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Race and Conflict in Garner's "One-Two-Three Little Indians" and Laurence's "The Loons"

TRACY WARE

ACCORDING TO TERRY GOLDIE, white representations of the indigenous peoples of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have more in common with each other than with their putative subjects: "Our image of the indigene has functioned then as a constant source for semiotic reproduction in which each textual image refers back to those offered before" (6). Hugh Garner's "One-Two-Three Little Indians" and Margaret Laurence's "The Loons" support this point. Both stories reflect their authors' concern for oppressed people, both allow a glimpse of Native resistance to white expectations, but both culminate in Native deaths that are depicted as inevitable. As J.J. Healy notes of Canadian literature in general, "there isn't much for an Indian who isn't dead and doesn't stand within the master narratives of the dominant group" (70). Perhaps because the death of the Native does fit the master narratives, both "One-Two-Three Little Indians" and "The Loons" have been frequently anthologized. More than most Canadian stories, they have achieved canonical status, and therefore the conflicts that they raise are of considerable importance. To what extent do they confirm a debased master narrative that regards Natives as victims of a triumphant white civilization? How do we reconcile the enduring sense of their aesthetic merit with a concern for their ideological implications? And how do we account for the resemblances between such different writers as Garner and Laurence?

I

As Paul Stuewe observes, "by the mid-1970s [Garner's] attempts to produce best-selling novels had led to his being dismissed as a serious writer by many readers and critics" (*Storms* xii). The modest change in Garner's

reputation since is reflected in George Woodcock's comment that "the best of [Garner's] stories... justly have their regular places in Canadian anthologies" (Introduction 9). No other Garner story is so often anthologized as "One-Two-Three Little Indians": by Garner's 1978 reckoning, it had "been published, broadcast, telecast and translated 40 times, which may well be a record for a Canadian short story" ("Determined" n. pag.). Although the story earned only \$171 in the two years following its original broadcast and publication in 1950, it "earned more than \$5,600 in fees of various kinds" from 1952 to 1979 (Stuewe, *Storms* 212-13). Such things mattered to Garner, who argued that "too much emphasis is placed on the division of fiction into 'literary' and 'commercial' types, as if they represent two different mediums" ("Preface" to *Yellow Sweater*, n. pag.). Yet Garner also recognized other values, as when he told his American literary agent that such stories as "One-Two-Three Little Indians" were "prestige pieces": "though they may not make me much money they may help to build me a reputation" (qtd. in Stuewe, *Storms* 103). Believing that a collection of short fiction should begin and end with "strong" stories (*One Damn Thing* 277), Garner placed "One-Two-Three Little Indians" at the end of both *The Yellow Sweater and Other Stories* (1952) and *Hugh Garner's Best Stories* (1963). However we assess it, this story has its place on the short list of Garner's best works and in the canon of Canadian short fiction.

Garner does not usually write about Indians, but he characteristically writes about the working class, and so Desmond Pacey introduces "One-Two-Three Little Indians" in these terms: "Mr. Garner's writings reflect his deep knowledge of and sympathy for those people who exist on the lower levels of the social structure" (260). Big Tom, the protagonist, is a victim of exploitation as well as racism: when he returned to "the woods after three years in the mines during the war," he had been damaged by the experience, "for the mining towns and the big money had done more than etch his lungs with silica: they had also brought him pain and distrust, and a wife who had learned to live in gaudy imitation of the boom-town life" (226). It is hard to say which is worse, the mines that afflict workers regardless of race or the tourism that forces Big Tom to play the role of "a real Indian with a feather'n everything" (229). If Garner's sympathies for his protagonist's race and class are already apparent, so are his attitudes towards gender. One of the problems in the story is that in the depiction of Big Tom's wife Garner lapses into what Janice Acoose calls the stereotype of the "easy squaw" (39). Big Tom's wife is consistently depicted as selfish: she is less worried about her child's health than about the silk

dress that she has been promised, and she is out drinking on the night of the baby's death. Since Garner does not associate Big Tom with alcohol, he is guilty of sexism more than racism.

