit neat binary post-colonial models, in which a group is dominated and then resists that oppression. Until 1982 the Métis were not recognized as an Aboriginal people of Canada, and today, much of the population remains under the jurisdiction of provincial and federal governments.[13] Yet to dismiss the usefulness of post-colonial theory for Aboriginal texts altogether seems counterproductive given that much of the current work in the field has moved beyond "[b]inary couplets like core / periphery, Self / Other, First World / Third World, North / South," to acknowledge the individual situations of various populations, including the Métis (Jacobs 13).[14] Thus, I wish to take a cue from Kateri Damm who argues that Aboriginal peoples generally are in a process of decolonization, with mixed-bloods (particularly Métis writers) playing a central role:

> Mixed-bloods see with two sets of eyes, hear with two sets of ears and those who write find the ability to assimilate and process all of this into a kind of tertium liquid: a blending or 'mingling' that cannot be completely ignored or discounted by either side. (19)

As a white Canadian female academic, I have to be cautious that when using the notion of hybridity, I am not attempting to "speak for" Dumont and Scofield (Donovan 8). Hybridity is used here to understand and theorize the various positions that Métis writers can and do take up in their work because of their "in-between" status.

Not surprisingly, most studies of Métis discourse focus on its double-voiced nature. As A.J. Jannetta comments in an article on Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*, "The Métis as a hybrid race . . . seem to represent the deconstruction of dichotomies of self-Other and either-or" (66). Rather than merely responding to white stereotypes, Jannetta argues that Campbell anticipates and incorporates these perspectives into her work and then employs "inversion, imitation, and mimicry" to resist and reformulate such reductive formulations (69). A similar strategy of deconstructing binaries allows Dumont and Scofield—each in his or her own way—to take control of the tools used to cultivate and sustain racism, in a manner that is disarming and critical. Here, Robert Young's reading of Bakhtin's concept of language as ironically double-voiced

provides a way to theorize how and why these two poets use irony in their texts. If hybridity is a way of describing the fundamentally divided condition of language, then it is not surprising that for Bakhtin "hybridization" is "the ability of one voice to ironize and unmask the other within the same utterance" (Young 20). Hybridity is designed to expose the limits of authoritarian discourses and establish a political setting in which differences can flourish. Homi Bhabha points out that Bakhtin's understanding of discursive hybridity creates "a space of enunciation where the negotiation of discursive doubleness" does not result in dualities or binary oppositions but rather engenders new forms of cultural authority ("Culture's" 34). Likewise, irony's layering of perspectives or creation of a third image through the juxtaposition of two discreet images or ideas ensures that hybrid identities can be expressed on their own terms.

Through hybridity—as represented by their use of irony—Dumont and Scofield cultivate "'in-between' spaces [that] provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood . . . [and] initiate new signs of identity" (Bhabha, *Location* 1). Because these subjects are formed "in-between," they exceed the sum of their different parts. Nor can they be pinned to a single location; in fact, these writers, by opening up spaces of "in-between-ness," articulate and legitimize a variety of positions and allegiances. Through irony, the two poets enact the concept of locatedness as process rather than product, and emphasize both the individual and communal dimensions of these endeavours. In doing so, they respond to whites and other Aboriginal groups who may have dismissed the legitimacy of the Métis because of their mixed heritage.[15]

Central to both poets is the impact of urban life on their sense of identity. Scofield's collection, *Native Canadiana*, subtitled "Songs from the Urban Rez" expresses the poet's ambivalent relationship to the city, a place that gives him anonymity but also isolates him from his roots. Likewise, Dumont's collection, called *A Really Good Brown Girl*, emphasizes the poet's ongoing struggle to find a place for herself within a predominantly white urban society by adapting the vocabulary, behaviour, and attitudes of those around her. By being as she ironically calls it, a "really good" girl, Dumont is able to "survive in two worlds and in a white classroom" from childhood through to adulthood (15).

