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## 8

### Indigenous Hauntings in Settler-Colonial Spaces

*The Activism of Indigenous Ancestors  
in the City of Toronto*

VICTORIA FREEMAN

At a multi-faith event in the fall of 2005, a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists reclaimed one of the Toronto Islands as "Spirit Island," reconsecrating and reactivating the land as a sacred site for healing ceremonies and teachings by elders. During that ceremony, an Indigenous elder from Greenland sang a healing song passed down from his great-great-grandmother. He sang it for the sculptor who hoped to create a healing garden for children on the site, which he envisioned as a medicine wheel of sculptures by Indigenous artists. The sculptor spoke of being raised white and only later in life realizing that his family's multigenerational history of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse were the result of the catastrophic effect of the Trail of Tears on the Cherokee-Choctaw lineage running through his grandmother. That was a history and geography far removed from Toronto—and the medicine wheel also came from elsewhere!<sup>1</sup>—yet he and others present seemed to draw strength from connecting their own particular histories and concerns with the Mississauga's historic use of that land for healing<sup>2</sup> and to the First Nation's assertion that the islands remained unceded territory.<sup>3</sup> In many of the speeches and prayers that day, there was a palpable sense of return.

The gathering certainly exemplified the diverse ways that various Indigenities, histories, and other cultural influences mix, meld, and mutate in this global city. A white pine was planted, both recalling and making manifest the Great Tree of Peace planted long ago by the Iroquoian prophet known as the Peacemaker. Although he is said to

have been born near Belleville, his people, the Huron-Wendats, were also Indigenous to the Toronto area, and he brought peace to the Haudenosaunee, one of the largest groups of Aboriginal people now living in the city. Also present was an Anglo-Canadian woman who practiced a form of ancestral healing and understood herself as a shaman; her healing practice drew on New Age conceptions of Indigenous spiritual traditions, although she was not strongly connected to Indigenous people herself. Later, an Anglo-Canadian man arrived who proudly traced his lineage back to the brother of Augustus Jones, the eighteenth-century surveyor of the fledgling settlement of York that later became the City of Toronto. Augustus Jones was also the Welsh father of the nineteenth-century Mississauga missionary Kahkewaquonaby (Rev. Peter Jones), perhaps the most famous and influential Mississauga of his time.<sup>4</sup> This descendant brought with him the physical manifestations of his connection to Peter Jones: an old photograph of the missionary and a mid-nineteenth-century Christian hymn book Jones had translated into Ojibway, which were examined reverently by the group. Some Anishinaabeg who worked in the healing professions were also there, people related by ethnicity to the Mississaugas who had lived in the area until 1847.

What was interesting about this event was that all of these people believed in one way or another in the potency of ancestors as forces or influences from the past on present-day Toronto. Whether their progenitors were buried in the vicinity or in unknown graves thousands of miles away, their ancestry and the ancestry of others mattered. What was also notable was that they all wanted to forge new connections to the Indigenous history of the place, and in some sense to reactivate, or even reanimate, the site as Indigenous space. On another day in Toronto, on the Great Indian Bus Tour of the city sponsored by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, a tour guide presented an alternative history of the city, challenging the tour participants to imaginatively “strip back the layers of concrete” to learn the true history of what had happened to the Indigenous peoples of the area, a history that she spoke of as being hidden and suppressed. Referring to the Bering Strait theory as “voodoo science,” she spoke of the widespread Indigenous belief that Native

Americans had originated in North America, that Indigenous people had always been here. She described how, in the traditional Anishinaabe migration story, the ancestors followed the megis shell from the east coast of North America to Madeleine Island, Wisconsin; some Anishinaabeg had been left at points along the way, she said, including on the peninsula that later became the Toronto Islands.<sup>5</sup> Her point, reinforced by her references to the hundreds of Indigenous archaeological sites along the shores of the region’s rivers, was that Indigenous people, including the Anishinaabeg, who academic historians generally describe as moving into the area only after about 1700 CE, had always been present in the city and its environs and were still there. In spite of the layers of concrete, the footprints of the ancestors were everywhere, a spiritual presence that proved both Indigenous continuity and persistence and demonstrated true ownership of the land.

At one point, the bus tour participants disembarked at an unusual grassy mound that looked like a good robbing hill in a Scarborough suburban neighborhood, the top of which was marked with a cairn and a plaque describing the mound as the site of a Wendat ossuary dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century.<sup>6</sup> There the remains of 475 Iroquoian people were buried communally, in manner ritually consistent with the Huron-Wendat Feast of Souls (also known as the Feast of the Dead) now known largely through a description by Jean Brébeuf in the *Jesuit Relations* of 1636.<sup>7</sup> The modern visitors, who were mainly but not exclusively of Aboriginal heritage, made offerings of tobacco and prayed for the spirits of the ancestors, who were referred to as such regardless of the particular tribal ancestry of the tour participants. The tour guide remarked that in the past the site had not been properly cared for; houses in the area had often been put up for sale because they were haunted. Since then, she said, the non-Aboriginal neighbors had learned to watch over Tabor Hill, protect its sanctity, and even honor the spirits with tobacco.<sup>8</sup>

These two anecdotes are suggestive of a pattern I want to explore in this paper, which is how and why the Indigenous past of the Toronto area is being reinscribed on the modern city through the

medium of Indigenous ancestral spiritual presence. What was striking in both examples was that the Aboriginal past and the Aboriginal sacred were one and the same, still existing at very specific sites but also experienced as being everywhere in the city in a largely invisible but unbounded way. In my research on the historical memory of the Indigenous and colonial past of Toronto, I have encountered many such narratives of Indigenous ancestral spiritual presence in Toronto, a city where Indigenous people are a tiny minority, where there is no Indigenous reserved land, and where detailed knowledge of the city's history, Indigenous or otherwise, is rare. In my interviews with current residents of the city, or those whose ancestors lived there,<sup>9</sup> many of the Indigenous interviewees have spoken of ancestors, ghosts, spirits, the energy of sacred sites, and other forms of haunting or spiritual presence from the past actively and invisibly at work in the present-day city, often for Indigenous ends, always producing Indigenous difference.

For a non-Indigenous Toronto citizen such as myself, stories relating the historic Indigenous and especially the historic Indigenous sacred to familiar Toronto places had a curious effect. They rendered my hometown unfamiliar and strange—*unheimlich*, to use the terminology of Sigmund Freud<sup>10</sup>—leaving me as a settler with a curious double vision where I was both in place and out of place, living in the present yet haunted by an Indigenous past. This was an interesting turnaround, given that being both in place and out of place is an everyday experience for most Indigenous people in Canada, living as they do in a land that is and is no longer their own land, where they are often haunted by the past and particularly the suffering of their ancestors. Such experiences are examples of what Ken Gelder and Jane M. Jacobs, in *Uncanny Australia: Sacredness and Identity in a Postcolonial Nation*, describe as manifestations of the Indigenous “uncanny” (again, following Freud). In a settler-colonial context, this experience of unsettlement is a potentially decolonizing force, where “what is ‘ours’ as settlers is also recognized as potentially, or even always already ‘theirs.’”<sup>11</sup>

As a historian, I am curious about how such discourses of Indigenous ancestral spiritual presence relate to questions of histori-

cal memory and historical consciousness and how and why they have become a mode of empowerment for Aboriginal people in the city. For Toronto is a place where the colonial past and the people affected by it often appear to be completely absent, as if colonialism never happened<sup>12</sup>—or perhaps as if it had been completely accomplished. If reconciliation is, at least in part, a process of “bringing the nation into contact with the ghosts of its past,”<sup>13</sup> reworking the nation's sense of itself to make possible the development of just and equitable relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, what role do these local Indigenous ghosts and ancestors play in this process?

One of the first things that becomes apparent in exploring the links between narratives about Indigenous ancestors and ghosts and historical memory in Toronto is that most contemporary Torontonians do not appear to be very interested in the city's past, Indigenous or otherwise, and they certainly do not have much opportunity to explore what interest they do have. The city currently defines itself largely in terms of its present ethnic diversity rather than its history, in contrast to some other North American cities of comparable size, such as Boston and Montreal.<sup>14</sup> History does not form a large part of the city's urban mythology or tourism promotion, and Toronto is anomalous in that there is currently no museum or large-scale institution that is devoted to the whole span of the city's history or that situates the history of Toronto in a larger context, though there have been recent calls for one.<sup>15</sup> In many respects, it seems, Toronto is a city without public consciousness of its roots.

Toronto's Indigenous history appears to be particularly invisible and unknown to most Torontonians.<sup>16</sup> Its ten existing city-run museums are mostly small historic houses, focused on nineteenth-century Anglo-Celtic Toronto. Most of the hundred thousand artifacts and one million archaeological objects in the city's collection date from the 1790–1920 period and are quite limited in terms of representing First Nations history.<sup>17</sup> The Royal Ontario Museum, a provincial institution also in Toronto, has large Aboriginal collections from all over Canada, including artifacts from the Toronto area, but its geographically broad mandate means that local or regional history

is rarely a focus.<sup>18</sup> Only since 2006 has the city's own Web site offered a historical overview of Toronto's past, which includes a sizable Indigenous component,<sup>19</sup> perhaps signaling a shift in historical consciousness—but the people I interviewed were generally unaware of it.

The invisibility of local Indigenous history is a common North American settler-colonial phenomenon. In published town histories across North America, "Indians" usually appear only in the first chapter and then "exit stage left after treaty or battle."<sup>20</sup> Popular books on Toronto history that sit on local library shelves largely follow this pattern, with a few interesting exceptions—most notably a volume published by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto in 1997.<sup>21</sup> In the most common version of the Toronto "creation" story, history really begins in 1793 with Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe founding the settlement of York in a "trackless wilderness" devoid of Indigenous people except for two Mississauga families camped on the peninsula that is now the Toronto Islands<sup>22</sup> (though there is usually also some mention of the ancient Indigenous portage route along the Humber River to Lake Simcoe as a significant local feature, instantly belying the region's "tracklessness"). Usually, once such histories describe the founding of the city, Indigenous peoples disappear from the story.