At its most incisive, the story shows that racism stems from mundane ignorance, not from exceptional malevolence. So it is that one tourist "seemed surprised when she asked him what tribe he belonged to, and instead of answering in a monosyllable he said, 'I belong to the Algonquins, Ma'am'" (230). Garner reminds us of the gap between the character and the stereotype, but he knows that the oppressive power of stereotypical attitudes is not easily escaped. In this instance, Big Tom wears a head-band with a feather, since this dubious gesture towards tourist expectations meant "that he sold more baskets. . . . In the time he had been living along the highway he had learned to give them what they expected" (229-30). The American tourists who treat him like "an animal in a cage" (230) do not intend to do so, but they humiliate him nonetheless. When Big Tom expresses anxiety about his baby's illness, Mr. Staynor responds unthinkingly: "Don't worry, there's not much wrong with the papoose" (234). Garner is hardly anti-American, since Staynor is no different from Cooper, Big Tom's boss, who had earlier said this of the sick boy: "No need to worry, it's as healthy as a bear cub" (232). Both men are so interested in using Big Tom as a fishing guide that the child is irrelevant to them; their racism takes the form of assuming that a "papoose" could not be seriously ill. When Staynor finally notices the extent of the child's illness, he calls off the expedition and soothes the child while Big Tom rows to shore. Staynor's final gesture captures the inadvertent cruelty of tourist exploitation: "Mr. Staynor handed him the fee for a full afternoon's work. 'I'm sorry the youngster is sick, Tom,' he said. 'Don't play around. Get him up to the doctor in town right away. We'll try her again tomorrow afternoon'" (234). Staynor means well, but he does not realize that he is the only one who has been playing, and he does not offer to drive Big Tom to town.

The most powerful scene in the story occurs when Big Tom attempts to hitch a ride to town:

He noticed that the passengers in the few cars he met were pointing at him and laughing, and suddenly he realized that he was still wearing the feather in the band around his head. He reached up, pulled it off, and threw it in the ditch. (235)

His act would be a strong act of resistance, of what Emma LaRoque calls "defeathering the Indian," if he were not so fully disempowered. As it is,

he throws off the costume of the tourist Indian only to find that he is nowhere at all. Without a car and with his dying baby in his arms, Big Tom is unable to escape the society that regards him as ridiculous. As Leslie Monkman argues, the baby's death

simply confirms the story's insistence that their lives are subject to forces beyond their control. They have no more significance in the white world in which they must try to survive than do the Indians referred to in the children's rhyme from which the title is taken. (85)

"Insistence" is exactly the word: despite Garner's claim to be unconscious of any "symbolism or allegory" in his work (*One Damn Thing* 267), no careful reader could miss the symbolism that foreshadows the baby's death. From the moth "beating its futile wings against the glass of the window" (228) to the resemblances between a dying fish and "the baby lying on the seat in the blanket" (233), the rhetoric makes the ending inevitable.

How critical should we be of this story? Has Canadian literature not seen enough dying Indians? How much does the force of the story derive from dubious cultural attitudes that turn a brutal contingency, a child's fatal illness, into an inevitability? "One-Two-Three Little Indians" is important because it raises such difficult questions, which readers will answer in different ways. When they do, they might consider two things. First, as Monkman writes, "In the figure of a dying [Indian] child, Canadian poets, novelists, and dramatists have repeatedly found an image with the potential to shock the reader into awareness" (85) that racism has dire consequences. As Monkman also observes, one such reader is Robert Weaver, who compares "One-Two-Three Little Indians" to Alan Fry's "do-cumentary novel," *How a People Die*:

I doubt if Garner knows much of anything of a documentary nature about Indians and Alan Fry obviously knows a great deal. But Garner made that imaginative leap inside, and reached his characters where they in their turn could reach back to the reader of his story. (qtd. in Monkman 86)

Even those who suspect that such imaginative leaps are a form of appropriation might pause before attacking a story that stresses that white racism is one of the biggest problems that Natives face.

Second, Garner is not entirely fatalistic. Goldie maintains that "The death of the individual indigene is equivalent to the death of the race" (160), but I do not think that this is the case here. It is true that early in

the story Big Tom remembers “that once his people had been strong and brave, men with a nation of their own, encompassing a million miles of teeming forest, lake and tamarack swamp” (226), and that this passage tends to confuse “heritage and culture,” to use LaRoque’s phrase (11). That is, by identifying Big Tom’s culture with his ancestral past, Garner does not allow for the role of change. But the passage is so far from being crucial that Stuewe can call it “positively romantic in a way that detracts from an otherwise powerful tragedy” (“Garner” 110). Readers who associate the baby’s death with the death of the race are probably confused about the titular allusion. Garner alludes to the well-known North American song that was often used to teach children to count:

