

Knowing Their Place?
Identity and Space in Children's Literature

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Edited by

Terri Doughty and Dawn Thompson

**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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INTRODUCTION

IDENTITY, PLACE AND SPACE IN CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

TERRI DOUGHTY AND DAWN THOMPSON

In May 2009, the annual conference on *The Child and The Book*, founded in 2004 at Roehampton University, was held at Vancouver Island University, located in British Columbia, on the West coast of Canada. Our sense of place, at a university with ties to the Aboriginal peoples of our region and which advertizes itself with the slogan “love *where* you learn,” in a province celebrated as a space for individuals to connect with the natural world, set our conference theme: the intersection of identity with the sense of place and/or space. This timely topic generated a rich variety of papers on indigeneity and place in stories for children, on the intertwining of place and identity in diasporic literature for children, on the relationship of the child to the natural world, and on the role of fantastic spaces in children's constructions of the self. The graduate/post-graduate student conference drew presenters from a range of fields: Literature, History, Library and Information Studies, Early Childcare Education, Aboriginal Studies, and Education. The papers collected here have their origin in the conference.

The idea that children should know their place has its roots in a traditional Western hierarchy that places children subordinate to, and some might argue subject to colonization by, adults. The authors in this collection not only question that hierarchy, but they examine the ways in which children's literature addresses the processes of coming both to know oneself as situated in space and how the spaces one inhabits shape one's self. The relation between identity and place or space has become increasingly contradictory terrain. The forces of globalization appear to lead to a homogenization of cultures, regardless of local conditions. Indeed, as theorists such as Zygmunt Bauman have observed, in the post-

modern age the individual can be seen as dislocated from place: “we are witnessing the revenge of nomadism over the principle of territoriality and settlement” (Bauman 2000, 13). Similarly, anthropologists talk of deterritorialization as the process whereby a people’s culture is decreasingly linked to a particular place. In response to these shifts, the European Picture Book Collection (EPBC), sponsored by the European Union, endeavours not only to help children learn about “their European neighbours” (<http://www.ncrcl.ac.uk/epbc/EN/index.asp>), but also to generate a sense of connection between cultures, creating a transnational identity. Penni Cotton, a researcher at the National Centre for Research in Children’s Literature at Roehampton University and the generator of the EPBC project, has written of the desire to create, through this sense of connection, “a sense of Europeaness” (2001, 111). Similarly, writing of the existence of a body of transnational literature for children, Gillian Lathey lists the problematics of national literatures, describing the “reductive nonsense and mythology sometimes attached to the concept of national identity” (2001, 4). In this first part of the twenty-first century, there is tremendous interest in the transnational and the transcultural.

However, the geo-politics of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have illustrated that we are not moving smoothly into an age of greater connectedness. As Stuart Hall argues, “global and local are the two faces of the same movement” (1997, 27). Countries have divided into smaller national units, as with the breaking up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Other countries, with borders drawn by colonizing powers, struggle with tensions generated by cultural minorities who feel threatened, as with the francophone separatist movement in Québec, Canada, or the Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. Similarly, Aboriginal peoples around the world are engaged with reterritorialization, not in the anthropological sense of connecting to a broader global culture, but in the nationalistic sense of asserting their claims to their historic lands and waters. As well, environmentalism encourages people to buy local products and protect local environments. Most globalization theorists now recognize that globalization is not so much a process of homogenization, with a model of a centre and margins constantly being eaten away at and absorbed by that centre, but rather is a constantly engaged tension between the global and the local: “there is much empirical evidence that people’s awareness of being involved in open-ended global flows seems to trigger a search for fixed orientation points and action frames, as well as determined efforts to affirm old and construct new boundaries” (Meyer and Geschiere 1999, 2). Australian children’s literature critic John Stephens writes about “Glocal Postmodernism in Australian Picturebooks,” using a term coined by cultural

theorist Wayne Gabardi to articulate this notion of “diverse, overlapping fields of global-local linkages” (Stephens 2008, 89). Similarly, Petros Panaou observes contemporary European picturebooks and notes the “interplay between sameness and difference, locality and universality, the regional and the national, the national and the European” (2008, 43). The connections between place and identity are shifting and changing as they engage with these tensions and linkages. Globalization theorist Arjun Appadurai claims, “it is unlikely that there will be anything mere about the local” (1996, 199). For these reasons, it seems to us that this is an appropriate moment for a collection of essays that looks to the historical and present workings of place and space to generate individual and social identities in children's literature.