Perhaps not surprisingly, few of these works discuss the fact that the so-called Toronto Purchase of 1787 was known to be invalid by 1794, a year after York's founding, or that when the treaty was finally "confirmed" eleven years later in 1805, government negotiators increased the amount of land surrendered without the Mississaugas' knowledge and, according to the Mississaugas of New Credit, paid them only ten shillings for 250,880 acres.<sup>23</sup> In fact, several of the early historians of the city saw no need to mention the Toronto Purchase at all.<sup>24</sup> Yet the confirmed treaty is the foundation for Toronto's legal existence, and since 1986 that treaty has been subject to a land claim. Like other treaties, it is fundamental to the historic relationship created between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Most of the non-Indigenous Torontonians I interviewed were completely unaware of it.

Perhaps the Indigenous past has also been disconnected from the history of Toronto because of outdated distinctions between the urban history of the city and its non-urban antecedents, or between history and so-called prehistory, to which the Indigenous past is usually relegated.<sup>25</sup> As Coll Thrush pointed out in *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place*, connections between urban and Indigenous history are only beginning to be made; in fact, "Indian" and "urban" are often seen as antonyms, at opposite ends of a national past and imagined future.<sup>26</sup> Cities, he says, are seen as the "ultimate avatars of progress," representing "the pinnacle of technology, commerce, and cultural sophistication"; at the same time, cities obliterate the Indigenous landscape of the past. Yet the Toronto area's human, if not urban, history goes back at least eleven thousand years.

If the public culture of Toronto has been largely silent about the history of Indigenous people in the region, we might ask ourselves, as Elizabeth Furniss does in relation to the history of Queensland, Australia, "What is in the history of Aboriginal-settler relations in [this area] that has created the contemporary situation in which silence is perpetuated?"<sup>27</sup> Is there any ethical obligation to remember this history? Is this settler-colonial silence a factor in the phenomenon of Indigenous haunting?

In the more than forty interviews I have conducted for my research on historical memory in Toronto, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of Toronto sometimes described instances of Indigenous haunting in the city, either in the sense of disaffected spirits returning or sometimes in the more metaphorical sense of a returning or haunting memory or image, or a slight trace or vestige of something lost. Indigenous and non-Indigenous uses of such stories differed: for most of the non-Indigenous people I interviewed, stories of haunting expressed what was once and is no longer, hence a kind of absence, whereas for Indigenous interviewees and some of their allies, ghost and spirit stories articulated what had been and is still present, if invisible, in the city, and what could become more visibly manifest in the future.<sup>28</sup>

Haunting as Indigenous absence has an old pedigree in the settler

trope of the “vanishing Indian.” In 1855, for example, Johann Georg Kohl, a German visitor to Toronto, noted that Native people “were numerous when the English founded here the town of York, and there are still people in Toronto who remember the fleets of bark canoes and little skiffs, in which the Indians used to bring fish and other things to sell to the inhabitants—mostly encamping on that long sandy peninsula [now the Toronto islands].” He continued, “But the Indians have now vanished like the morning mist, and nothing remains to recall even their memory, but the well sounding name they invented for this locality—the sonorous Toronto.”<sup>29</sup>

Kohl’s nostalgic description itself reenacts that ghostly vanishing, with only the word “Toronto” lingering as a haunting vestige of that history. Indeed, from Kohl’s time to the present, Toronto’s name has been one of the few remaining links with its Indigenous past, though even its exact meaning is uncertain.<sup>30</sup> While virtually all my non-Indigenous interviewees were aware that the city had an Indigenous name, and some were aware of at least one possible meaning, that Indigenous name was alive in a completely different way for some Indigenous interviewees. As one person explained, the word “Toronto” carried spirit energy from the past into the present because the language itself was alive. Created by the ancestors, it continued to do their spiritual work.<sup>31</sup> Such ancestral energy brought both the Indigenous past and a current Indigenous presence into the consciousness of the city through its very name. It always accompanied current Indigenous residents so they would never be alone, so they would never be only in a settler-colonial place. Such perceptions are illustrative of the way some of the people I interviewed spoke of the activism of their ancestors; either in spirit or by example the ancestors invisibly helped their descendants in their personal lives and also influenced the development of the city. Such activity by the ancestors inspired activism in their descendants in turn, strengthening their commitment to Indigeneity<sup>32</sup> in their own lives and to the passing on of Indigenous culture to future generations of descendants.

In some interviews, particularly with non-Indigenous Torontonians, Indigeneity itself was often experienced as a kind of ghostly

absence in the modern multicultural city,<sup>33</sup> somewhat akin to the city’s “lost rivers.”<sup>34</sup> Indeed, Toronto is known globally for its cosmopolitanism and not for its Indigeneity; the city exemplifies what Marshall Berman has described as “that immense demographic upheaval, severing millions of people from their ancestral habitats, hurdling them halfway across the world into new lives,”<sup>35</sup> a condition that is a fundamental characteristic of (post)modernity. Fully 50 percent of Toronto’s almost 2.5 million citizens were born outside of Canada, and half of all immigrants to Toronto have been in Canada for less than fifteen years.<sup>36</sup> While the Aboriginal population of the City of Toronto was 13,605, according to the 2006 census, and was 31,910 in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Aboriginal organizations in the city estimate as many as 70,000 Aboriginal residents.<sup>37</sup> While this constitutes one of the largest Aboriginal populations of any Canadian city, it is a tiny, if increasingly vibrant, proportion of the city’s multicultural mix. To many of the non-Indigenous people I interviewed, Toronto appeared to be a place where Indigenous historical presence, and especially the Indigenous sacred, appeared to be wholly absent or to have been destroyed by modernity, something that had been “lost,” and that existed only as a residue, if it existed at all.<sup>38</sup>

Questions of who is Indigenous to Toronto are complex, and it is worth reviewing the outlines of the history of the region to understand the relationship between the current Indigenous population and narratives of Indigenous spiritual presence or haunting in the modern city. Whose ancestors’ bones are buried in the earth? Whose ancestors’ spirits haunt the land? Huron-Wendats and the related Petun (Tionnontrati),<sup>39</sup> Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe peoples have all lived in the Toronto area at various times, but creation and migration stories in oral tradition, archaeological evidence, and linguistic analysis do not cohere to provide easy universally accepted answers to the question of their origins or movements, or the length of their occupation. While the creation stories of all these groups speak to their long residency in the Great Lakes region, the earliest archaeological evidence (c. 9000 BCE) in the immediate Toronto area is of hunter-gatherers, likely the ancestors of Algonquian speak-

ers (though the Anishinaabeg have an oral tradition of migration from the east). Corn growers, the ancestors of the Iroquoian Haudenosaunee, Neutral,<sup>40</sup> and Huron-Wendat peoples, were in the region by at least five hundred CE, but whether they developed in situ from hunter-gatherers who embraced a new corn technology from the south or arrived from the south with an existing corn culture and displaced the hunter-gatherers is unclear.<sup>41</sup> Certainly, by 1100 CE, there were numerous Iroquoian villages along the rivers of the Toronto area. Over the next several centuries, cosmopolitan Wendat and Tiomontari villages flourished in the area (and changed location about every fifty years), while from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, there was a gradual relocation of these villages to the Georgian Bay area, for reasons unknown but variously theorized.<sup>42</sup>

Even after their relocation, these peoples continued to use the Toronto area as hunting territory until 1649, when they were defeated and dispersed by the Haudenosaunee (whose ancestral homeland is considered to be south of Lake Ontario). While some of the defeated Huron-Wendats followed the Jesuits back to Lorette, in Quebec, and others escaped to Michigan and beyond to become the Wyandots, a substantial number of the survivors were adopted and absorbed into the Haudenosaunee; Joseph Brant, for example, had Wendat ancestry.<sup>43</sup> Thus, although historically the Haudenosaunee originated south of Lake Ontario, an unknown number of people now living at Six Nations or in the city have very deep historical roots in the Toronto region through their Wendat or Tiomontari ancestry.<sup>44</sup>

By the 1660s the Haudenosaunee, and particularly the Seneca, were using the Toronto area for hunting, fishing, and fur trading. The mainly Seneca villages of Teiaigon and Ganetsakwyagon appeared on French maps of the Humber and Rouge rivers from the mid-1600s to at least 1687 when they seem to have been abandoned in the wake of a devastating and far-reaching French campaign against the Seneca.

The Toronto area continued to be Haudenosaunee hunting territory until about 1695, but by 1701 a branch of the Anishinaabeg known to the French as the Mississaugas had moved into the area,

and in the Great Peace of Montreal their right to hunt there was recognized by the Haudenosaunee delegates. How the Mississaugas came to be in the region and who retained ultimate jurisdiction over the land remains to this day a source of controversy among both Indigenous peoples and historians. Anishinaabe oral traditions published in the mid-nineteenth century<sup>45</sup> described Anishinaabeg driving the Haudenosaunee out of southern Ontario in a series of fierce battles believed to have occurred in the late 1600s; according to the Mississaugas of New Credit, one battle is said to have been fought at the mouth of the Humber River.<sup>46</sup> In this version the Anishinaabeg gained title to the Toronto region through conquest; the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee then made peace, and Anishinaabe control over the lands north of Lake Ontario was recognized in the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701.<sup>47</sup> Haudenosaunee perspectives, articulated by the Confederacy and scholars of Iroquoian history, such as J. A. Brandao and William Starna, maintain that in 1701, the Haudenosaunee agreed to make peace with the Mississaugas and share the territory for hunting only as part of their deal with France, while the British agreed to guarantee their continued use of their “Beaver Hunting Grounds” (which extended to the Toronto area) through the Nanfan Treaty of the same year.<sup>48</sup> In any event, by the time a French trading fort was established at Toronto in the mid-eighteenth century, the Mississaugas were in de facto possession of the north shore of Lake Ontario; in this area, they were particularly associated with the Credit River because of its very productive salmon fishery.<sup>49</sup> They were in situ when the British gained control of the area in 1760 and founded York, later Toronto, in 1793, and it was they who signed the land surrenders with the British.