One little, two little, three little Indians,
 Four little, five little, six little Indians,
 Seven little, eight little, nine little Indians,
 Ten little Indian boys. And there were:
 Ten little, nine little, eight little Indians,
 Seven little, six little, five little Indians,
 Four little, three little, two little Indians,
 One little Indian boy. (qtd. in Ramsey 48)

His ironic point is that the song occludes the sad reality that his story examines. Readers sometimes mistake this allusion for a British rhyme about “Ten Little Niggers” that counts down the corpses to end with the chilling line, “and then there were none” (qtd. in Ramsey 48). G.C. Ramsey demonstrates that it is the British rhyme that Agatha Christie uses in her famous novel and play, *Ten Little Niggers* (1939). However, because that novel was retitled *Ten Little Indians* for American publication, readers sometimes confuse the North American song with the British rhyme (see Ramsey 46-49). My point is simply that Garner’s racial attitudes are more attractive than Christie’s, and that he is not writing about the death of a race in “One-Two-Three Little Indians.” In this respect at least, his story compares favourably with “The Loons.”

II

“The Loons” is one of the most frequently-anthologized stories of the most warmly-admired Canadian writer (Wainwright vii). Since its inclusion in *A Bird in the House* in 1970, the story has appeared in everything from anthologies of prairie writing (Angus, Mitchell) to *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* (Gilbert and Gubar).¹ Laurence’s own commentary

on the story suggests the reasons for its prominence. After describing the story's autobiographical origins, Laurence writes:

All these various things combined in my mind with a sense of outrage at the treatment of Indians and Métis people in this country throughout our history. History for me, as with social issues, is personalized — these events happen to real people; people with names, families and places of belonging. The loons seemed to symbolize in some way the despair, the uprootedness, the loss of the land that many Indians and Métis must feel. And so, by some mysterious process which I don't claim to understand, the story gradually grew in my mind until it found its own shape and form. ("On 'The Loons'" 805-06)

No one would underestimate the seriousness of Laurence's social concerns, but my argument is that the symbolism of the loons need not have been deliberately planned by Laurence precisely because it is based on widespread (and dubious) cultural attitudes.

The first problem raised by "The Loons" is related to the general issues discussed by Goldie: white authors reify the indigene, and "the reified indigene is seen to put us in contact with pure prehistoricity" (148). To find this idea in Laurence criticism, we have only to turn to Coral Ann Howells for the argument that Piquette Tonnerre, unlike Vanessa MacLeod, belongs to a "prehistoric world" (42). I am not interested in rebuking Howells or any other Laurence critic, since I believe that she merely reflects a confusion in the story and in Laurence herself. When Piquette's death is associated with the disappearance of the loons, which "seemed to symbolize in some way the despair, the uprootedness, the loss of the land that many Indians and Métis must feel" ("On 'The Loons'" 805-06), it hardly matters that her death, even more than the death of Big Tom's baby, is less the result of inevitability than brutal contingency. In this case, "The death of the individual indigene is equivalent to the death of the race" (Goldie 160) because the symbolism of the loons suggests that an earlier way of life has been fundamentally displaced.

Like the other stories in *A Bird in the House* and the collection as whole, "The Loons" is a story of Vanessa's development (see Kertzer 31-38). Extending an insight in Kent Thompson's 1970 review (232), Arnold E. Davidson comments that "The young Vanessa reacts passionately to her life's story; the somewhat older Vanessa re-examines sympathetically; the author, a mature Vanessa, writes analytically, with an objectivity impossible to the 'trapped' child" (100). In "The Loons," Vanessa's distance from her youthful excesses is the source of most of the irony. The eleven-year-

old Vanessa thinks that “the Tonnerre family, whom I had always heard called half-breeds, were actually Indians, or as near as made no difference. My acquaintance with Indians was not extensive” (112). She is inspired by the poetry of Pauline Johnson to regard Piquette as “in some way a daughter of the forest, a kind of junior prophetess of the wilds” (112). But when Vanessa describes how the construction of cottages endangers the loon, Piquette states: “You wouldn’t catch me walkin’ way down there jus’ for a bunch of squawkin’ birds” (115). For Vanessa, “It became increasingly obvious that, as an Indian, Piquette was a dead loss” (114). As W.H. New comments, that line becomes more severely ironic when Piquette literally becomes a “dead loss,” “but in terms that invert the stereotype and mordantly criticize the society that can only think in cliché” (199). The youthful Vanessa represents that society.