Indigeneity is perhaps logically the place to begin an exploration of the relation of children to space and place. The essays included here on this topic explore a kind of literary indigeneity with regard to genre and voice. Melissa Li Sheung Ying considers the issue of cultural appropriation through a comparison of early twentieth-century Native American story collections based on oral tales. Two are by European writers, and one by Chief William Shelton of the Snohomish People of the Northwest coast of the USA. The comparison reveals the assumptions and ideology of the Europeans, but also the effects of Shelton's desire to bridge the cultures and educate a predominantly European audience. Donna Ellwood Flett's essay on Canadian mixed-blood Anishinabe writer Drew Hayden Taylor's Gothic vampire novel, *The Night Wanderer*, shows how the return home of an exiled Vampire/Wendigo creates a contemporary young-adult ghost story that indigenizes the Gothic genre as it works to revitalize aboriginal cultures in their nationalistic struggles. Revitalization is also part of Sheila Grieve's thesis on the use of First Nations picture books in Early Childhood Education contexts: because of the importance of story in the shaping of identity, she argues for an increased, and culturally aware, use of literature that comes from the “home culture” of Aboriginal children. Dawn Thompson also considers the issue of Aboriginal education, using Haisla writer Eden Robinson's short story “Traplines” and Spokane/Coeur d'Alene writer Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* to consider the motivations for and implications of Aboriginal youths' choices whether or not to leave their homes, their reserves, to improve their educational opportunities.

Leaving home is not always a choice the child gets to make, as children's migration and settlement are generally determined by adults. Children of diasporas have complicated relationships to place: which land is home? In addition, they must negotiate cultural differences. Michelle

Superle's essay on diasporic Indian literature for children, for example, explores the way in which India is figured as the nurturing motherland, a place to which to return in order to shape childhood identity, even when it is no longer home.

The connection to land from a gendered perspective is central to eco-feminist theory, which is treated in the essays by Catherine Posey, Janet Grafton, and Vikki VanSickle. Posey explores the aesthetic and spiritual connections to the land in *Anne of Green Gables* and several other L. M. Montgomery novels as proto-eco-feminist. Grafton follows the transformation from sickness to health in three early twentieth-century novels, Montgomery's *Jane of Lantern Hill*, Dorothy Canfield Fisher's *Understood Betsy*, and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, in which the catalyst for the transformation of the protagonists is their connection to the 'green space' of the land itself. This leads to a broader reflection on gendered notions of both the land and of health. Vikki VanSickle considers two verse novels by Karen Hesse and one by Kevin Major, tracing the 'home-away-home' narrative, linking it to eco-feminism and showing that the return home is about 'learning to live bioregionally'. 'Bioregional' would also be an apt descriptor of the work of George Mackay Brown, according to Linden Bicket, who looks at how myth, legend, and faith tie the people to the land, and to current environmental issues, in two children's novels set in the Orkney islands of Scotland.

The final papers move into a different kind of space, the fantastic. The first, by Terri Doughty, focuses on the use of liminal spaces and dreams in the young adult novels of Canadian Charles de Lint, arguing that these provide fluid spaces in which young adults can experiment with identity formation and play productively with relationships between self and other. Melissa Bachynski discusses the role of Neverland and London in the representation of self-esteem in the characters of Peter Pan and Mr. Darling, respectively. Finally, Dianne Hayles's paper on *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* employs Pierre Bourdieu's theories of identity and social and cultural space to show how nonhuman animals are used to situate characters in the two different worlds of 'muggles' and wizards.

Real or fantastic, indigenous or "from away," the spaces that child characters inhabit in literature, and the ways in which they come to know and inhabit them, affect them profoundly and in many different ways. Their stories, in turn, help situate and shape the children who read them. Both characters and readers are, indeed, living on contradictory terrain: all at the same time settler and indigenous, modern and post-modern, local and global, and perhaps in this moment transforming into something else.

Likewise, in coming to know *their* places, the critics included here are participating in the complex and never-ending process of mapping that terrain.

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CHAPTER ONE

READING INTO THE VOICE: THE REPRESENTATION OF NATIVE VOICES IN THREE EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHILDREN'S STORY COLLECTIONS

MELISSA LI SHEUNG YING

I am ashamed before the earth;
I am ashamed before the heavens;
I am ashamed before the dawn;
I am ashamed before the evening twilight;
I am ashamed before the blue sky;
I am ashamed before the sun.
*I am ashamed before that standing within me
which speaks with me.*
Some of these things are always looking at me.
I am never out of sight.
Therefore I must tell the truth.
I hold my word tight to my breast.

In reciting the above poem to a man named Washington Matthews before continuing to narrate a story of creation, Navajo priest Old Torlino was “solemnly affirming that he was going to tell the truth as he understood it” (Astrov 1962, 3; emphasis in original). However, as with all tellings of tales, stories can be altered and accommodated to the speaker’s preference or—as Old Torlino reveals—conveyed from how one understands a particular story as influenced by a specific cultural background. The oral tradition of storytelling for Native Americans not only constitutes the continuous passing on of shared identities, customs, and beliefs from one generation to the next, but also ensures the preservation and survival of cultures that thrive on a tightly-knit family system and faith in the spiritual world. “The Indian’s relation to the ‘word’ as the directing agency that stands powerfully behind every ‘doing’” (Astrov 1962, 3) solidifies the