In a poem called "It Crosses My Mind," Dumont's speaker argues that the existing categories of identification do not adequately convey the complexities of being an urban Métis woman:

> It crosses my mind to wonder where we fit in this 'vertical mosaic,' / this colour colony; the urban pariah, the displaced and surrendered / to apartment blocks, shopping malls,

superstores and giant screens, / are we distinct 'survivors of white noise,' or merely hostages / in the enemy camp. . . . (59)

The speaker's frustration with the feelings of isolation that are created by urban structures become increasingly acute for Dumont's "I," who is repeatedly asked when she applies for jobs if she is a Canadian citizen. This kind of self-identification presents a special set of problems for the Métis speaker, who notes that "there are no lines for the stories between *yes* and *no*" (59). To avoid being named into being by the matrix of nationalism, Dumont's "I" concludes that she needs to act on her own behalf, "stop naming herself and crossing her own mind" (59). Here, Dumont ironically invokes—and subverts—the language of childhood rhymes ("Finders keepers / losers weepers") that has been used to ensure that the Métis remain "*losers weepers*" and resists the demand to categorize herself in such simplistic and reductive terms (59).

Scofield makes a similar point in a poem entitled "Between Sides," first published in 1993, which is reprinted as the epigraph to his recently released autobiography, called *Thunder Through My Veins: Memories of a Métis Childhood*. The latter half of the poem specifically addresses the speaker's struggle to negotiate a coherent identity in a white-dominated world:

White people have their own ideas
How a real Indian should look
In the city or on the screen

I've already worked past that   came back to the circle   my way is not the Indian way or the white way

I move in-between
Careful not to shame either side.
(*Gathering* 81)

Even when Scofield's speaker finds a place of "in-between-ness," he worries about being penalized precisely because he does not fit already established categories. Scofield takes a more overtly ironic approach to questions of identity in "Mixed Breed Act" (from *Native Canadiana*), which begins by punning on the word "act," deliberately blurring the verb with the noun: "How do I act   I act without an Indian act / Fact is I'm so exact about the facts / I act up when I get told I don't count / Because my act's not written" (56). As an openly gay writer, Scofield is also invoking the AIDS activist strategy of "acting up," a phrase used to refer to resistance and protest activities undertaken on

behalf of AIDS sufferers and their families over the past twenty years. Much like an actor without a script, Scofield's speaker mocks the fact that he is stuck in a space where he lacks instructions on how to act precisely because there is no *Act* that directly addresses the Métis—nor adequate government policies to address the AIDS crisis. He outlines a history of shifting identities that took the speaker's people from being "good enough / To be aboriginal even original Canadians" to being "scrunched in between" the "First Nations act" and the "Canadian act" (57). The speaker's "mixed mouth blabbing" becomes a site of confrontation and a demand for change by calling on those who have written these acts to take action and correct a legacy of concealing the "[d]irty goings-on in our country" (58).

Close readings of several other poems by Dumont and Scofield illustrate in detail how these each poets employ irony to assert the existence of the Métis population and to counter derisive stereotypes and dominant versions of history. For example, both include poems that critique Sir John A. Macdonald's policy of Métis dispossession and his determination to build railroad across the lands he had taken away. Scofield's poem is aptly titled "Policy of the Dispossessed," and Dumont's poem is the aforementioned "Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald." In these works, Dumont and Scofield talk back to official (i.e. white) versions of history through self-deprecating poetic voices and offer an ironically charged vision of the past. By countering written accounts of history that treat the construction of the railroad as a heroic feat and ignore or dismiss the Métis presence, these poets invert conventional treatments of their people and what they perceive as a unfair situation. They also cultivate an edginess that expresses their ability to see beyond the singularity of these recorded versions of the past and asserts the legitimacy of their individual Métis identities.

Dumont uses the form of the generic advice letter to openly mock Macdonald's own self-righteous stance, as someone who felt no hesitation in giving advice about the fate of a group of people whom he obviously did not understand. Further ironies emerge through the speaker's commentary on the fate of the Canadian railroad, a project sponsored by Macdonald that was used to justify the displacement of the Métis:

> that railway you wanted so badly,
> there was talk a year ago
> of shutting it down
> and part of it was shut down
> the dayliner at least,
> 'from sea to shining sea,'
> after all that shuffling around to suit the

settlers,
we’re still here and Métis.

(52)

By rhyming the words "sea" and "Métis," Dumont undercuts the rhetoric of Canadian intervention and reminds readers that the desire to join both coasts of the country came at a heavy price. The Métis were removed from their land in order to create a new nation that was not of their own making. In the poem, Dumont’s speaker includes one of Prime Minister’s clichéd phrases, designed to sell the westward expansion of the railway ("‘from sea to shining sea’"), places it in quotations, and dismantles its persuasiveness. She places Macdonald’s late nineteenth-century rhetoric beside her description of the contemporary situation: the closure of the railway and the continued existence of the Métis. The speaker’s voice unmasks Macdonald’s position, exposing the absurdity—in hindsight—of the Prime Minister’s assumption that the Métis would disappear. This poem is part of a section called "White Noise," which frames Dumont’s sustained critique of the discourse used to sell the railway construction. The section title signals the structural ironies created by juxtaposing various poems. Through the concept of white noise, the poet exposes the emptiness—and conversely the implicit power—of the government’s language, which is designed to mute other sounds, including the voice of this Métis speaker.