When the two girls meet at the Regal Café four years later, Vanessa is “astounded that anyone could have changed so much” (115): Piquette “teetered a little, but it was not due to her once-tubercular leg, for her limp was almost gone” (116). The unspoken implication here is confirmed by the earlier reference to Piquette as “animated now with a gaiety that was almost violent” (115-16), and the later reference to “her voice only slightly blurred” (116): although Piquette is only seventeen, she is already drinking heavily. Whenever I teach this story, I am always troubled by the need to make this point explicitly, and thus to sound more severe than the story. Laurence can leave it implicit because she appeals to a cultural code of Native and Métis alcoholism that is all too familiar. Vanessa understands that code now, and she also understands that except for a momentary glimpse into Piquette’s isolation, “I could not reach her now any more than I had then” (116-17). This bleak insight, which would have been beyond the younger Vanessa, is endorsed by Jon Kertzer: “No understanding is possible between the two girls, or even between the reader and a Metis girl who refuses to be cast in a familiar role” (66).

When Vanessa returns home from her first year of college, she learns that Piquette and her two children have died in a horrifying house fire.² Haunted by this report, Vanessa allows it a silence (see Kertzer 68) that indicates her knowledge of her own limitations: “There was a kind of silence around the image in my mind of the fire and the snow, and I wished I could put from my memory the look that I had seen once in Piquette’s eyes” (119). The story’s strongest social criticism follows, as Vanessa finds that “Diamond Lake had been re-named Lake Wapakata, for it was felt that an Indian name would have a greater appeal to tourists” (119), much

as Big Tom is forced to play the role of the tourist's Indian. Both Garner and Laurence are less interested in attacking tourism than in exposing the pervasive exploitation of Native people.

The story then moves from social criticism to the symbolism of the loons. After stating that the cry of the loons is no longer heard at the lake, Vanessa concludes with this paragraph:

I remember how Piquette had scorned to come along, when my father and I sat there and listened to the lake birds. It seemed to me now that in some unconscious and totally unrecognised way, Piquette might have been the only one, after all, who had heard the crying of the loons. (120)

Despite the tentative phrasing, much depends on Vanessa's associating Piquette with the loons. As Laurence writes elsewhere, "The loons, recurring in the story both in their presence and in their absence, are connected to an ancestral past which belongs to Piquette" ("Time" 159). Her references to the "mysterious process" of creativity notwithstanding ("On 'The Loons'" 806), it is Laurence as well as Vanessa who makes that connection. Herbert Zirker demonstrates how the conclusion is foreshadowed by earlier references to Piquette as "a reproach and a mystery" (115) and to the crying of the loons as "Plaintive, and yet with a quality of chilling mockery" evocative of a remote past (114). So the conclusion implies that

Piquette has empathized with the *plaintive* ring in the crying of the loons which both expresses sorrow, mourning *and* a plaintiff's accusation directed at her circumstance in life. The cry is heightened by the element of *chilling mockery*, suggesting the Métis' inescapable doom. (174)

In a series of etymological insights, Zirker shows how thoroughly the story unites Piquette and the loons: both are associated with lameness, clumsiness, drunkenness (as in "drunk as a loon"), and wildness (174-76). For Zirker, "these descriptions are part of a pattern of imagery carefully building up the sense of a fundamentally disabled being. What is being described is an inescapable existential state of mutilation which . . . turns out to be literally fatal" (175). The problem is that this description is all too close to what Goldie would call (after Edward Said) the "standard commodities" (15) of the image of the indigene.

The problem emerges in Zirker's account of the "behavioural patterns" implied in the loon imagery as those of "'ethnic' cultures that have not adjusted to the 'modern' technological or bureaucratic versions of

‘mainstream’ society. Native Canadians may be among such ‘fringe groups’ that are not immediately upwardly mobile” (176). The “scare quotes” cannot prevent such an analysis from coming perilously close to blaming the victim, on whom the burden is placed for not adjusting to Modernity. The problem is compounded by Zirker’s recognition that Piquette’s death is “inescapable” (175). As in all too many other representations of such people, Piquette is inscribed in a tragic fate in which she has no agency. The virtue of Zirker’s article is that it demonstrates beyond doubt that the problems are in “The Loons,” and not in our misreadings of it.

