



**SEEING RED**

---

**A HISTORY OF NATIVES IN CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS**

---

Mark Cronlund Anderson *and*  
Carmen L. Robertson

---

**SEEING R**

---

**G RED**

---

**CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS**

---

# SEEING RED

*A History of Natives  
in Canadian Newspapers*

MARK CRONLUND ANDERSON AND CARMEN L. ROBERTSON



University of Manitoba Press  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Canada R3T 2M5  
uofmpress.ca

© Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson 2011

16 15 14 13 12 2 3 4 5

Printed in Canada

Text printed on chlorine-free, 100% post-consumer recycled paper

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in a database and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the University of Manitoba Press, or, in the case of photocopying or any other reprographic copying, a licence from Access Copyright (Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency). For an Access Copyright licence, visit [www.accesscopyright.ca](http://www.accesscopyright.ca), or call 1-800-893-5777.

Cover design: David Drummond  
Interior design: Jessica Koroscil

Cover image: Deligalugaseitsa and Sepistopota, Sarcee, near Calgary, AB, about 1885, McCord Museum, MP-1973.49.195

Interior images: *Victoria Times Colonist*, 14 March 1922;  
*Toronto Globe*, 12 April 1922; *Toronto Globe*, 18 April 1922;  
*Regina Leader*, 8 March 1913; *Toronto Globe*, 18 October 1924.

#### Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Anderson, Mark Cronlund, 1960–  
Seeing red : a history of Natives in Canadian  
newspapers / Mark Cronlund Anderson, Carmen L. Robertson.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Also issued in electronic format.

ISBN 978-0-88755-727-9 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-88755-406-3 (PDF e-book)

1. Indians—Press coverage—Canada—History. 2. Indians in  
mass media—Canada—History. 3. Native peoples—Canada—Social  
conditions. I. Robertson, Carmen L., 1962– II. Title.

PN4914.I56A54 2011 070.4/49305897071 C2011-901108-5

The University of Manitoba Press gratefully acknowledges the financial support for its publication program provided by the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage, Tourism, the Manitoba Arts Council, and the Manitoba Book Publishing Tax Credit.



**SEEING RED**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to express our thanks to the excellent research assistants who played a vital role in this project. These include Bridget Keating, Andrew Osbourne, Samra Sahlu, Haley Sichell, and Allison Szeles. We are also grateful for a research grant we received from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), without which the research would likely never have concluded.

We also thank Dagmar and Madelaine for endless inspiration. Finally, a thanks to David Carr at the University of Manitoba Press for his early and ongoing support of this project.



# PALE-FACE" FROM ROYAL CITY ENDS LONG MUSH WITH DOGS FROM NORMAN TO EDMONTON

the orig  
is the ne  
nexation t

CONT  
40

Charles  
Prom

Donald W. MacKinnon  
Brings to Civilization  
First Tidings of Men  
Who Are Spending Long  
Winter Months on Lonely  
Banks of Mackenzie  
River

*Ends Long Tramp  
With Dog Train*

## UNDER TWO MONTHS ON 1,000-MILE "MUSH"

When a staff correspondent of the Globe "turned for home" at Smith Portage last July, after spending a few weeks in the neighborhood of the sub-Arctic, the last man he saw on the bank of the river at Fort Fitzgerald was Ronald W. MacKinnon, transport officer for the Imperial Oil, Limited, then on the final lap of the inward journey to Fort Norman.

Yesterday there came to The Globe from the local office of the company named a picture of Mr. MacKinnon as he appeared at the time of his return trip to the haunts of the modern man. After spending most of the winter with the crew of the Norman well, Mr. MacKinnon returned for civilization on January 27, travelling by dog train. He arrived at Edmonton on March 25, having covered in less than two months an arduous journey of more than 1,000 miles.

The picturesque garb of caribou, shown in the accompanying picture, was made for Mr. MacKinnon by the Eskimos at Coronation Gulf, on the Arctic coast. Though not a native of the far North—he comes from the city of Guelph—Mr. MacKinnon stood his long trip well, and the time that will compare favorably with the long-distance "mush" records of the world's greatest dog-train country.

The voyager brought to Edmonton news that the drilling party used at Fort Norman had winched well, and expected an early



RONALD MACKINNON  
Who "mushed" from Fort Norman to the outposts of Edmonton, covering the long distance in less than two months.

Charles  
late residence  
yesterday,  
continued ill-  
was in hospital  
born in Ontario  
located at the  
About five  
Toronto and  
of dredging  
ing President  
Dredging  
pany.