In the second stanza of "Letter," the poetic "I" brings together the said and the unsaid (which is now being spoken), creating an overtly incongruous relationship between official accounts of Canadian history and counter-narratives. In particular, Dumont’s speaker quotes several lines from F.R. Scott’s "Laurentian Shield" (1954), a well-known poem that contemplates the impact of human beings on the Canadian landscape. Scott, a second-generation Canadian poet, was known for his socialist politics, work on constitutional law, and commitment to civil liberties.[16] In "Laurentian Shield," Scott explores the parallels between the development of language and the settlement of the land through abstract and dense phrases. The relationship between the land and those who visit or live on it, as his speaker notes, is shaped by "exploitation" as people come to hunt, search for gold, create towns and cities, and eventually abandon the area (58). The poetic "I" of Scott’s text also acknowledges the existence of ethnic and racial minority populations who are part of this scene, living in "the mines, / The scattered camps and the mills, a language of life" (58). But the day-to-day situation of these individuals remains unexamined within the poem. In her text, Dumont rewrites Scott’s white-authored version of the Canadian landscape, including the untold stories of the relocated Métis. The poet’s blunt language powerfully juxtaposes the rhetoric of railway expansion,

Scott's eloquent depiction of the land that longs to speak, and the brash reality of Métis survival:

> stalling the 'Cabin syllables / Nouns of settlement,
> / . . . steel syntax [and] / The long sentence of its exploitation'
> and John, that goddamned railway never made this a great nation,
> cause the railway shut down
> and this country is still quarreling over unity . . .
>
> (52)

In this case, Dumont invokes the legacy of Macdonald and Scott, whose language either buries or aestheticizes the existence of the Métis. By placing these three voices beside each other, Dumont can critique the two narratives of nation building and insert her own vision of the railway's impact on the Métis people.

Dumont also deliberately locates her work within a series of Canadian poetic depictions of the building of the railway. Notably, another Scott poem, "All Spikes But the Last," was written in response to E.J. Pratt's famous epic poem, "Towards The Last Spike" (written in 1952),[17] about the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway.[18] In "All Spikes," Scott's narrator highlights the absence of Chinese immigrant workers in Pratt's text, many of whom died during construction, but remain unacknowledged in "The Last Spike." Scott begins "All Spikes" with the question, "Where are the coolies in your poem, Ned?" and concludes it with a reference to the "Chinese Immigration Act," federal legislation passed in 1885 to restrict Chinese access to Canada (194). Like Dumont, Scott pointedly critiques Pratt's representation of the railway, adding a further ironic twist to "Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald." With Dumont's poem, the dislocation of the Métis becomes yet another piece of the Canadian railway's less than auspicious history; she squarely places herself in a dialogue with these canonical poems to ensure that her Métis voice will be heard.

In the concluding lines of "Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald," Dumont's speaker provides a pun-filled reading of the railroad and its legacy: "we were railroaded / by some steel tracks that didn't last / and some settlers who wouldn't settle" (52). The doubled meanings of "railroad/ed" and "settle/settlers," when paired with the image of steel tracks that have failed to stand the test of time, deflate the glory of Macdonald's nation-building. Such verbal play also reflects the need to end a long legacy of linguistic double-talk that has been used to silence

the Métis. Instead, Dumont employs her own discursive strategies to ensure that the irony of the Métis population's survival *is* communicated.

Like Dumont, Scofield combines a harshly ironic vision of white dominance in Canada with his own re-reading of some of the key words used to support the process of dispossession in his poem, "Policy of the Dispossessed." Scofield's narrator describes his family's land loss, the process of learning English, and the struggle to live on low wages. The poem's speaker evokes the raw pain of those memories in order to show the emptiness of terms like "*our homeland*," "*our motherland*," and "*our nation*" for his Métis ancestors, who were refused recognition as legitimate members of the newly-formed country of Canada (53-55). Scofield's text becomes a rewriting of governmental policy, authored by those people who have been dispossessed literally and disarmed linguistically. As with the title of his collection, *Native Canadiana*—which puns on the meaning of the word "native" by suggesting that the Métis have the same rights to the land as other Aboriginal tribes—Scofield takes aim at the rhetoric used to undermine Métis attempts to claim land and equal status under the law. But rather than dismissing the government's self-serving use of the English language, the poet includes several Cree terms that reassert a strong connection to his Métis heritage and invite readers to participate in the process of "code-switching." Although Scofield includes translations of Cree words to ease the transition, he does foreground the need to move between linguistic contexts and make sense of a poem in which "in-between-ness" is constantly being enacted. Scofield unmasks the power and dominance associated with English and ironically exposes its inability to represent his community's beliefs and desires.