A further problem that Zirker unintentionally raises is the slippage between Métis and Indians.³ In the opening, Laurence is careful to specify that the Tonnerres were “French halfbreeds” with different problems than Indians have:

They did not belong among the Cree of the Galloping Mountain reservation, further north, and they did not belong among the Scots-Irish and Ukrainians of Manawaka, either. They were, as my Grandmother MacLeod would have put it, neither flesh, fowl, nor good salt herring. (108-09).

When the eleven-year old Vanessa decides that the Tonnerres “were actually Indians, or as near as made no difference” (112), one wants to read the slippage as a sign of youthful confusion. But finally the differences between Métis and Indians are of little concern in this story. Thus Michelle Gadpaille calls “The Loons” “a lament for the passing of an entire way of life among the Indians, epitomized by the haunting call of loons” (105). Thus Giovanna Capone states that the loons represent “the original Indian inhabitants of the country eradicated by so-called civilization” (166). And thus, in the most revealing slippage, Patricia Morley writes that “‘The Loons’ identifies a halfbreed Indian girl [Vanessa says “French halfbreeds”] and, by extension, her entire people, with the lonely phantom lake birds” (45). Once again I would stress that I am not rebuking these critics, since their misrecognition is also Laurence’s. The symbolism of the loons is a misrecognition because it ignores the historical struggles of both Natives and Métis while assigning both to “a world separated by aeons from our neat world of summer cottages and the lighted lamps of home” (114).

There are, then, two types of confusion in “The Loons”: the Métis are confused with the Indians; and both are confused with the loons. I stress the first confusion in order to reveal a fundamental flaw in the story. Once it is recognized, readers should be less likely to pass over the other and more dangerous confusion: as LaRoque writes in another context, “the Indian has been so closely associated with nature that sometimes he

is hardly separated from it at all" (34). Not only does such an association deny Piquette her full humanity, but it makes a tragic outcome inevitable. We will never be able to imagine a future for people whom we regard as separate from us "by aeons." Instead we will move with Gadpaille from the death of Piquette to "the passing of an entire way of life..." (105). No one would doubt the good intentions of Margaret Laurence, but it is remarkable that a story written out of a "sense of outrage" ("On 'The Loons'" 805) ends in a helpless lament for creatures that have disappeared. By contrast, "One-Two-Three Little Indians" is able to preserve a sense of outrage because it deals with death in the context of poverty and racism. It is not "white technology" (Goldie's phrase — see 37) but its absence that kills Big Tom's baby.

The most disturbing aspect of "The Loons" is that it allows for resistance, which it then finds utterly ineffectual. When Piquette is given the chance to comment on the loons, she is momentarily eloquent: "Who gives a good goddamn?" (114). But just as Vanessa is right that the Tonnerres "were actually Indians, or as near as made no difference" (112), so she is right that "Piquette might have been the only one, after all, who had heard the crying of the loons" (120). Piquette has no choice in the matter. To return to Kertzer's point, "The Loons" shows that what happens to a "Métis girl who refuses to be cast in a familiar role" (66) is that she is eventually assigned the most familiar role of them all.

III

Agreeing with Gerald Graff that "the most powerful and influential of recent theories argue that literature is a scene of contradictions that cannot be subsumed under any 'totalizing' ideology" (31), I believe that the best way to handle the conflicts raised by these stories is to teach them. This approach does not involve demonizing either writer for his or her representation of other peoples, for as Walter Benjamin says in a celebrated assertion, "There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (256). The problem with this assertion, however, or with Goldie's similar formulation of a general complicity in racism (6), is that it removes the edge from a critique of ideology. If everyone is racist, and if all documents are barbarous, then there will be plenty of errors to expose, but no hope of avoiding error. Accordingly, I would like to conclude by taking a different stand.

When I raised some of these issues in response to a paper by Cherry Clayton at a conference in 1992, I was surprised by the responses.⁴ Several

people felt that the whole conflict in “The Loons” could be avoided if we allowed Laurence the proper historical understanding; others felt that we should teach another Laurence story instead.⁵ It is difficult to imagine such responses to “One-Two-Three Little Indians.” Would anyone suggest that we should select another Garner story if this one raised uncomfortable issues? If either writer needs historical understanding, it is Garner, who was born thirteen years before Laurence. But it is unlikely that historical understanding is the answer to a problem raised by such recent writers. My inclination is to view the defensiveness of my respondents as a sign of the progressivist assumptions that underwrite conventional Canadian literary history. To conclude this paper, I will try to take Benjamin’s advice and “brush history against the grain” (257).