Contrary to Kohl’s narrative, the Mississaugas did not subsequently “vanish” from the growing city like mist in some inevitable natural process—they were forced out of the Toronto area. Indeed, the story of the dispossession of the Mississaugas is one that perhaps should haunt Torontonians, but which they and their popular historians rarely seem to know or tell, although academic historians such as Donald B. Smith, Leo Johnson, and Alan Taylor have over the last twenty years minutely detailed that process.<sup>50</sup> After signing the



1805 “confirmation” of the Toronto Purchase and simultaneously agreeing under considerable pressure to a surrender of the adjacent “Mississauga Tract” for 2.5 percent of its market value,<sup>51</sup> the Mississaugas retained only minimal lands in the area, while Toronto’s population increased rapidly following the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, rising from 2,500 in 1815 to 9,256 in 1834 to 30,775 in 1851.<sup>52</sup> Settlers transformed the land, clearing the forest and sowing crops all along the north shore of Lake Ontario, including near the Credit River, west of the city as then constituted. The Mississaugas suffered the destruction of their hunting and fishing grounds, and their numbers dropped by two-thirds within one generation as many died from disease or alcohol abuse, falling from more than five hundred in 1778 to fewer than two hundred by 1818.<sup>53</sup> “Thin and miserable” and obviously suffering from trauma, they agreed in 1818 and 1820 to sell all the remainder of their lands, save for two hundred acres along the Credit River, in order to receive “goods yearly to cover . . . [their] Women and Children,” a supplement to their regular annual presents that was clearly a desperate attempt at self-preservation.<sup>54</sup> Rather than agreeing to an outright sale, the Mississaugas thought they had agreed that the Crown would protect their land from greedy settlers, because members of the band “wanted to keep it for [their] children forever.”<sup>55</sup>

On their last two hundred acres, the Mississaugas then made a radical attempt to save themselves from physical extinction. They began in 1826 to convert to Methodism, renounce alcohol, and become Christian farmers under Kahkewaquonaby, the Mississauga missionary Peter Jones. Yet, despite their rapid “civilization,” which was widely touted by the Methodists, they were unable to gain secure legal title to even this small patch of land. In despair, the Mississaugas left the Credit River in 1847 and were finally given refuge by the Six Nations of Grand River. They moved to a corner of the territory that they had earlier ceded to the British colonizers in 1784 for use by the Six Nations loyalist refugees forced from their homelands during the American Revolution.<sup>56</sup>

Following the forced departure of the Mississaugas, Indigenous people became invisible to Torontonians except as exotic visitors

such as performers in Wild West and other shows or as sellers of crafts at the Ontario Industrial Exhibition.<sup>57</sup> A few high-profile individuals remained visible in the city,<sup>58</sup> but most remaining Indigenous residents were banished from the consciousness of Torontonians, who, like other Canadians, increasingly conceptualized “Indians” as living in the North or West, far from urbanized spaces.<sup>59</sup> Increasing racism and the rejection of intermarriage also led to the shunning of Native relatives and the concealment of Native ancestry.<sup>60</sup>

If those mostly unknown and invisible Indigenous individuals living in the city between 1850 and 1950 seem a bit ghostly to us now, there is also a sense in which Indigenous peoples now living in the city, though very much alive and thriving, can also be said to haunt it. Just as peoples formerly colonized by the British and French have flocked to the European metropolises of their former colonizers, so Toronto’s current Aboriginal inhabitants, the vast majority of whom arrived after World War II, are part of a postcolonial phenomenon arising from a history of oppression and dispossession in which Toronto businesses, government, churches, and residents played an active if rarely acknowledged role.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, Toronto’s current Indigenous population largely represents, in Bonita Lawrence’s words, “the children and grandchildren of people removed, dispersed, and continuously bled off from Native communities”<sup>62</sup> across Canada through such instruments of oppression as the Indian Act, residential schools, colonial land policies, and reserve poverty. While many Indigenous residents of Toronto continue to maintain their connection to their “home” territories or First Nations, others lack official Indian status, are of mixed heritage, and have lost their formal attachment to a band or territory and to other bonds of identity, such as language or clan. As Lawrence says, their identity cannot be adequately understood except as shaped by a legacy of genocide.<sup>63</sup>

While few Indigenous families currently living in Toronto can claim ancestral residency in the city, the majority of Aboriginal residents are of Anishinabe and Haudenosaunee heritage and are thus Indigenous to the broader Great Lakes region, which includes the Toronto area. However, because of globalization, the Toronto

Native community now includes Indigenous people from all over the Americas. Thus, the current Indigenous population of Toronto, like much of the non-Indigenous population, is multicultural, cosmopolitan, and diasporic. In fact, some interviewees expressed a Native version of “placelessness,” where their sense of home was a more generalized or idealized Indigenous space or even an idealized Indigenous past, rather than a specific reserve or territory.<sup>64</sup> For some Indigenous interviewees, contemporary Toronto was that idealized space where divisive or painful histories could be superseded and a pan-Indigenous urban territory could be created. Discourses of Indigenous spiritual presence thus occurred in a context of Indigenous dispossession and alternative place-making.

As Gelder and Jacobs argue in *Uncanny Australia*, however, Indigenous cultures are adaptable and mobile: one is never simply dispossessed, nor can dispossession be completely equated with disempowerment. Rather, they argue, to be out of place provides new ways of being in place. In fact, they argue, “new forms of authority may come into being through the very structures of dispossession.”<sup>65</sup> In Toronto, ghosts, ancestors, and historical discourses of spirit and sacredness are integral to these new forms. As in Gelder and Jacobs’s Australia, the Aboriginal sacred becomes more than a relic of the past; it becomes a new form of authority, facilitating a return of Indigeneity, in the context of dispossession.<sup>66</sup>

Today, with more Native people arriving in the city every day, Toronto’s “Indians” are no longer vanishing. Rather, their past has disappeared—often both their familial past and the Indigenous past of Toronto. Not just “lost,” these are pasts from which Indigenous peoples have been actively dispossessed, both in terms of who controls the actual physical remains and artifacts from that history and who controls the content and form of historical narratives about this past. It is in this context that Indigenous discourses about haunting and ancestral spiritual presence are especially salient, a context in which, among other things, they do symbolic and ideological “work” in the political struggle to reclaim the city’s Indigenous past on Indigenous terms and to reclaim the city as Indigenous territory. Many of the stories I heard of Indigenous spiritual presence in the

Toronto area related to archaeological sites where Indigenous people had lived, were buried, or had used the land in the past. Indigenous haunting, which above all is the *ephemeral* presence of beings from the past, occurs in Toronto in a context where local Indigenous peoples have little or no access to the material remains left by their ancestors. Although roughly 135 Indigenous archaeological sites are known to exist in the City of Toronto, and there are more than 185 in the GTA, many of these known sites are poorly documented and are under threat.<sup>67</sup> Many more are likely to be discovered during ongoing suburban expansion into relatively undisturbed farmlands. Several of the Indigenous people I interviewed were actively involved in political struggles to protect these sites, which were seen as sacred sites even more than as repositories of evidence of an Indigenous past. In fact, Indigenous bones were markers for important connections to land, cultural traditions, and, ultimately, sovereignty.

Interviewees told me that “bones come up for a reason”; the uncovering of human and other remains in the GTA, such as the accidental uncovering of ancient bones during road widening on Teston Road in Vaughan (just north of Toronto) in August 2005, was interpreted by some as a direct communication from the ancestors and a form of strategic action and manifestation of solidarity with Indigenous peoples in the present. The ancestors’ reappearance obstructed wanton and environmentally harmful “development,” asserted Indigenous presence, reclaimed the land, and called for respect, return, and recognition. Certainly, their manifestation directly engaged the settler-colonial state in a complex chain of interactions, claims, and counterclaims that cut to the core of settler-colonial and postcolonial dynamics between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents in the GTA.

Settler disturbance of Indigenous burial sites is a problem with a long history in the Toronto area. Four years after the founding of York in 1793, the colonial authorities issued a Proclamation to Protect the Fishing Places and Burial Grounds of the Mississaugas in response to “many heavy and grievous complaints . . . made by the Mississauga Indians of depredations committed by some of His Majesty’s subjects and others upon their . . . burial



places . . . in violation of decency and good order."<sup>68</sup> Later, nineteenth-century Toronto archaeological investigators such as David Boyle and Andrew F. Hunter removed skeletons and crania from the region's Indigenous burial sites, and academics such as Daniel Wilson displayed them or studied them in local museums.<sup>69</sup> These actions reinforced the widespread North American settler perception that the Indigenous past consisted of "a long chronological period known as prehistory . . . that was inhabited by anonymous ancestors with no particular connection to the aboriginal people of today."<sup>70</sup> Even where archaeologists did make connections between ancient bones and contemporary Indigenous peoples, they still sanctioned a double standard in the treatment of human remains where accidentally uncovered Euro-Canadian remains were immediately reburied but Indigenous ones were retained for scientific study without the consent of descendant groups. This differential treatment was justified on the grounds that scientific knowledge about "Indians" was essential for the public good.<sup>71</sup>

Cultural differences with respect to death and ancestors have been an important aspect of local conflicts over ancestral remains. The Anishinaabe historical scholar Darlene Johnston, an expert witness on Anishinaabe history for the Ipperwash Inquiry into the death of Dudley George (who was shot by the Ontario Provincial Police while nonviolently protecting an Indigenous burial site), noted that both Iroquoian and Anishinaabe spiritual beliefs documented since the seventeenth century and still powerful today accord at least two souls to the dead. One of these souls remains with the bones unless reborn in a child, while another leaves the body after death but remains close by until properly honored through ceremony and feast, after which it travels to the Village of Souls.<sup>72</sup> Thus, for many local Indigenous people today, and perhaps even increasingly as cultural traditions are revived, the remains of the dead are believed to retain a spiritual essence that requires ongoing respect. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the living to care for the dead through visiting, feasting, and prayer; failure to perform these duties harms not only the dead but also the living. If human remains or spiritual objects such as grave goods are handled inappropriately, bad things

may happen to the people and communities involved. Historically, the loss of ancestral lands was especially traumatic because it also entailed separation from the graves of ancestors and thus prevented descendants from carrying out these essential spiritual duties.

In the Jesuit Relation of 1639, Father Paul LeJeune recorded that the Montagnais, another Algonkian-speaking people with similar cultural traits to the Anishinaabeg, referred to the soul that remained with the bones as "the soul of their Nation," a concept that Johnston reported was still resonant among Anishinaabeg today.<sup>73</sup> This conception of death and the ongoing spirit nature of ancestors gives modern local Indigenous peoples who are traditionalists, or even unconscious inheritors of these cultural understandings, a very different orientation to their past and its relation to the present than mainstream Euro-Canadian culture does. The First Nations archaeologist Eldon Yellowhorn speaks of "the perception of the past as a spirit nation" that brings "the mythic era into the daily lives of aboriginal people"<sup>74</sup> (though Yellowhorn describes this as a premodern belief system to be superseded, a position with which many of the people I interviewed would disagree). In an Anishinaabe context, Johnston explained, "the remains of the First Animals [founders of the ancestral clans in the Anishinaabe creation story] contained a powerful spiritual essence that gave birth to the First Humans." She added, "Human remains return to the earth with their spiritual essence intact, continuing the spiritual cycle of birth and rebirth." Indigenous bones, Indigenous ghosts, and ancestral spirits, then, signify much more than individual ancestors; they embody the continuity of the people as a whole.