In the last stanza of the poem, the speaker makes a trip back to the lost land. He quenches his thirst by invoking the Cree name for the Métis, a gesture that, coupled with his re-reading of the railway, counters the authority of those who presume to know the whole history of Canada:

> In that part of the country
> *our homeland*
> I went back and dug in the prairie soil.
> There among the buffalo bones and memories
> an ancient language sprang from the earth
> and wet my parched tongue.
> In that part of the country
> we were always *katipâmsôchik*—
> and our displaced history
> is as solid as every railroad tie

pounded into place, linking
each stolen province.

(55)

As with Dumont, the steel railroad tracks may be a visible symbol of the government's efforts to separate the Métis from their land. But language and the retelling of history are powerful tools, especially when a halfbreed poet reasserts the validity of his Métis mixed heritage by employing the term "*katipâmsôchik*," which he translates below the text of the poem as "The People Who Own Themselves" (55). The reclamation of this Cree name asserts Métis individuality and gives insider status to those who understand both Cree and English. Scofield displaces the primacy of English and the words of Sir John A. Macdonald (quoted at the beginning of the poem) with his own policy document, a halfbreed account of the past and present that rejects institutionalized versions of history and memory.

The presumed dominance of English (as the language of government as well as mainstream publishers) and these poets' desire to include a counter-discourse in Cree, as seen in "Policy of the Dispossessed," becomes an integral part of the two collections. Such code-switching is useful for Dumont and Scofield particularly when examining the complex links between sexual and racial identities. Dumont explores the destructive aspects of sexualized racism in "Squaw Poems." Her speaker invokes Cree words and considers how the term "squaw" has become a haunting and oppressive image of impropriety. Scofield takes a more overtly playful approach in works like "Snake-dog" and "Buck and Run," two poems that explore the intersections of a vernacular or dialect language and sexuality, focusing specifically on the speaker's homosexuality and Métis identity. In both cases, irony is important because it establishes a middle ground between the Cree and English languages and creates a space to accommodate and express the concerns of these Métis writers and their narrators, while deconstructing the categorical nature of racial identity. Here, strategic essentialism is turned inside out, as the speakers of these poems work toward more nuanced visions of themselves.

Dumont's "Squaw Poems" explores the relationship between history, memory, language, sexuality, and racial identity by considering the negative impact of Anglicized Cree terms on one Métis woman. As the speaker suggests in a subsequent poem, "The Devil's Language," for many Métis, Cree provides unique access to "your mother's sound, your mother's tongue, your mother's language," a capacity that English lacks (55). Yet, the poetic "I" has been forced to use English—"the Great White way"— all of her life (55). In "Squaw Poems," Dumont examines how the stereotype of the "squaw," an English version of the Cree term

for "girl" has become a tool of community manipulation. She uses the Cree words for the numbers one through six[19]—not translated anywhere in the text—to label the reactions of a Métis speaker to the various derogatory uses of this English slang. The numbers not only divide the poem into manageable sections but also mark the passage of time, as the speaker moves from childhood to adulthood. Dumont's "I" soon comes to recognize the power that this word has over her own sexual self-expressiveness and conduct in general.

The first time that the speaker hears the word "squaw" is when her mother uses it to describe another Aboriginal woman. The mother compounds the racism of the slur by calling the woman in question "[t]hat black squaw" (18), combining the negative significations of black skin with a familiar Eurocentric equation: "squaw is to whore / as / Indian maiden is to virgin" (19). The speaker learns that she must avoid becoming a "squaw" at all costs, even if it means suppressing her sexual identity:

> I would become the Indian princess, not the squaw dragging / her soul
> after laundry, meals, needy kids, and abusive husbands. / These were my
> choices. I could react naturally, spontaneously to / my puberty, my newly
> discovered sexuality or I could be mindful / of the squaw whose presence hounded my every choice. (19)