He was  
Paul's An  
member of  
the Scottish  
Besides  
one son,  
Toronto, T  
Thursday  
late residence  
Mausoleum

DEATH  
S

Little L  
Into

That the  
Tenute, tw  
das street  
al, was th  
under Dr.  
at the Mo

At noon  
child, who  
opposite h  
killed by a  
Perks. W  
child had  
the north  
avoiding h  
bound str  
the curb h  
back, and  
truck, bein  
over by the  
The tru



10-34:  
20-38:  
31-40:  
Winn-  
White  
nto, 42-  
Mont-  
ohn, 30-

projects, and to this is attributed the apathy of the voters. Viewed from this standpoint, they see the result as a fair expression of the city's attitude, as few voters were swayed by impassioned appeals.

Ro  
forme  
ously  
ness  
was c

4 p.m.  
ference  
um, 73:

## WOUNDED BY INDIANS, DIES FROM INJURIES

ON

8 a.m.,  
north-

### Shooting of Constable While Making Arrests Has Fatal Termination

On  
b

om.  
York  
York  
York  
John,  
e  
rpool  
York  
York  
York

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Thamesville, April 17.—Constable William Pickard of this town, who received gunshot wounds in the leg while attempting to arrest burglars here early last Sunday morning, died shortly after 8 o'clock this morning in the Chatham General Hospital.

The three Indians, Zimmer Noag, Ed. Rickman and Richardson Logan, who were arrested in connection with the shooting, are at present confined in the county jail at Chatham and a charge of manslaughter will probably be brought against the trio.

Constable Pickard, who was 68 years of age, was a lifelong resident of this town. He held the office of County Constable for nearly 20 years and during that time had had many exciting moments while in the discharge of his duty. Besides his widow, the following children survive: Bert and William, jun., of this town; James of Windsor, and Mrs. Alfred Keely of Chatham.

Ne  
wives  
lower  
tender  
the  
eral  
anti-  
ing t  
Hi  
toda  
him.  
still  
issue  
to r  
it is  
in S  
H  
from  
Univ

itizen

be.)  
Prost,  
village,  
ghtning  
ock this  
tting in  
room of  
came  
shing it  
he roof.  
on, who  
m, were  
on re-



# CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
------------------	-----

INTRODUCTION	3
--------------	---

## CHAPTER ONE

THIS LAND IS MINE	19
<i>THE RUPERT'S LAND PURCHASE, 1869</i>	

## CHAPTER TWO

FIFTY-SIX WORDS	40
<i>TREATY 3, 1873</i>	

## CHAPTER THREE

"OUR LITTLE WAR"	58
<i>THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION, 1885</i>	

## CHAPTER FOUR

THE GOLDEN RULE	83
<i>THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH, 1898-1905</i>	

## CHAPTER FIVE

POET, PRINCESS, POSSESSION	99
<i>REMEMBERING PAULINE JOHNSON, 1913</i>	

## CHAPTER SIX

DISROBING GREY OWL	116
<i>THE DEATH OF ARCHIE BELANEY, 1938</i>	

CHAPTER SEVEN

**"POTENTIAL INDIAN CITIZENS?"** ————— 137

*ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AFTER WORLD WAR II, 1948*

CHAPTER EIGHT

**CARDBOARD CHARACTERS** ————— 155

*THE WHITE PAPER, 1969*

CHAPTER NINE

**BENDED ELBOW NEWS** ————— 173

*THE ANICINABE PARK STANDOFF, 1974*

CHAPTER TEN

**INDIAN PRINCESS/INDIAN "SQUAW"** ————— 192

*BILL C-31, 1985*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

**LETTERS FROM THE EDGES** ————— 219

*THE OKA CRISIS, 1990*

CHAPTER TWELVE

**BACK TO THE FUTURE** ————— 243

*A PRAIRIE CENTENNIAL, 1905-2005*

**CONCLUSION** ————— 265

*RETURN OF THE NATIVE*

**NOTES** ————— 277

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** ————— 338

**INDEX** ————— 352

# SEEING RED



# INTRODUCTION

Eskimo families which live in clean, modern homes and in which the father is a steady, skilled worker have fewer children that die in infancy than Eskimo families with more traditional life styles.

—GLOBE AND MAIL, 12 JULY 1974

Canada is home to more than 600 Indigenous nations as well as roughly one-half million Aboriginals living off-reserve. Prior to the centuries-long European invasion, these groups spoke dozens of different languages, exhibited wide variety in architecture, child rearing, clothing, diet, gender relations, material culture, religion, rituals—in short, they varied in all the ways one might expect of an enormous region occupied by a wide range of cultural groups.<sup>1</sup> All told, in excess of 1.3 million Canadians claim some Aboriginal heritage, according to the 2001 census. This includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.<sup>2</sup> Yet the country's most ubiquitous agent of popular education, the newspaper, has tended to conflate all of these peoples into one heavily stereotyped monolith, patterned on a colonial ideology that flourishes to this day.