If "bones come up for a reason," surely the most striking result of such ancestor activism in the Toronto area has been the resurgence of a Huron-Wendat presence in Toronto. Until recently, Toronto archaeologists and administrators, like the general public, had assumed that for all practical purposes the Wendats were an extinct people, whose wishes no longer needed to be taken into account. But in 1997 the Wendat scholar and activist Michel Gros-Louis of Wendake, Quebec, convinced the Royal Ontario Museum to repatriate Wendat bones excavated in the 1930s from the 1636 Feast of Souls

at Ossassane (near Midland, Ontario). The scattered descendants of the Huron-Wendats in Quebec, Michigan, Oklahoma, and elsewhere gathered in Huronia for the first time since their dispersal in 1649. There they ceremonially reburied their ancestors' remains at the site of the original ossuary as part of the first Wendat Feast of Souls held in more than 350 years.<sup>75</sup> Many of the Wendats who attended the ceremony experienced an intense spiritual reconnection with their ancestors, their Ontario homeland, and their living relations,<sup>76</sup> and as a result the Wendats have become an increasingly vocal political force for heritage preservation in southern Ontario, including the Toronto area. For them, the repatriation of the ancestors activated the descendants.

Until recently, the Huron-Wendat people were "completely oblivious to what has been happening to their ancestral habitat," according to David Donnelly, a Toronto lawyer who has represented the Wendake First Nation in relation to Toronto archaeological sites.<sup>77</sup> A precedent was set in 2004, when a court ruled that the Huron-Wendat people should have been consulted before a local Wendat village site (which may also have contained remains) was sold to the Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto for use as a cemetery. In May 2006 the Wendats asked the province to revoke archaeological licenses permitting excavation at a fifteenth-century village site known as Skandaturt in Vaughan, because they had not been properly consulted. Other bands joined the Wendats in demanding a province-wide moratorium on village-site excavations at that time and threatened to occupy the Skandaturt site to support the Wendat protest. In October 2006 the Wendats called for a moratorium on all excavations on Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) lands to ensure that scientific, cultural, and legal principles were being respected, and demanded to know why the Huron-Wendat nation "[had] not been contacted by TRCA for consultation, participation, accommodation, monitoring, ceremony, etc., in any of its archaeological projects."<sup>78</sup>

With the increasing politicization of the Wendats with regard to their ancestors, there has been a shift in local historical consciousness. It is now recognized in the public sphere of Toronto

that the Wendats are a contemporary polity with ancestral ties to the region.<sup>79</sup> There has also been a resurgence of recognition of Wendat ancestry among some Haudenosaunee in the Six Nations territory, where many Wendats were adopted after their defeat by the Iroquois in 1649–50 but gradually lost their distinctive identity over the generations.<sup>80</sup>

The archaeological activism of the Wendats and other groups, such as the Haudenosaunee, is a response to the rampant destruction of Indigenous archaeological sites in the region, where thousands of sites have already been destroyed because of weak provincial legislation.<sup>81</sup> While the Cemeteries Act provides some protection for burial sites, other legislation covers nonhuman remains, such as village sites and the thousands of artifacts recovered from them. First Nations have no legal control over those items, nor is there a legal requirement to consult with them regarding such artifacts, which serves the interests of developers and governments intent on quickly clearing land for new construction. The Eurocentric legal separation of the "sacred" and "non-sacred" does not reflect First Nations cultural understandings of an interconnected "living cosmos" in constant flux, where all aspects of the world manifest spirit, and humans, animals, objects, and other spirits may influence or be transformations of each other. For example, as the archaeologist Ron Williamson has noted, "a flint spearhead is a prosaic hunting tool to archaeologists, but in both Iroquoian and Anishinabe creation stories, flint represents the blood or bodies of culture heroes."<sup>82</sup> Thus, all artifacts of the ancestors contribute to the sacredness of a place. While many sites are destroyed without ever being excavated, even those sites that are excavated in the GTA employ "salvage" archaeology conducted by private archaeologists hired by developers, and these sites are usually permanently destroyed once excavation is completed.

Because of legislative ambiguity over the question of ownership of archaeological remains, whether they are village or hunting sites or individual artifacts, virtually all excavated items remain completely out of the reach of the descendants of the peoples who created the artifacts in the first place. By law, archaeologists are required to

hold all objects in trust for the people of Ontario until such artifacts can be placed in a public institution, but since there is no public money provided for their preservation or curation, hundreds of thousands of artifacts are inappropriately stored wherever archaeologists can find the space, and have sometimes been inadvertently discarded, such as when four hundred thousand Wendat artifacts at the University of Toronto were mistakenly sent to a garbage dump in Michigan.<sup>83</sup> Meanwhile, the Wendats of Wendake, Quebec, whose ancestors lived in the Toronto area, are attempting to create their own museum of Wendat history on their own territory in Quebec but have virtually no artifacts of their ancestors that they can call their own.<sup>84</sup>

In her comments to the Ipperwash inquiry, Prof. Johnston articulated an important distinction between the two souls of Indigenous ancestors: “the fear of the disembodied soul vs. tenderness toward the soul that remains with the body.”<sup>85</sup> Commentators such as Paul LeJenne in the seventeenth century and Peter Jones in the nineteenth commented on the fear of the living toward souls that have left the body to travel with dead relatives and on the efforts of the living to get ghosts to leave.<sup>86</sup> These beliefs, mixed with elements from European traditions, underlay my interviewees’ representations of ghosts as unhappy spirit beings from the past who remained in the human world to remind the living of what was unfinished or lost or because they were unable to move on to the spirit world. They were unsettled, not properly put to rest or accorded appropriate respect, often because of colonialism. Such ghosts haunted both people and places, making places unlivable or uncomfortable, and were dangerous to people in the present. For example, haunting was cited as the reason for a cave-in during the demolition of the Uptown Theatre on Yonge Street that caused the death of an innocent bystander in 2003; the theatre was disrespectfully built over an ancient Indigenous burial ground.<sup>87</sup>

Such haunting did not necessarily involve visual apparitions of dead people, though a couple of people showed me photographs of what they perceived to be Indigenous spirits hovering over historic Toronto lands such as village sites. Some interviewees spoke instead

of experiencing historical trauma, especially of one’s own ancestors or of Indigenous ancestors generally, either as a haunting energy in the Toronto environment or as physical or emotional pain in the body or psyche, where one was literally possessed by the pain of previous generations.<sup>88</sup> A man of Seneca heritage told me that he knew his own ancestor had been murdered by the French at Teiaiagon, the seventeenth-century Seneca village on the Humber River in western Toronto, because of the terrible pain in his shoulder that assailed him one day while he was walking along the Humber River not far from the village site. He spoke of sensing the souls of the dead, who he said still haunted the area because so many had been killed in an attack by the French in 1687 that they had not been properly feasted.<sup>89</sup>

The connections between historical trauma and ancestors were also highlighted in a remarkable series of commentaries by the Mohawk traditionalist and city resident William Woodworth on four lectures on the Indigenous history of the Toronto area given by the City of Toronto’s chief curator Carl Benn, a noted historian of Iroquois history and of the city’s Fort York. These lectures, given in May and June 2006, were part of the Humanitas Festival, an attempt by the City of Toronto to kickstart its initiative to create a new civic institution that would “tell Toronto’s stories” to the world. Benn had suggested in his scholarly account that the Seneca villages on the Humber and Rouge rivers may have already been abandoned by the time the French governor Denonville sailed past Toronto on his way back to New France after ransacking Seneca villages south of Lake Ontario in 1687, since Denonville did not mention them in his journal but boasted of attacking other Seneca villages. Contesting Benn’s remarks, Woodworth said there was an oral tradition that Teiaiagon had been destroyed by fire, the people massacred by the French, and the whole area around Toronto deforested. Woodworth spoke further of how he had formerly hated being in Toronto because of the “dark energy” he felt in the city, which he described as a deep sense of abandonment, because the souls of the dead had not been properly addressed and cared for. He recalled, “I used to hate it here; it hurt me [because] of the history. . . . I feel genocide

in Toronto.” He spoke of Baby Point (the site of Teiaagon) as a sacred place, sanctified by the horror of what happened there, and described the English houses built over the site as the epitome of colonization.<sup>90</sup>

Evaluating such comments is a difficult task for a historian trained in the Western academic discipline of history, which generally privileges textual records over oral traditions (though historians of Indigenous history are increasingly grappling with the latter); secular accounts over those that draw on other-than-human spiritual forces; material or oral evidence over intuitive knowledge; and critical distance over emotional connection and identification, all of which are elements of the historical consciousness and worldview of many contemporary Indigenous peoples (and also of many non-Indigenous people, especially those who are religious). But from Indigenous perspectives, the distanced, “neutral” tone of academic historical narratives can be equally problematic. Woodworth spoke of how horrifying it was to hear his ancestors’ painful experience “objectified” by an academic historian. He spoke of how Native people were inside the history and the feeling of the history—they did not just think about this history in their heads but experienced it bodily, even in the DNA their ancestors had passed on to them—a view shared by a number of interviewees. For them, the more “objective” accounts of history were empty, because they did not address the way they were haunted by the historical experience passed on to them or the spiritual connection they felt with their ancestors.