The speaker's mother perpetuates a matrix of classifications that leave the young woman vulnerable "to gross sexual, physical and / or verbal violence," which is justified by the stereotype of the "squaw" and its continued circulation (LaRocque 87). The poetic "I" recognizes the power of this Eurocentric conception of Aboriginal women and adapts the oppressive behavioral patterns she thinks she must in order to protect herself from such slurs and taunts. But she also critiques the Métis women, like her mother, who accept rather than scrutinizing the complex matrix of power relations that shape this stereotype, based on race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Dumont's poem demonstrates through irony that strategic essentialism, though productive when used to further the cause of marginalized populations, can become merely internalized racism, when an individual or community replicates the same patterns of oppression that have ensured its domination without self-awareness.[20]

In the sixth ("*nikotwasik*") and last poem, Dumont uncovers the gendered and racial connotations of the term "squaw" by suggesting that men can be "squaws" too. She implicitly reformulates the presumption

that Aboriginal women were responsible for seducing white men and hence creating the Métis population. The speaker introduces the word "squawman," providing what at first seems to be a standard dictionary meaning— "a man who is seen with lives with laughs with a squaw" (19)—but then develops a more pointedly ironic definition: "a man is a man is a whiteman until / he is a squaw he is a squaw he is a squawman" (19). Through a series of reversals, Dumont shows that men are part of this equation; they can also be coded "squaws" by virtue of their contact with Native women. Dumont's deliberate wordplay and her use of Cree numerals creates a collection of poems in which readers familiar with the Cree dialect who recognize both the sexism and racism of the term "squaw" can question those who might otherwise hold onto traditional definitions. At the same time, Dumont's text offers a broadly ironic commentary on the apparent stability of racial categories, which though seemingly intractable, are exposed as primarily social constructs aimed at separating populations and creating hierarchies that justify exploitation.

As part of this process, Dumont's "Leather and Naughahyde" describes a female Métis speaker's brief and painful encounter with a "treaty guy from up north" who obliquely inquires about her Aboriginal status over coffee (58). What begins as a friendly conversation between two people ends in animosity:

> I say I'm Métis / like it's an apology and he says, 'mmh,' like he forgives me, like / he's got a big heart and mine's pumping diluted blood and his voice / has sounded well-fed up to this point, but now it goes then like / he's across the room taking another look. . . . (58)

The speaker is made to feel inadequate because of her Métis identity, despite having been, only minutes earlier, part of a shared discursive community, laughing over behaviour of the "mooniyaw" or non-Native people[21] in the city where they both live (58). Dumont adds a twist to this poem through her choice of title, which though not initially clear, resonates with meanings when repeated in the last line of the text: "and when he returns he's / got 'this look,' that says he's leather and I'm naughahyde" (58). Dumont's juxtaposition of leather and naughahyde creates a bitterly ironic contrast between the former, an expensive material with a naturally rich colour and surface, and the latter, a cheap form of hide that is created when fabric is treated with rubber and various chemicals. The poetic "I"'s status is perceived as artificial, and unworthy of further attention, once her "true" identity is revealed. Having already included several poems that address the relationship of the Métis to white, Western culture, Dumont employs her own brand of

irony to explore the hybrid position of an urban Métis woman whose racial/ethnic self-identification is regarded as a liability, even by male treaty Aboriginals.

Scofield takes a somewhat different approach to issues of sex and race in his poems, offering more overtly playful and teasing commentaries through dialect poems such as "Snake-dog" and "Buck and Run," the later of which is a highly sexualized reading of the hunter/hunted relationship. Here, Scofield transports and reconfigures the traditional practices of the rural hunter in an urban setting through a combination of Cree and English. In "Buck and Run," the Métis hunter is a sexual predator who reverses the concept of white colonization by appropriating the traditional motifs of the stereotyped Native "other":

> Hey pretty buck,
> Wanna come to my tee-pee
> And lie on some soft fur?
> (you'd be surprised
> how many develop a fur allergy
> after it's over) . . .
>
> (78)

A colloquial rhetorical style and an overtly irreverent attitude toward the English language make the text both inviting and jarring. The speaker, like the poet, is an openly gay Métis man who has had both white and Native lovers, and explores racial conflicts through sexual practices: "You can't keep / A colonized buck down. / (though I've never had problems / keeping them up)" (78). As he explains at one point, "Conceited bucks are an entirely / Different breed altogether / Whenever I put / The Indigenous moves on them / I always keep to the lingo / They understand" (78). In Scofield's poem, those who feign sophistication—whether in bed or through language—are quickly exposed. For example, one lover, "[a] smooth bar buck talker" who engages in sex under the covers, except when drunk, soon becomes known as "a muskrat / In buck's clothing" because of his conservative tendencies (and white blood), and is abandoned (79).