This may come as a surprise if you think that colonialism is dead, a best-forgotten relic of days gone by in Canada. It may also surprise you if you think that the press is strictly objective and non-partisan. Indeed, if this is the case, you will be surprised to discover that the evidence shows something strikingly different. An examination of press content in Canada since the sale of Rupert's Land in 1869 through to 2009 illustrates that, with respect to Aboriginal peoples, the colonial imaginary has thrived, even dominated, and continues to do so in mainstream English-language newspapers.<sup>3</sup> Further, the press has never been non-partisan or strictly objective in Canada. A wealth of studies, and observations from daily life, readily demonstrate this.

Colonialism has always thrived in Canada's press. This is not a shock given Canada's imperial birth and its enduring colonial behaviour with respect to Aboriginals since the country's nominal founding at Confederation in 1867.<sup>4</sup>

It is what David Spurr refers to when he writes that "the colonizer speaks as inheritor."<sup>5</sup> Paul Nesbitt-Larking notes that "the medium of print is strongly associated with the politics of imperialism and colonialism."<sup>6</sup> In this way, Canadian nationalism becomes imperialism because it shares of the same dream.<sup>7</sup> Further, these colonial actions become double-edged because the mainstream positions itself as rightful owner of Aboriginal lands as well as inheritor of an English pattern of positioning itself with respect to Aboriginal peoples. Two examples exemplify the point.

The first is the treaty system that, to begin with, effectively stripped Aboriginals of the vast majority of their lands at the end of a gun-barrel or with the implied threat of violence. This amounted to naked military conquest, though it is rarely portrayed as such in Canada. Instead, the nation insists that violence was the American way, a projective tale that serves the high and mighty purposes of elevating *Canadiana* over *Americana* at the same time as promoting the disingenuous and misleading idea that Indigenous peoples sought the protection of the Canadian government in their desire for treaties. Again and again in the 1870s the press made it clear that Canada chose not to engage in all-out war because it was simply too expensive and not because it was somehow unwarranted.

While it is true that the United States engaged in a centuries-long assault to conquer Aboriginal lands with few holds barred, it would be a serious mistake to conclude that Canada's emergence as a nation-state ultimately reflects a substantively kinder, gentler process. In the absence of, at the very least, the threat of overwhelming force, why would Aboriginals have willingly given up 95 percent of the territory they had possessed since time immemorial? Of course, there were other issues, including the sustainability of traditional ways of life in the face of dwindling buffalo herds. But the treaties all derived, ultimately, from the fact of white invasion, which was inherently aggressive. The idea that Aboriginals desired to cede their lands, imperialism notwithstanding, clearly makes no sense at all unless one embraces a colonial ideology that endorses imperial land theft. Why would anyone freely give up huge regions of traditional territory in return for a degraded status on small areas of marginal land? Aboriginals were compelled by force or the threat of the use of force. And that is precisely how the press portrayed it in the latter nineteenth century. Today, at least since 1997, even the Supreme Court of Canada recognizes the unsubtle and deliberate colonial intentions the federal government displayed in treaty relations. Yet *Canadiana*, crucially aided and abetted

by newspapers, and even scholars who should know better, has for decades denied it, persisting instead in believing the dreamed colonial version of history. In this way, Canada, like all nations, is an "imagined community."<sup>8</sup>

The residential school system that between 1879 and 1996 sought to disappear Aboriginal culture by vigorously educating it out of existence serves as the second example of how the mainstream positions itself as owner of Aboriginal lands. Detractors accurately call it a systematic attempt at cultural genocide. Even its few lingering supporters accept that it was morally flawed and disastrously run; and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered a formal apology for the system on 11 June 2008.<sup>9</sup> As with the treaties, the historical record of residential schools is unequivocal: this was a system predicated on aggressive violence. Aboriginal children were forced to school, yanked from their families, banned from speaking their languages, and often not returned for a decade or more. Sometimes years would pass and parents were not allowed even to see, let alone hug or just spend time with their children. Many children were physically, sexually, and/or emotionally abused by their teachers. Many died at the hands of vicious pedagogical authorities, including clergy. These horrific tales have been recorded in documentary film, government reports, and several excellent books.<sup>10</sup> John Milloy notes that "in their attack on language and spirituality, the schools had been a particularly virulent strain of that imperial epidemic sapping the children's bodies and beings."<sup>11</sup> J.R. Miller has termed them "merely one important cog in a machine of cultural oppression and coercive change."<sup>12</sup>

Both national projects, that is, the treaty system and residential schools, exemplified belligerent colonial policy at work, what one might refer to as hegemonic assimilation, an idea borrowed from Antonio Gramsci,<sup>13</sup> in which an imperial power attempts to impose its cultural world views upon the Other.<sup>14</sup> Both efforts were specifically and proudly colonialist in intention, premised first upon notions of alleged white superiority and corresponding Aboriginal inferiority, broadly conceived. Additionally, colonial ideology, draped in virulent, angry, and self-righteous Christianity, lent the works a triumphal air. White Canadians could bask self-righteously in the idea of "killing the Indian to save the white man," a concept resting at the heart of the colonial enterprise in Canada.<sup>15</sup> It had God's own stamp of approval. After all, the residential schools were run by clergy and keyed on religious instruction in the widest sense.