Such emotional, bodily, or “energetic” haunting can be interpreted in various ways. Regardless of one’s beliefs regarding the existence of ancestral souls, ghosts, spiritual energy, or blood memory, at the very least one can consider such experiences a form of “postmemory,” which Marianne Hirsch defines as the memory of later generations not directly involved in the original traumatic event, whose own lives are “dominated by narratives that preceded their birth,” by “events that can be neither [fully] understood nor recreated.”<sup>91</sup> Indigenous healers often describe the same phenomena as intergenerational trauma. According to Indigenous psychologists, intergenerational trauma is itself a form of memory, truer than anything written in the history

books about Indigenous experience, which can often be passed on wordlessly, as in the familial dysfunction caused by the experience of the Trail of Tears mentioned earlier in this paper. According to the Native American psychologists Eduardo and Bonnie Duran, many Indigenous people are possessed or haunted by the past.<sup>92</sup> Traumatic memory, characterized by flashbacks, nightmares, and anxiety attacks, occurs when the past is uncontrollably relived, when the distance between past and present collapses.<sup>93</sup> In the case of Indigenous people, there is not one trauma but many, over a long time period, not just their own personal experience, but that of their ancestors over generations. A common feature of such traumas is that those who survive feel they must not betray those who were overwhelmed by the trauma (such as ancestors), and reliving the past becomes a necessary commemoration, though it may also be re-traumatizing.<sup>94</sup>

The healing of traumatic memory, according to Dominick LaCapra, begins when the past becomes accessible to recall in memory and language, providing some conscious control, distance, and perspective, so that those who are haunted begin working through the trauma, laying ghosts to rest—but, as Duran and Duran emphasize, there are very culturally specific ways to propitiate such ghosts.<sup>95</sup> Indigenous forms of expression are critical to such healing. On the other hand, historical narratives imposed by outsiders can be experienced as re-traumatizing.

While the painful experience of ancestors affected many Indigenous interviewees directly, their connection to their ancestors was by no means only negative. The distinction articulated by Johnston in responses to the two souls of the Indigenous dead was echoed in the difference in how people spoke of Indigenous ghosts haunting the city and of the beneficial spiritual presence of Indigenous ancestors in their own lives. Many of the people I interviewed had had positive experiences of the spiritual presence of their ancestors, who admonished them, guided them, or helped them heal.<sup>96</sup> While some of the non-Indigenous Torontonians I interviewed were also very interested in their ancestors and imagined them vividly, and a few sensed them as spiritual presences even if they had lived on other continents, almost all my Aboriginal interviewees felt deeply con-

nected to history through their ancestors. As one audience member at the Humanitas talks put it, “[Woodworth] is not a historian but he feels very personally connected to the history in a way that I don’t think generally people in the Western tradition feel. . . . I don’t feel it and I don’t think [Benn] feels that connection. . . . I don’t feel that connection with my European ancestors of 400 years ago.”<sup>97</sup>

But for many of the Indigenous people I interviewed, their ancestors were, in some sense, still alive; although they had “passed on,” they continued to work for present and future generations in another medium, from another level of reality, and to be aware of how their descendants treated them in turn. The relationship between ancestors and descendants could best be described as based on reciprocity, one of the most fundamental Indigenous values, and one that promotes strength and continuance.<sup>98</sup> Reciprocity and relationship with ancestors helped Indigenous interviewees find the persistence necessary to endure in a colonial context, despite the legacy of cultural genocide.

For a number of the Indigenous interviewees, their awareness of the presence of their ancestors in their lives produced a sense of doubleness, in which past and present coexisted; thus, their sense of the present included a sense of repetition and return. For example, some interviewees identified with their ancestors when colonial patterns were repeated, such as when they experienced a lack of power in negotiations over land. “I can understand now what happened to our ancestors because we’re in the same boat,” a Mississauga interviewee who had taken part in land-claims negotiations recounted.<sup>99</sup> Others connected with the spirits of ancestors through treaties, ceremonies, and traditional practices because of their consciousness that these were how the ancestors had provided for future generations. For some, there was even a sense of becoming one with the ancestors, a communion of spirit. As one person I interviewed said, there is “this tremendous interweaving of tradition and personal life.” He explained, “My personal life is a lot more than a personal life. It is actually a repetition of ancestral ways and I’m carrying it. These aren’t my decisions, it’s just my nature and I’m actually streaming it.”<sup>100</sup> Whether or not Indigenous historical consciousness was primarily cyclical in the past—a matter of considerable debate among

historians of Indigenous history<sup>101</sup>—paradigms of historical return or historical cycles were articulated by many of my interviewees. These were employed not only as a sign of Indigenous difference, but also because if the future is a return to the past, there is hope for an end to colonialism and a return of Indigenous sovereignty.

In contrast to most of the non-Indigenous people I interviewed, Indigenous interviewees felt a deep sense of responsibility toward their ancestors, to protect their physical remains, to survive as a people, and to teach future generations their history and the cultural practices they created (though some members of immigrant groups also felt a very strong commitment to preserve language, culture, and the continuous identity of their ethnic group). As Woodworth commented during the Humanitas lectures, this sense of duty is highlighted by the fact that local Indigenous cultures exist only here; they are localized, particular, and unique. Indigenous North Americans, he said, are the only ones who have not crossed the oceans and gone to live elsewhere; they may have been displaced through forced removal and other effects of colonialism, but they have not disappeared. Many Indigenous interviewees insisted on a strong sense of Indigenous continuity in Toronto: it was “a place infused by [their] energy,” “very much alive and very much imbued with the spirit of its history,” “covered with the footprints of ancestors.”<sup>102</sup>

While unfeasted or ill-treated spirits may make places uninhabitable, it is ancestors who make a place sacred. A form of the past experienced in the present by many of the Indigenous people I interviewed was the accumulated energy or spirit of places in Toronto, such as the site of Teiaiagon or Spirit Island, an energy they perceived as coming from the traces of all the beings that had inhabited that place before, the events that had occurred there, the emotions and words expressed, prayers said, offerings left, the bones and remains of the dead in the earth, the blood spilt or tears shed. The feeling and energy of places in Toronto reflected how the land itself had been treated—whether it had been treated with respect in the past, was appropriately honored and nourished through ceremony, and thus was a healthy place, or whether it had become a place of desecration and pain. The spiritual energy of a place also reflected

the influence of non-human spirit beings on that place. Some of the Indigenous people I spoke to conceived of invisible lines of power that linked places to other places in a web or grid of spirit energy; to them, Toronto was a place linked to others in a vast web of spirit. It was the role of human beings to try to maintain this web by ensuring balance, the good energy of a place, which would then actively influence what transpired there. It was this energy—an energy that contained within it all the historical experience of the place—that the people attending the Spirit Island ceremony sought to connect to.

With similar understandings, Woodworth spoke to the Humantash Festival audience about his vision to create a new sacred site for condolence ceremonies on the original Toronto waterfront to bring arriving immigrants to the city into spiritual relationship with the Indigenous ancestors of the land. He called on the Indigenous peoples of the area to resume their ancient hosting duties and to adopt newcomers into their clans. In a brochure for his Beacon to the Ancestors Foundation, he wrote that through seventeen specific ceremonies over a twelve-month period Toronto would be “reinvigorated and recontextualized in the spirit of the Ancestors,” with “reconciliation and healing between peoples, with the ancestors, and with the created world itself.”

In his historical understanding, the city’s famous CN Tower was the modern realization of the Great Tree of Peace, envisioned thousands of years ago in the prophecy of the Peacemaker:

The *Hotinonshon:ni* prophecy of gathering the peoples from the four directions under the Great White Pine Tree of Peace is now coming to fruition. In a place still named in the language of the Ancestors, peoples from virtually every part of the world find refuge in Toronto. The original *Hotinonshon:ni* teachings instruct us to share with all peoples who visit our lands. In an understanding held in the Two Row Wampum, our many Ancestors agreed to share this place in our separate yet collateral streams. The time has come to recover and refresh these old responsibilities in this special place which is nurturing a powerful form of global community.<sup>103</sup>

Woodworth’s interpretations of history and the Peacemaker’s prophecies may be idiosyncratic, and are specifically Haudenosaunee-based in a way that Anishinaabe commentators might not relate to, but his general orientation to the past is broadly discernible among the many Indigenous people I have talked to in my research and in numerous other circumstances. In interpreting the past and present through Indigenous prophecy, Woodworth was not alone in seeing the words of the ancestors become manifest. Others I spoke to viewed Toronto history through the interpretative framework of the Seven Fires prophecy of the Anishinaabeg. This, I believe, is an orientation to the past that deeply affects how many Indigenous people interact with the Western discipline of history (particularly those who self-identify as traditional) and how they understand their history and present life in Toronto.

Indigenous assertions about the spiritual presence and activities of ancestors in Toronto are, among other things, claims to the validity of Indigenous knowledge practices and point to the fundamental question of authority in the construction of historical narratives. People of Indigenous heritage who I interviewed for my research were far more likely to give primacy to oral tradition, literally the words of the ancestors, which they sought from elders and trusted over professional historians’ information and interpretations and the documentary records produced by colonizers. For example, while historians’ narratives have often focused on conflict between Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Anishinaabe peoples, Indigenous interviewees stressed that archivally documented historical conflicts represent a short period of post-contact turmoil, whereas oral tradition speaks of millennia of regional interaction and mainly peaceful coexistence.

As noted earlier, several Indigenous interviewees spoke of knowing aspects of Toronto history through feeling and intuition and through direct, often bodily experience<sup>104</sup> rather than through intellectual knowledge of official historical narratives focused on events and chronologies, although many people I interviewed were also well versed in these. Some spoke of encountering ancestral spirits through direct communication in a vision or a dream.<sup>105</sup> Even when



the past was narrated in stories in the oral tradition, the story itself, even apart from its content, was experienced as carrying spiritual life energy from the past, medicine from the ancestors, that would help sustain the spirit of the people.<sup>106</sup> In such instances the past was experienced as a presence as much as and perhaps even more than as historical narrative, and as continuity more than as a sequence of discrete events.