For Scofield, this nexus of racial and sexual differences becomes a point of inspiration and is best addressed through ironic comments that draw attention to both the political ramifications of his speaker's actions and the immediate pragmatic concerns of being a gay Métis man with sexual desires. The concluding stanza of the poem addresses the contradictory nature of the speaker's hybrid position in a deliberately subversive manner: "When it comes to delicacies / I prefer / The real bannock & jam type. / Okay with me / If they leave a few crumbs, / I won't buck & run" (80). Scofield invokes the Métis delicacy of bannock

and jam and suggests that if he can find a buck of that ilk, then he himself won't have to disappear or pander to white *or* Native stereotypes of what constitutes a halfbreed.

"Snake-dog" follows "Buck and Run," creating a dialogue between works that extends the speaker's vernacular depiction of homosexual desire within a distinctly Métis framework. In "Snake-dog," the juxtaposition of Cree and English is even more overt, as the poem begins with a Cree "exclamation of disgust or disdain:" "*iyee*" (81). Here, a dialect version of English is paired with Cree slang-terms as the speaker pursues a male, whose sexual promiscuity is the focus of admiration and ridicule: "dat one I tinks / between looks big skônak / wants a whole friggin' army /jump into da sack, his hands / wants to rattle me aroun' / shakes me up a bit" (81). The speaker adapts a voice that invokes the oral roots of Aboriginal story-telling but also implicitly challenges those who presume that formal English is the only means of creating a rhetorically sophisticated text. By placing the poem after the pun-filled "Buck & Run," Scofield invites his readers to read between the lines and engage with what is said and unsaid about the speaker and his potential lover.

The poetic "I" in *Snake-Dog* mocks "dat one," whose sexual prowess has become larger than life, ironically deflating the English word "big" by juxtaposing it with the Cree term, "*skônak*," which can refer to both a "female dog" and "a sexually promiscuous individual" (81). Whatever power this potential lover may possess is inevitably undermined as the speaker asks jokingly, "whats he tinks / I'm s'posed da crawl over / says hey, / you got a great *kinêpik* smile / how 'bout slithering back / ta my pad" (81). Here, the Biblical snake is presented as a promiscuous male who, rather than tempting Eve, as is traditionally expected, tries to seduce Scofield's speaker. However, the poetic "I" resists the snake's charms, claiming "buts I'm no desperate dog / no siree," and then boldly lists off the necessary accoutrements for what he deems a successful seduction: "I wants flute music, horses / a darn good dose / of dat love medicine" (81).

Scofield employs his speaker's dialect voice to ironize and unmask two aspects of many Aboriginal cultures that have been heavily appropriated and commercialized as pan-Indian symbols: flutes and horses. Both frequently appear in Aboriginal mythology and are significant to various tribes' cultural and social practices. Flutes, for instance, are a central part of the Hopi flute ceremony, an elaborate sixteen-day process, designed to bring summer rains and encourage crop maturation. Yet flutes have become perhaps most frequently associated with the Southwestern-based pan-tribal figure of Kokopelli, a humpbacked flute playing figure who has been mass-marketed as a

children's toy, on t-shirts, and through various other tourist trade items which are easily produced and readily consumed. Similarly, the specificity of the horse's significance to individual tribes (including the Blackfoot and Lakota who have Horseback Dances to prepare for war and facilitate healing respectively) has been subsumed by a more general link to traditional images of Native North Americans on horseback, as reproduced and circulated through white photographs of Aboriginal cultures (such as those of Edward Curtis) and Hollywood Western movies.[22]