We stress these two colonial enterprises to underscore that press coverage did not and cannot occur in a vacuum.<sup>16</sup> If colonialism has permeated Canadian society—in a sense *is* Canadian society at its deepest level—as treaties and residential schools attest, then one might reasonably expect attendant ideological saturation to surface in the printed press. In short, as the scholars Augie Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz have observed, “mainstream media have proven complicit in fortifying the cultural hierarchy and moral authority at the heart of an existing social order.”<sup>17</sup> Has the mainstream press expressed ideas and representations congruent to and supportive of the thinking that underwrote and gave rise to treaties and residential schools? The short answer is, yes; the long answer, with voluminous evidence, is detailed in this book.

## RULE OF THREE

The establishment of treaties and residential schools was not accidental. They were created deliberately and for specific reasons. The language that aided and abetted and in turn reflected these colonial endeavours and thinking oozes from the pores of Canadian mainstream culture. In other words, the reasoning that engendered the creation of the treaty system and residential schools was, for their duration, also the *lingua franca* of mainstream newspapers. In general it avers that Aboriginals, when compared to white Canadians, exemplify three essentialized sets of characteristics—depravity, innate inferiority, and a stubborn resistance to progress. These representations cross-pollinate and contain within them a wide variety of elements. Collectively, on the one hand, this imagery has served to informally yet persuasively teach countless Canadians about imagined Native inferiority (that is, the Other in its many guises); and, on the other hand, the portrayals have served to reinforce prevalent mainstream notions about Aboriginal peoples, all of which degrade, denigrate, and marginalize. In this way, the press has both reflected naturally and regurgitated spontaneously and necessarily the culture from which it emerged at the same time as reinforcing and teaching prevailing social norms to youth and newcomers. “Along with notions of common history and traditions and shared systems of cultural representations,” Bhodan Szuchewycz writes, “a significant element in the discursive construction of nations and national identities involves the articulation of difference and contrast with respect to other nations and national identities.”<sup>18</sup>

The idea that Canadians of Aboriginal ancestry epitomize moral depravity is as old as the press in Canada. The notion finds expression in a variety of ways, including identified sneakiness, poor parenting, thievery, whorishness, dishonesty, laziness, ungodliness, and a tendency for debased afflictions associated with the body (such as sexual debauchery, alcoholism, and capricious violence).

The second perception also dates in the press to at least as early as Confederation. It asserts that Aboriginals exhibit inherent racial inferiority, though newspapers mostly remained mum on how they understood the flexible term of "race." Early on, the press critically embraced then-common social Darwinist concepts. Such presumed inadequacy leads, for example, to alleged stupidity, poor decision making (with links to depravity), and childish, irresponsible, frequently irrational behaviour. It is often conflated with and used to explain espied archetypal savagery, the alleged Aboriginal proclivities for wanton violence, violent crime, viciousness, and a general tendency toward mayhem.

Third, the press throughout Canadian history has cast Aboriginals as mired in an unprogressive and non-evolving past, as if they exist outside of linear time. Behaviour associated with this theme includes excessive stubbornness, childishness, and maladaptive cultural characteristics that make it difficult for Aboriginal culture to progress in the ways understood and appreciated by the mainstream. Additionally, this theme reinforces cultural depravity and racial inferiority in ways that buttress all three colonial essentialisms. For example, note that childishness may be lumped in with alleged innate inferiority because adults (whites) are smarter and more advanced than children (Aboriginals). By the same token, childishness may be associated with racial inferiority insofar as the superior (white adults) stands above the inferior (childish Aboriginals). The point is simply that identifying three prominent varieties of treatment is useful for the purposes of analysis and discussion, yet the three tropes themselves behave as is their wont, following their own internal colonial logic, and frequently overlap.

Variations on the three perceptions include popular archetypal packaging such as the moribund Native, the savage, the Indian princess, the stoic or noble Native, the childish Native, the intemperate Native (a.k.a., the drunkard), and so on. The list frequently decussates itself. What the archetypes share in common is that each is constructed by the characteristic three aforementioned essentialisms. For example, the Indian savage archetype typically exhibits depravity, is often identified as racially inferior, and epitomizes