In the Humanitas lectures, Woodworth spoke of the fact that much Indigenous knowledge was not shared with outsiders, that many stories were told only among Native people and were not shared. They were “protected by the ancestral energy—they’re not in history.”<sup>107</sup> The Mohawk historical scholar Susan Hill (among many others) has also spoken of the spiritual repercussions of disrespectful relations to sacred knowledge.<sup>108</sup> Thus, Indigenous knowledge can be for others a kind of absence, something concealed from the gaze of the “marauding” and secular non-Indigenous world.<sup>109</sup>

Because of this secrecy, claims about Toronto’s history based on Indigenous knowledge may sometimes be associated by others with the possibility of deception. The suspicion or fear that some Indigenous people are “inventing” history for their own purposes relates specifically and especially to Indigenous claims made about historical events or historical places based on non-rational, spiritual or sacred knowledge, including communication with ancestors, which is essentially unverifiable through Western historical practices.<sup>110</sup> But, perhaps, as Gelder and Jacobs suggest, rather than focusing solely on the issue of verification in the Western sense, it is more fruitful to consider that the Indigenous sacred, and in this case, the historical Indigenous sacred, represents what Western historical practices cannot describe or explain.” Perhaps, as they suggest, this is a case of Lyotard’s *différand*, “a case of conflict . . . that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgment applicable to both arguments,” where “one side’s legitimacy does not imply the other’s lack of legitimacy,” a condition of incommensurability.<sup>111</sup> The Canadian historian Toby Morantz suggested a similar incommensurability in her consideration of the blending of oral history with Western approaches to the history of the Swampy Cree.<sup>112</sup>

Other Canadian historians of Indigenous history, such as Keith Thor Carlson, are grappling with similar questions.<sup>113</sup> Among Indigenous scholars, there is also critical discussion about the nature and role of various forms of Indigenous knowledge in the construction of historical narratives.<sup>114</sup>

In addition to presenting problems of verification, Indigenous knowledge claims about ancestral spiritual presence in Toronto may also cause settlers anxiety because of their inherent unboundedness; from a non-Indigenous perspective, such knowledge is unpredictable and beyond colonial control.<sup>115</sup> It thus at least potentially institutes new forms of authority and power for Indigenous people. Perhaps for these reasons—and because of increased Indigenous confidence and the need to speak publicly of the sacred when it is increasingly under threat—there is, according to Gelder and Jacobs, an “amplification of the sacred” in Australia,<sup>116</sup> an assertion that more and more previously unknown sites are sacred, for example. This phenomenon is also observable in Toronto. For example, one Indigenous activist in Toronto has claimed that a large mound on the floodplain of the Humber River near the site of Teiaiagon is an ancient “thunderbird” mound; he told me he discovered this knowledge not only through investigation of the shape of the mound and other physical characteristics but also through visionary contact with an ancient leader buried there. The activist posted signs on the mound identifying it as an Indigenous sacred site and warning others to stay away, creating a new geography of Indigenous significance in the city.<sup>117</sup>

Yet the marshaling of discourses of Indigenous ghosts and ancestors can also prove uncontrollable to Indigenous residents. Unlike the situation in a reserve community, where the community is bounded and is itself the ultimate verifier of Indigenous knowledge and a check on spurious claims, in the free-floating more open-ended Indigenous communities of the city, where new people are constantly arriving and others leaving, individuals who do not have strong connections with Indigenous communities or a solid grounding in Indigenous culture can attach themselves to the Indigenous sacred, make claims regarding their knowledge of an unverifiable oral tradition through unknown Indigenous ancestors, and attract a

following, especially of less culturally knowledgeable Indigenous or non-Indigenous city dwellers. Such people may have little or no support from knowledgeable elders in the city's Indigenous community or from leaders at Wendake, New Credit, or Six Nations, or be only cautiously tolerated when the result is good (such as the preservation of archaeological sites), even if the means are questionable. In Toronto this phenomenon is remarked on by various Indigenous and non-Indigenous commentators, and their most damning criticisms of such people are not only that they may use questionable historical evidence or speak for communities they do not actually represent, but that they do not have the ancestry they claim, that the Indigenous ancestors and cultural heritage they claim are guiding their actions are bogus.<sup>118</sup> This was the single most common criticism I heard of activists involved in Indigenous heritage preservation in the city, and one that various activists made about each other in disputes over heritage, identity, and cultural knowledge, disputes that are themselves the legacy of colonialism.

For many Indigenous people in Toronto, as elsewhere in the world, Indigenety is, of necessity, both heritage and project.<sup>119</sup> Ancestral spirit energy was perceived by many of my interviewees as actively reasserting an Indigenous historical and spiritual presence both on the landscape and on the dreamscape of the city, acting simultaneously on multiple levels of reality, only some of them visible in everyday life. Ancestral spirits assured and represented Indigenous continuity and remade the city as Indigenous sacred space, creating or recreating geographies of meaning and spirit that on the one hand could be used to assert difference, including the validity of a particular kind of knowledge, and on the other hand could unsettle non-Indigenous residents in a way that promoted greater recognition of an Indigenous historical presence and opened up the possibility of healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and settler-immigrant peoples. Thus, ancestors were not perceived as dead relics of a premodern past but as active and dialogic, influencing modernity in Toronto, though Toronto's modernity also reshaped the narratives of ancestors in turn, by reformulating the context in which they were active.<sup>120</sup> Because narratives of Indigenous ancestors

and ghosts in Toronto represent many things that Western historical practices cannot or do not describe or account for in relation to the region's Indigenous past, these spirit beings can be understood ultimately as expressing Indigenous historical consciousness in the city.

## NOTES

*Some interviewees referenced in the text and in the notes below are identified by pseudonyms.*

1. Popular conceptions of "medicine wheels" are largely an invented Plains tradition, according to the Pitkanani (Peigan) archaeologist Eldon Yellowstone, "Awakening of Internalist Archaeology in the Aboriginal World," 200-1.
2. Simcoe, *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, 184.
3. See Mississaugaas of the New Credit First Nation, *Toronto Purchase Specific Claim*.
4. See Smith, *Sacred Feathers*.
5. This claim of pre-1700 Anishinaabe occupation of the Toronto Islands was made by the Great Indian Bus Tour originator Rodney Bobiwash, in his chapter "A History of Native People in the Toronto Area: An Overview" in *Meeting Place*, ed. Sanderson and Howard-Bobiwash, 8. According to Bobiwash, "There is no doubt that the Toronto Islands were a stopping place along the migration route," but his source or reasons for saying this are not clear. In his discussion of the Great Migration, he quotes from the Anishinaabe elder Eddie Benton-Benai's rendition of the oral tradition in *The Mishomis Book*, but the latter depicts the migrating Anishinaabeg as traveling along the southern rather than northern shore of Lake Ontario. However, there are a number of versions of the routes taken by various subgroups of the Anishinaabeg.
6. Kenyon, "Prehistoric Cemetery," and Emerson, "The Village and the Cemetery," 181-83.
7. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 10:375ff.
8. Alanis King, tour guide, Great Indian Bus Tour, October 29, 2005.
9. I have interviewed forty-five Toronto residents to date, almost half of them of Indigenous heritages. My data is suggestive rather than a statistically accurate representative sample of the Toronto population.
10. See Sigmund Freud's influential essay "The 'Uncanny'."
11. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 23.
12. Cf. Jennifer Cole, quoted in Shaw, *Memoirs of the Slave Trade*, 49.
13. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 30.
14. The city's current motto is "diversity our strength."
15. City of Toronto, *Humantias*, 18, 27; "Toronto's Hidden History: Why

Doesn't the City Have a Proper Museum to Showcase Its Past?" *Toronto Star*, January 21, 2007. At: Pier Giorgio De Cicco, "How to Showcase Toronto," *Toronto Star*, February 19, 2007, A13; "More Than One Plan in Place for T.O. City Museum," *Toronto Star*, January 28, 2007, A7.

16. Archaeological Services, *Master Plan*, 12. The authors note "little widespread awareness of the depth of this pre-contact settlement history, or general knowledge of the societies that inhabited Ontario prior to the onset of Euro-Canadian settlement." This assessment is born out in the interviews I conducted for my research on historical memory in Toronto.

17. City of Toronto, *Humanities*, 20–23.

18. However, in 2002, in partnership with the Native-run Woodland Cultural Centre of Brantford, the ROM hosted an exhibit on the nineteenth-century Mohawk doctor and Toronto resident, Oronhyatekha (Dr. Peter Martin), a significant Aboriginal historical figure from the city's past.

19. See the City of Toronto's Web site at [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca).

20. Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 12.

21. Sanderson and Howard-Bobiwash, *Meeting Place*. See also Robinson, *Toronto during the French Regime*, and, more recently, Dieterman, *Mississauga*, and Williamson, *Toronto*.

22. The two families were observed in 1793 by Joseph Bouchette, as he recounted in *British Dominions in North America*, 189. Most popular authors have shown little comprehension of the depth of Indigenous history in the region or the fact that the Mississaugas had been decimated by smallpox by the time the British arrived. They also show little comprehension of Mississauga land-use patterns, involving seasonal resource collection in various locations, so the fact that two families were on site when the British arrived was not necessarily a measure of the "emptiness" of the land.

23. An incomplete deed to the land found several years after the negotiations of 1787 was blank where the description of the area ceded should have been, and the marks of three chiefs from the Toronto area were on separate papers attached to it. It is unclear if presents distributed to the Mississaugas at the 1787 meeting at the Bay of Quinte or during the surveying of the land in 1788 were intended as specific payment for the purchase of Toronto lands. For details of the current claim, see Mississaugas of New Credit, *Toronto Purchase Specific Claim*, and Indian Claims Commission, *Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation Inquiry: Toronto Purchase Claim*, June 2003.

24. Early major histories of Toronto, such as Scadding and Dent, *Toronto, Past and Present*; Mulvany, Adam, and Blackett Robinson, *History of Toronto and County of York*; Adam, *Toronto: Old and New*; and Middleton, *Municipality of Toronto*, make little or no reference to the Toronto Purchase. More recent works generally do, but they rarely address its problematic nature.

25. In fact, the term "prehistory" appears to have been coined in 1851 by the University of Toronto's first professor of history and English, Sir Daniel Wilson, according to Killan, *David Boyle*, 85. The term was coined before Wilson's arrival in Toronto. See also Ash et al., *Thinking with Both Hands*. North American writers immediately latched on to "prehistory" as a categorical catch-basin into which Indians were put" (Cohn, *History's Shadow*, 211).

26. Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 11.

27. Furniss, "Challenging the Myth," 188.

28. Settler hauntings have a long genealogy and political significance in Canada and have been examined by Cameron, "Indigenous Spectrality and the Politics of Postcolonial Ghost Stories," 383–93; and in many of the essays of the *University of Toronto Quarterly* 75, no. 2 (Spring 2006), a special issue with the theme of haunting in Canadian cultural production, especially Bentley's "Shadows in the Soul," and Carrou's "Haunted Prairie." Carrou distinguishes between the very different deployment of ghosts and spectral/spiritual presence in literature by Indigenous and settler writers.