As part of this process of dismantling such broad Aboriginal stereotypes, Scofield uses code-switching to portray the contrasting images of the people who use each of the two languages employed in the text. This strategy is complicated by the fact that the poetic "I" not only speaks both English and Cree but locates himself in the spaces between the two languages. With "Snake-dog," Scofield's speaker self-consciously explores a white, Western, English-speaking person's clichéd perception of Native cultures, but also employs irony to encourage readers to move beyond an Aboriginal perspective that ignores the "in-between-ness" of Métis people and their distinctive identities. In particular, the poetic "I"'s refusal to be "desperate," to conform to the lover's desire that the speaker simply pander to his wishes by bring him back "ta my pad" takes on even more significance in this collection (81). Scofield's speaker in "Snake-dog," especially when read just after "Buck & Run," is not willing to submit to either white or Native lovers who presume to know who he is or what he wants, without comprehending *his* desires and demands. Rather, the poetic "I" takes this stereotype of acquiescence and subverts it by presenting his own set of conditions, a list of pan-Indian stereotypes that are themselves designed to be deconstructed and read ironically. Easy racial identification based on skin colour is undermined by the complexity of Scofield's commentary, which mocks those readers who assume that Aboriginal peoples are a homogenous entity.

Scofield provides an added complication by insisting that if the potential lover is going to make his move that he needs to provide a dose of old-fashioned seduction with his "love medicine" (81). This concluding line can be read as ironically invoking Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine*, a novel that traces the stories of two mixed-blood families who are struggling to negotiate their individual and collective identities in relation to the Catholic church, their Anishinaabe heritage, and the white Western world. In Erdrich's text, Lipsha Morrissey creates his own version of the traditional Chippewa love medicine to keep his grandparents together, and inadvertently kills his grandfather in the process. Lipsha feeds the couple frozen turkey hearts and his grandfather

chokes on the charmed food (250). In Scofield's poem, however, no one dies or even manages to have sex. His poem makes reference to and moves beyond Erdrich's text by presenting the perspective of a gay Métis man, adding another distinctive dimension to the portrayal of mixed-blood Aboriginals. In "Snake-dog," heterosexual paradigms are displaced by a potential homosexual encounter, in which the temptation of the "snake-dog" is juxtaposed with the speaker's own formulaic constructions of Native North American cultural life. Through the poetic "I," Scofield's speaker explores the ways in which non-Métis people reductively conceive of mixed-blood people as either Aboriginal, without their own unique culture, or ignore them altogether. The code-switching between Cree and English and the dialect that the poetic "I" uses to deliver the work offer a hybrid vision that opens up the space to contest and reconfigure the stereotypes that relegate Aboriginal people, and more specifically, gay Métis men to the margins of white, Western society.

Scofield also can be read as taking the concept of hybridity and ironizing the traditional links between hybridity and heterosexuality by introducing his own distinctly homosexual politics and desire for a Métis lover. Robert Young notes that historically the concept of hybridity was attached to heterosexuality: "same-sex sex . . . posed no threat because it produced no children; its advantage is that it remained silent, covert and unmarked" (25-6). Yet, over time, hybridity and homosexuality became identified with each other, "as . . . [similar] forms of degeneration" (26). Products of miscegenation were linked to deviant sexual behaviours, including homosexuality.[23] Thus, Scofield's poems may be seen as undermining those who would continue to believe such associations by mocking the poor performances of his white male lovers and unmasking the very categorical stereotypes of race and sexuality that have shaped conceptions of the Métis and gay men respectively.

With an ironic edge to their poetry, Scofield and Dumont each extend and rework Native North American traditions in their own ways to reflect on the specific issues faced by contemporary Métis writers living in Canada. Irony relies on the perception of incongruities and can demand that readers interact with and participate in the construction of new meanings. In the case of Dumont and Scofield, this ongoing negotiation of juxtapositions is a significant part of rediscovering what constitutes Métis identity, in all of its diverse forms. The use of irony enables these poets to reinforce and celebrate the existence of various communities and to forge new kinds of alliances between groups of otherwise divided individuals. It also challenges readers to reconfigure established stereotypes of the "halfbreed" and to rethink accepted

definitions of history.

By pairing strategic essentialism with irony, Dumont and Scofield are able to convey the hybridity of their individual and collective identities in a specific and extremely nuanced fashion. Rather than using irony to explore a doubled discourse in which the Métis are seen as part of the Aboriginal population, each collection cultivates its own space of "in-between-ness," acknowledges their distinctiveness particularly through the exploration of sex/gender roles, and the relationship between treaty Natives and halfbreeds, which vary for Dumont and Scofield. In that respect, the two writers call for a critical rethinking of how irony has been theorized in an Aboriginal context. By demanding an increased attentiveness to the particularity of tone and subject matter as well as the use of code-switching, their works, individually and collectively, offer new ways to talk about the links between hybridity and discourse.