We do not ordinarily look for stereotypes in Laurence, while we can hardly avoid them in Garner. That is why Janice Acoose’s work is so important. For Acoose, the stereotypical attitudes in “The Loons” are different in degree but not in kind from those in W.P. Kinsella (69-88). “Compassion” and “understanding” (72) are not good enough if the old stories are perpetuated:

Although I recognize that Laurence may have deliberately depicted Piquette as a victim to sensitize readers to the situation of some women, as an Indigenous woman who has been exposed to so many strong, powerful, and resourceful women, I am disappointed to find the tragic ending once more used to effect closure on the narrating of a Métis woman’s life. (84)

Precisely because readers trust Laurence so profoundly, they might not recognize the ideological implications of “The Loons.” Angelika Maeser-Lemieux, for example, is content to study Laurence in Jungian and feminist terms: “Native peoples, notably the Métis, serve as a metaphor for the alienated and repressed parts of the individual and collective psyche in patriarchal culture” (116). In the process, the “darker aspects of the Feminine must be repressed and projected onto the primitive woman, who, unfortunately, becomes herself the victim of this patriarchal polarization into opposites” (126). Two great advantages for Garner are that he does not turn his protagonist into a metaphor, and he does not regard victimization as an unfortunate necessity.

According to Margery Fee, “Native people . . . are so rarely depicted as individuals, because they must bear the burden of the Other — of representing all that the modern person has lost” (29). Fee’s words fit “The Loons” exactly, but I would argue that “One-Two-Three Little Indians” succeeds as a depiction of an individual, and that it is largely free of what

Fee calls “elegiac nostalgia” (25). Because of the intersections of race and class in this story, and despite the problems with gender, Garner exposes racism without reducing his protagonist to the category of the Other.

NOTES

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¹ For other notable inclusions, see Atwood and Weaver, *Oxford*; Geddes; Roberts and Jacobs; and Scholes. Laurence’s attitudes towards the story were curiously conflicted. When Mordecai Richler asked for a contribution to his anthology, *Canadian Writing Today* (1970), she picked “Horses of the Night” over “The Loons.” The latter, she explained, “was read on the CBC and later published in *The Atlantic Advocate*, and if you really want to see it, I’ll send it, but it isn’t a very good story” (1 Feb. 1968; Wainwright 168. Wainwright identifies this story as “possibly ‘The Loons’” [168], but there is no need to be tentative. “The Loons” is the only story that Laurence published in *The Atlantic Advocate*, where it appeared as “Crying of the Loons.” It was also read on the CBC). Four days after the previous letter, she changed her mind: “Am enclosing another story. Upon re-reading it, maybe it’s not such a bad story, after all. Anyway, see what you think” (5 Feb. 1968; Wainwright 169). Several months later, she told Richler that “The Loons” “was shorter and therefore maybe better for your purposes,” adding that she hoped to publish “Horses of the Night” elsewhere (10 Sept. 1968; Wainwright 171). Richler eventually published “an excerpt from *A Jest of God*” in *Canadian Writing Today* (Wainwright 260, note 1).

² In a Dec. 30, 1972 letter to Al Purdy, Laurence states that “this has to be the most repetitive death in fiction, as it is told about in *The Fire-Dwellers*, in *A Bird in the House*, and now again in this novel [*The Diviners*]. I wonder why it haunts my imagination so much” (Lennox 262). She makes a similar comment in a contemporary letter to Adele Wiseman (Lennox and Panofsky 329).

³ Of course Métis and Natives share a similar plight, and so Maria Campbell’s *Half-breed* is included in accounts of Native literature. But as LaRoque writes, “Although the Métis and the Indians are lumped together in most Native Studies curriculums, their histories and their cultures, and even their current concerns are different, even if their social problems are often quite similar” (17).

⁴ Although I cannot remember their identities now, I am grateful to all who responded.

⁵ “The Loons” has been replaced by “The Mask of the Bear” in *The New Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English* (Atwood and Weaver).

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