29. Kohl, *Travels in Canada*, 2:14.

30. The debate about the meaning of the name is sometimes vociferous. Henry Scadding, Toronto's first historian, was of the view that the word meant "meeting place," which became the most common translation and was used, for example, in the *Meeting Place: Aboriginal Life in Toronto*, ed. Sanderson and Howard-Bobiwash, and published by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto in 1997. John Steckley, the foremost linguist of the Huron-Wendat language, has proposed "sticks in the water" or "fish weir" as more accurate translations of Mohawk "Tkaronto," and suggests that it was first applied to the ancient fish weir at The Narrows between Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching ("Toronto" Meaning Lost in Translation," *Toronto Star*, December 24, 2007, sidebar at <http://www.thestar.com/News/Ontario/article/288382>). According to Michel Gros-Louis, a Wendat linguist, the word also has a sense of "abundant life" (private communication, July 23, 2006). Peter Jones, in *History of the Ojebway Indians*, said the word meant "a looming of trees," while Mohawk interviewee William Woodworth was told by Haudenosaunee elders that the word comes from *delondo*, a Mohawk word for a log, or fallen white pine. The anthropologist Heather Howard argued in her doctoral dissertation, "Dreamcatchers in the City," that the multiple meanings should not be seen as mutually exclusive. Percy J. Robinson, in *Toronto during the French Regime*, referred to early French maps showing the word "Toronto" or "Taranto" attached to Lake Simcoe, the general region of Lake Simcoe, or rivers or portage routes leading to it, including, eventually the Humber River. From the evidence of French maps, it does not appear to have been originally applied to the Toronto area,

though some Haudenosaunee people contest this. The City of Toronto Web site says it means “fish weir.”

31. William Woodworth, Interview with author, July 19, 2006. This comment reflects the general conception of language in the Indigenous oral tradition: “Native people view words as living, breathing, dynamic beings. . . . Uttered sound vibrations possess physical and spiritual energies that find their expression in the voices and visions of all sentient beings. . . . Words carry one’s physical totality or state of being and become part of one’s being. . . . To Native people, then, words affirm existence” (Einhorn, *Native American Oral Tradition*, 3).

32. “Indigeneity” has a number of definitions. It does not refer only to being in a given territory first. The Acoma Pueblo writer Simon Ortiz speaks of Indigeneity as “Indigenous land, culture and community that is a way of life for Indigenous American people because of the connection or bond that is primarily articulated as a sharing of responsibilities or sacred trust (spiritual law or principles) between Indigenous human culture and the land that is native and aboriginal to them” (pers. comm., November 27, 2007). The Seminole historian Susan Miller defines “indigenouness” as a pattern of characteristics shared by politics that are not organized as nation-states but conceive of their peoples as communities within a living and sacred cosmos (Miller, “Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm,” 25–45). Jeffrey Sissons defines Indigenous cultures as those “that have been transformed through the struggles of colonized peoples to resist and redirect projects of settler nationhood” (*First Peoples*, 15).

33. Sneia Marina Gunew, also commented on this phenomenon in *Haunted Nations*, 128.

34. By the beginning of the twentieth century these rivers were buried underground and had combined with sewers.

35. Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, quoted in Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 28.

36. According to Statistics Canada 2006 Census figures, there are 5.47 million people in the Greater Toronto Area (“Release of the 2006 Census on Language, Immigration, Citizenship, Mobility/Migration,” [http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006\\_lang\\_imm\\_citizenship\\_mobility\\_background.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_lang_imm_citizenship_mobility_background.pdf)).

37. Lawrence gives a figure of seventy thousand, including mixed-blood, non-status people (“*Real? Indians and Others*, 17). The City of Toronto posts a figure of 13,605 “reported” Aboriginal people, but many Indigenous people do not participate in censuses. See “Release of the 2006 Census on Persons of Aboriginal Identity,” [http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006\\_aboriginal\\_identity\\_background.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_aboriginal_identity_background.pdf).

38. Gelder and Jacobs describe a similar phenomenon in *Uncanny Australia*, 1.

39. The Petun or Tiomontani were politically distinct but culturally very similar to and related to the Huron-Wendats; the two peoples lived in proximity both in the Toronto area and later in Huronia. For simplicity I will refer subsequently to the Huron-Wendats only, but this is understood to mean both groups.

40. The Neutrals lived just west of Toronto; the Niagara Escarpment marked the border region between these groups. Warrick, “Population History of the Huron-Petun,” 362; Sioui, *Huron/Wendat*, 56, 83.

41. Archaeology records the presence of Paleo-Indian big-game hunters from 9000 to 7000 B.C., and Archaic hunter-gatherers to 1000 B.C., of whom very little is known but who may have been ancestral to both Algonquian (Anishinaabeg) and Iroquoian groups. While some scholars and some Iroquoian oral traditions suggest Iroquoian migration from elsewhere, likely the south, Trigger and others argue that local Woodland cultures appear to have evolved after 500 A.D. into corn-growing cultures that gradually developed the classic form of Iroquoian culture, with longhouse villages, corn-beans-squash horticulture, and matrilineal descent (Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic*, 105–48). See also Sioui, *Huron/Wendat*, and Wright, *History of the Native People of Canada*.

42. It has been suggested that the Huron-Wendats moved north to distance themselves from Iroquois enemies and/or to be closer to major trading routes and Algonquians who provided them with meat, fur, and other trade items. Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic*, 164–68, and Sioui, *Huron/Wendat*, 72.

43. Kelsay, *Joseph Brant*, 43.

44. David Redwolf, in a March 19, 2006, interview with the author, spoke of at least two thousand people at Six Nations as having Wendat ancestry, but I have no confirmation of this figure.

45. George Copway, Peter Jones, and William Warren all published Anishinaabeg oral tradition of this conquest, and this version of the history is accepted as fact by many historians, including Peter Schmalz, Donald B. Smith, and Leroy V. Eid. See Eid, “Ojibwa–Iroquois War”; Schmalz, *Ojibwa of Southern Ontario*; and Smith, “Who Are the Mississauga?”

46. Mississaugas of New Credit, *Toronto Purchase Specific Claim*. Peter Schmalz, working from Anishinaabe, Wyandot, and Haudenosaunee oral traditions and French records, suggested that Teiaigon may have been one of ten Iroquois villages destroyed by the Mississaugas in their conquest of southern Ontario (“Role of the Ojibwa in the Conquest of Southern Ontario,” 340). According to Peter Jones in *History of the Ojebway Indians*, the beach of Burlington Bay was the site of the last battle.

47. Schmalz, *Ojibwa of Southern Ontario*, 26–33; Jones, *History of the Ojibway Indians*, also related the proceedings of a council on the Credit River in 1840 renewing the peace and friendship treaty between the Anishinabeg and Haudenosaunee, 114–22. See also Smith, “Who Are the Mississauga?” 215–17.
48. See Brandao and Starna, “Treaties of 1701.”
49. William Claus to Lieutenant-Governor Maitland, York, May 1, 1819, Library and Archives Canada, Colonial Office 42, 362:203, referenced in Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 39.
50. See Smith, “Dispossession of the Mississauga Indians.”
51. Johnson, “Mississauga-Lake Ontario Land Surrender of 1805,” 249.
52. Masters, *Rise of Toronto*, 8, 11.
53. Return of the Missesayey, September 23, 1787, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Record Group (hereafter RG) 10, 1834:197; W. Claus to Lieutenant-Governor Maitland, York, May 1, 1819, Colonial Office 42, 362:203, referenced in Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 39.
54. William Claus, “Minutes of the Proceedings of a Council at the River au Credit on the 27th, 28th and 29th October, 1818,” LAC, Claus Papers, Vol. 11, 110–12.
55. Joseph Sawyer, John Jones to Sir John Colborne, River Credit, April 3, 1829, LAC, RG 10, 5:47.
56. Their removal to New Credit is described in Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 212.
57. For example, in December 1856, Mr. Ma-zaw-keyaw-se-gay and Mr. and Mrs. Mah-koone performed at St. Lawrence Hall. The latter was described in the program as a “grand-daughter of the famous, brave and warlike, yet generous and hospitable Captain Brant,” while in March 1858, Kawshawgance and his troupe gave a performance “illustrating the manners and customs of the Rocky Mountain Indians” at St. Lawrence Hall (Guillet, *Toronto*, 409, 411). Later Indigenous performers included Pauline Johnson and Frances Nickawa.
58. For example, Oronhyarekha (Dr. Peter Martin), Alex Johnson, Ellen Hill, James Ross, Dr. Peter Edmund Jones (the son of Peter Jones), George Henry Jr., Francis Assignack, Frederick Loft, Ethel Monture, Fioretra Katherine Maracle, and John Sero-Brant, as well as Pauline Johnson and her siblings Evelyn and Allen Wawanosh Johnson, were all Toronto residents at various times. Other “civilized Indians” involved with Christian missionary and educational efforts, such as Peter Jones, Alan Salt, and others, visited Toronto regularly to meet with members of missionary societies and attend missionary conferences. That less well-known Indigenous people still lived in or frequented the city is suggested by an 1859 painting of the first Union Station in Toronto, which clearly shows an Aboriginal woman with a basket waiting for a train heading west (William Armstrong, “First Union Station” [1859], Watercolour, Toronto Public Library, Acc. John Ross Robertson Collection 291).
59. Amelia Kalant, *National Identity and the Conflict at Oka*, 81.
60. Sanderson and Howard-Bobiwash, *Meeting Place*, 20–22. See also Van Kirk, “What If Mama Is an Indian?” 207–15, and the stories of Pauline Johnson for a discussion of the social pressure to assimilate that was prevalent in Canada at the time.
61. As the developing metropolitan center dominated its southern Ontario hinterlands economically and politically, Torontonians were at the forefront of calls for the annexation of northern Ontario and the Red River Colony, both of which had significant Aboriginal populations. Toronto political commentators also called for harsh treatment of the leaders of Métis resistance movements in the west in 1869–70 and 1885; six hundred of the twelve hundred men in General Middleton’s expeditionary force to quell the 1885 resistance came from Toronto. Toronto churches and their national offices (also located in Toronto) played a large part in supporting Indian residential schools in the west.
62. Lawrence, “Real” Indians and Others, xv.
63. Lawrence, “Real” Indians and Others, 6.
64. Ellen Wise, Interview with author, February 26, 2006; Roger Obansawin, Interview with author, March 13, 2006.
65. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 43, 51.
66. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 46.
67. Preserving historic sites has not been a priority in Toronto, and many important Aboriginal sites have been destroyed, according to Archaeological Services, *Master Plan*, 28.
68. Cruikshank, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2:41.
69. See Bennet McCardle, “Heart of Heart: Daniel Wilson’s Human Biology,” in Ash et al., *Thinking with Both Hands*, 101–13, and Teather, *Royal Ontario Museum*, for discussions of collections of the museum of the Canadian Institute, the Provincial Archeological Museum, and various museums of the University of Toronto. A photograph of “Indian” exhibits at the Provincial Museum show an entire wall of cases filled with crania (Teather, *Royal Ontario Museum*, 188). Andrew F. Hunter catalogued village and ossuary sites in Simcoe, York, and Ontario counties, counting thirty-three village sites in York and five ossuaries (“French Relics from Village Sites of the Hurons,” *Archaeological Reports of Ontario* 1888–89, 42–44). In 1889 Boyle and others opened a village site at Maple village site and the Keffer ossuary in York and Vaughan townships, north of Toronto.
70. Yellowhorn, “Awakening of Internalist Archaeology,” 198.
71. Ferris, “Between Colonial and Indigenous Archaeologies,” 160.