Notes

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1. See, for example, Hoy, Hulan, Gingell, Padolsky, and Seiler, for a small sampling of the materials written about Aboriginal and ethnic minority writers living in Canada. [back]
2. See Sawchuk 31. [back]
3. See Scofield 36-47 for a description of how he first acquired knowledge of his Métis identity from a neighbour in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. Dumont's formative years were spent in urban centers, without a strong Métis community presence in her life. [back]
4. Winfried Siemerling's description of ethnicity as a "relational identification . . . whose emergence is marked . . . as different from previous, seemingly unmitigated cultural identity to which it refers—yet which it cannot but name, remember, and construct from its new perspective" (2) suggests why ethnicity is a critical part of discussions of Métis identity. See also Sawchuk, 8, 13, and Peters, Rosenburg, and Halseth, 5-10. [back]
5. See Fuss 24-37. [back]
6. See Fuss 18-21, 31-37, 97-112. [back]
7. See Deloria 146-47, Vizenor 11, and Ryan 8-10. [back]
8. See Gingell for a detailed discussion of Cree dialects, none of which is regarded as more "correct" than any other (448; 462). [back]

9. Several languages are, in fact, part of the Métis cultural heritage, including Cree, the language of many of the Native women who first bore children with the European fur traders, and Michif, a dialect of Cree that combines aspects of various other languages (including French). [back]
10. As Peterson and Brown explain, "Until the 1982 passage of Canada's Constitution Act, they [the Métis] lacked the potential benefits or even hope of legal recognition as a separate native people everywhere except in the province of Alberta. As late as 1980, one such group in Canada could refer to themselves, not without irony, as North America's 'non-people'" (4). [back]
11. See Burley, Horsfall, and Brandon for a discussion of the Métis as a "hybrid" culture (2). [back]
12. See King 11-12. [back]
13. Individual agreements over land claims and self-goverment have been reached with several Métis groups, most notably, with the Alberta Settlement Accords that allow the Métis in Alberta to operate their settlements under the guidance of a General Council, though much of the operating budget of these communities still comes from the provincial government. In addition, the Sahtu Dene and Métis in the Northwest Territories reached a land claim in 1994, and negotiations are ongoing with the South Slave Métis Tribal Council and the Labrador Métis Nation; all of these negotiations are being conducted with the Canadian federal government. [back]
14. See Ghandi 77-80, 122-140, 167-76, Moraru 171-85, and Jacobs 13-15. [back]
15. As Campbell explains in *Halfbreed*, "There was never much love lost between Indians and Halfbreeds. They were completely different from us" (26). Similarly, Julia Harrison points out that "[i]n many largely native communities, the current relationships between Indians and Métis vary from supportive and often affectionate to hostile and antagonistic" (14). There are also historical records of conflict between the Métis and the Sioux (Giraud 2:160-63). However, it is important to note that much of the division between Natives and Métis can be traced back to government intervention and the creation of acts such as the *Indian Act* that favoured some segments of the population over others. This historical trend has lead to animosity between select Native groups and the Métis community, due in part to fear that the assertion of Métis rights might threated the meager government support being given to Native communities. My thanks to Jo-Ann Thom for pointing out the origins of this tension between Natives and Métis, a conflict created to a large degree by the Canadian government rather than the communities themselves. [back]

16. As Brian Trehearne notes in his study of Canadian Modernist poetry, "The generally propounded image of the poetry of F.R. Scott is one of biting satire, wry social commentary, tough-minded metaphysical speculations upon the meaning and purpose of the human species, and accurate Canadian landscapes" (134). [back]
17. See Pratt 201-51. [back]
18. See Djwa 272-72 for a discussion of why Scott wrote "All Spikes But The Last." [back]
19. See the *Alberta Elders' Cree Dictionary*, Appendix C for a list of numbers in Cree. [back]
20. See Fuss 99. [back]
21. My thanks to John Nichols for his generosity in translating this Cree word, which refers to a "non-Indian, white person." [back]
22. See, for example, Gerald McMaster's "What Becomes a Legend Most?," a 1990 painting of a faceless Aboriginal on horseback, for another ironic representation of how horses have been reductively portrayed as a generic part of all Native cultures (Ryan 26-29). Similarly, the ironically named Clifford Sifton in Thomas King's 1993 *Green Grass, Running Water*, insists that the Blackfoot are no longer authentically Indian because they "drive cars" rather than riding horses (119). He uses this argument to justify the Canadian government's broken treaties with various Aboriginal tribes. [back]
23. See Young 186 for specific examples. [back]

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