72. Ron Williamson, "Remarks," December 8, 2005; D. Johnston, "Connecting People to Place," 28; Jean Brébeuf, *Jesuit Relations*, 10:141-43; 287; Paul LeJeune, *Jesuit Relations*, Volume 16:191-93.
73. *Jesuit Relations*, 16:191-93; cited in D. Johnston, "Connecting People," 28.
74. Yellowhorn, "Awakening of Internalist Archaeology," 207.
75. Gros Louis, "Reburial of the Human Remains."
76. Gros Louis, "Reburial of the Human Remains." This was confirmed by two Wendat interviewees.
77. "Huron oppose digs on ancestral lands," *Toronto Star*, October 5, 2006, R5.
78. "Huron oppose digs on ancestral lands," *Toronto Star*, October 5, 2006, R5.
79. This shift is noticeable not only in terms of archaeological consultation, but also in terms of ceremonial acknowledgments of the Indigenous peoples of the area at the beginning of some public meetings.
80. Redwolf, March 19, 2006. While there is increasing inter-First Nations cooperation between archaeologists and some Wendat, Mississauga, and Haudenosaunee representatives concerning the disposition of uncovered remains, in the complex and ever-shifting political struggle between various Indigenous groups trying to protect archaeological sites and by extension make claims of Indigeneity in the Toronto area, one group of Haudenosaunee activists has claimed that most Toronto sites are Erie-Neutral rather than Wendat sites, and thus fall under the jurisdiction of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy rather than the Wendats (David Redwolf, pers. comm. with author, December 4, 2007).
81. According to the archaeologist Ron Williamson, an estimated eight thousand sites in the regional municipalities of Halton, Durham, Peel, and York were destroyed between 1951 and 1991, and 25 percent of them "should have been protected or at the very least excavated before their destruction by development." Between 2000 and 2005, more than twenty-five ancestral Huron-Wendat and Neutral Iroquoian villages were excavated in Ontario, and although archaeologists recommended preservation in situ in every case, all were destroyed. Williamson, "Remarks," 3-4.
82. Williamson, "Remarks," 2-3. See also B. Johnston, *Manitous*, xx-xxii. Furthermore, in Native understandings of imagery, the tool does not just represent the blood or hero; it becomes one with it, and the viewer, in perceiving the relationship, also becomes one with it (Einhorn, *Native American Oral Tradition*, 28).
83. Ron Williamson, Interview with author, May 18, 2006.
84. Marie Georges, Interview with author, April 22, 2007.
85. D. Johnston, "Connecting People," 29.
86. *Jesuit Relations*, 16:195-97; Jones, *History of the Ojibway Indians*, 99-100.
87. Alanis King, October 29, 2005. Henry Scadding referred to a Native warrior killed during the siege of Toronto in 1813 as being buried at Sandhill, a very ancient burial ground believed to have been located just west of Yonge and south of Bloor (Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, 399).
88. In the Toronto Native community and among Indigenous peoples in settler countries generally, there is considerable discussion of the transgenerational effects of trauma created by the historical experience of colonialism and particularly of residential boarding schools. Indigenous psychologists and healers are exploring techniques of ancestral and intergenerational healing. See Duran and Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*; Atkinson, *Trauma Trails*; and Wesley-Esquimaux and Smolewski, *Historic Trauma and Aboriginal Healing*.
89. Redwolf, March 19, 2006.
90. William Woodworth speaking at the Humanitas Festival First Nations history lecture series, Toronto, June 21, 2006.
91. Hirsch, *Family Frames*, 22, quoted in LaCapra, *Writing History*, 112-13.
92. Duran and Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*.
93. LaCapra, *Writing History*, 70, 89.
94. "One's bond with the dead, especially with dead intimates, may invest trauma with value and make its reliving a painful but necessary commemoration or memorial to which one remains dedicated or at least bound" (LaCapra, *Writing History*, 22).
95. LaCapra's notion of "working through" trauma crucially involves distinguishing past and present, self and other. This paradigm may be problematic for Indigenous peoples and others whose worldviews involve less rigid distinctions between such categories.
96. I also interviewed two non-Aboriginal spiritual healers (one of them a New Age healer, the other a traditional South African *sangoma*) who also said they had frequent contact with ancestral spirits, but they did not know any Toronto history and did not have relationships with Indigenous people or Indigenous spirits here (Sibongile Nene, Interview with author, May 22, 2006, and Marlayna Lynne Marks, Interview with author, January 6, 2006).
97. Margo Dunn, Interview with author, July 5, 2006. This point is arguable, as ancestral grievances have fanned ethnic hatred in various countries, including the former Yugoslavia, for example, but it may be generally true of non-Indigenous Torontonians.
98. Ortiz, "Towards a National Indian Literature," 254.
99. Carolyn King, Interview with author, July 30, 2006.
100. Woodworth, July 19, 2006.



101. See for example Martin, *The American Indian and the Problem of History*; Fixico, *American Indian Mind in a Linear World*; Krech, "Bringing Linear Time Back In."
102. Woodworth, July 19, 2006; Redwolf, March 19, 2006; David Grey Eagle Sanford, Interview with author, March 5, 2006. I am also indebted to Jon Johnson, whose unpublished dissertation chapter on the Great Indian Bus Tour offered by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto emphasizes the importance of this sense of continuity of Indigenous presence in the city as expressed in that guided tour.
103. Woodworth, "Toronto Beacon to the Ancestors: The Return of Native Peoples to their Hosting Duties."
104. "Knowledge is gathered through the body, mind and heart in altered states of being, in songs and dance, in meditation and reflection, and in dreams and visions" (Cajete, "Philosophy of Native Science," 52).
105. Redwolf, March 19, 2006; Sanford, March 5, 2006; Woodworth, July 19, 2006; Daniel Justice, Interview with author, February 23, 2006; Helen Thundercloud, Interview with author, February 4, 2006. This intuitive sensing was most pronounced in people working on the preservation of local Indigenous archaeological sites. A few non-Aboriginal people also said they sensed energy or spirit but generally not in relation to Toronto's Indigenous history, though a couple of allies of Native people did (Mark Warner, Interview with author, January 31, 2006, and Anna Petrov, Interview with author, January 25, 2006).
106. For example, Ortiz writes, "Story, whether in oral or written form, substantiates life, continues it, and creates it" ("Toward a National Indian Literature," 258).
107. William Woodworth, *Humanitas Festival First Nations History lecture series*, June 21, 2006.
108. Hill, "Ethics and the Use of Indigenous Knowledge in Academic Research."
109. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 106-7.
110. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 26.
111. Jean-François Lyotard, quoted in Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 17-18.
112. Toby Morantz, "Plunder or Harmony?"
113. Carlson, "Making Sense of Memory," Paper given at Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, Saskatoon, May 29, 2007.
114. For example, the Pitkani (Pelgan) archaeologist Eldon Yellowhorn, who has called for a rational, secular practice of "internalist" archaeology informed by Indigenous oral traditions, speaks of the need for Indigenous peoples to recognize that "a secular antiquity exists that is independent of the sacred versions related in traditional narratives." He decries "the ten-
- endency to revere a putative aboriginal utopia," and to uncritically accept largely invented traditions, such as the medicine wheel (Yellowhorn, "Awakening of Internalist Archaeology," 194, 199-200). Susan Miller, on the other hand, insists on the sacred as an integral part of Indigenous historiography writing: "Within the Indigenous paradigm, the cosmos is alive. Spirits recognized in Indigenous worldviews are real and have power within the material world" ("Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm in Historiography," 10).
115. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 106-7.
116. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 26.
117. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 118; Redwolf, March 19, 2006. The site was also registered with the Ontario Ministry of Culture; Ontario Ministry of Culture Archaeological Site Record, Borden Number Ai Gu 44; November 4, 2003. Similarly, protesters led by David Grey Eagle Sanford set up camp on "sacred land" to push the city to save an old bridge over the Rouge River, "Natives Aim to Save Bridge," *Toronto Star*, October 14, 2007, A3. He was quoted as saying, "My ancestors are buried all through here. It is sacred land to me."
118. Redwolf, March 19, 2006; Sanford, March 5, 2006; Woodworth, July 19, 2006; Ron Williamson, May 18, 2006; Petrov, January 25, 2006; Susan Hill, personal communication with author, July 24, 2007.
119. Sissons, *First Peoples*, 13.
120. Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*, 22.

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## 9

### Shape-shifters, Ghosts, and Residual Power

*An Examination of Northern Plains Spiritual Beliefs,  
Location, Objects, and Spiritual Colonialism*

CYNTHIA LANDRUM

In the summer of 1991, a Hunkpapa Lakota Sioux tribal member, Don Tenoso, was scheduled to provide a routine demonstration of traditional doll-making techniques in the Native American exhibition hall at the National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. At the time, I was a museum technician with the Department of Anthropology and was working in the Natural History building. Since we were about to begin the work of conserving and moving the Plains Indian collection that was in storage, I was curious to see what he had to say about the cultural significance of the dolls.

When I approached the demonstration area, the hall was nearly empty, with the exception of a few tourists, the exhibit mannequins, myself, and Don Tenoso, with his long black braids and modern Sioux Indian garb. As he quietly worked on his project just around the corner from the life-size mannequin of the Sioux warrior Kicking Bear, I wondered if he found it unnerving to be amid an exhibition that honored only the troubled "ghosts" of the Plains tribes' cultural and historical past—trophies of the Indian wars—and the collections of the anthropological expeditions.

While I watched from afar and contemplated the obvious irony of the situation, a woman with the spectral remnants of a 1960s beehive appeared, stood directly in front of Tenoso, and stated, "Are you an Indian? I thought you people were all dead. Why are you still here? Why haven't you done what my relatives did and blended in with the rest of the American melting pot? It's time for you to move