concept that thoughts, ideas, and morals expressed within the oral tradition carry a certain intimacy when related from the speaker to his or her audience. Print tradition does not necessarily capture the same feeling as sitting in front of a glowing fire and listening to the legends as told by an elder tribal member would. Nonetheless, when those stories are placed between the covers of a book, the material object as a whole enables one to see how Native stories take on a different agenda when reproduced in collections authored by those of European background. In a comparison of the European-flavoured works of William Trowbridge Larned (*North American Indian Fairy Tales*) and Frances Jenkins Olcott (*The Red Indian Fairy Book*) to those of Native American writer William Shelton (*The Story of the Totem Pole*), the differences found in the representation of Native voices pose the question of who has the authority to write for others and how Native culture is characterized by those who may not have experienced it firsthand.

There is no startling difference between the physical appearances of Larned's, Olcott's, and Shelton's books. All bear the same well-worn, tan-coloured paper and black type; the titles and author names remain the focus of each hardcover book due to their large font size; and illustrations—in either black and white or colour—are used to give visual appeal and more life to the words of a particular tale. These common traits may seem like simple observations, but considering that all three collections were produced within a few years of each other (1921 for Larned, 1917 for Olcott, and 1923 for Shelton), their publication itself reveals the European impact on the Native oral tradition and the representation of its voices. Through these three tangible paper and ink collections, the oral tradition has, to a certain extent, yielded to a printed one in which the “dissemination and preservation of knowledge [initiates an] information revolution” (Kreis 2004) in order to reach a wider audience with greater impact during the early twentieth century. Notably, even the Native American Shelton readily gives his voice to print in publishing his collection of tales—a move which clearly establishes his place alongside Larned and Olcott on the bookshelf. Moreover, Shelton's collection accentuates an awareness of his century's societal and cultural challenges and shows how he perhaps needed to adapt the ways in which his tribe's legends were told so that they could reach a similar level of permanence in the literary minds of North America.

The differences between each of these three authors, however, can be found within their prefaces, where all explain the contents of their books and—more importantly—any adjustments made in the recording of specific stories. For Larned, *North American Indian Fairy Tales* was an

attempt to “throw” (1921, i) just as much light upon Native individuals as on their folk stories:

It might have been expected that the Indians of North America would have many Folklore tales to tell, and in this volume I have endeavoured to present such of them as seemed to me to best illustrate the primitive character and beliefs of the people. (i)

Here, Larned not only has a European audience in mind for whom he is familiarizing his tales, but his subjective interpretation of them will also act to defamiliarize the Native voice for those of Native background. As such, a Native reading Larned’s book may see variations within the structure of the tales and the style of language (making a once recognizable story seem distorted), while a non-Native individual may see elements of his or her own fairy tale tradition used (hence familiarizing what is considered to be foreign). According to Paula Gunn Allen, “perception is shaped by culture in many subtle ways” (1992, 225). Larned’s *North American Indian Fairy Tales* may be a case in point for this, as there is a sense of astonishment expressed in his discovery that Natives possess a “fantastic imagination, magnanimity, moral sentiment, tender feeling, and humour” (1921, i). Similarly, he states that only an “advanced civilisation has much to do with the possession of such qualities” (i). Although Larned’s collection is an attempt to expose Europeans to something they may not have heard of before, it is nevertheless the ideology of white superiority which ironically showcases an ignorance that should not exist in such an “advanced civilisation” (i).

A comparable notion of European supremacy is also evident in Olcott’s *The Red Indian Fairy Book for Children’s Own Reading and for Story-telling*. In her introduction to the sixty-four stories telling of magic, mystery, and fairies, Olcott indicates her belief that Natives received their “poetic fancies” (1917, xvii) and inspiration from the Europeans themselves: “the Indians [talk] about birds, beasts, flowers and rocks of *our* American meadows, prairies and forests” (1917, xvii; emphasis added). Unlike Larned, however, Olcott pointedly lets her audience know that she has done extensive research in gathering and selecting stories for the themes of seasons and months represented in her collection. As a result, tales from the Iroquois, Arapaho, Hopi, Chippewa, Micmac, Blackfoot, Cherokee, and Passamaquoddy peoples are not only carefully spread throughout her monthly sections, but the narratives also reveal Olcott’s attentiveness to the fact that different tribes have diverse ways of telling a particular story. Even so, that is as far as she appears to go in giving Native voices a sense of agency within her story collection. In the

next paragraph, Olcott's biases in publishing a "fairy book" are openly acknowledged:

In retelling, all that is coarse, fierce and irrational has been eliminated as far as possible, and the moral and fanciful elements retained. The plots have been more closely constructed, and retold in the direct manner interesting to children. The character and spirit of the original stories have been carefully preserved. (1917, xviii)

As transcriber, reteller, and editor of the stories specifically chosen for her collection, Olcott embodies a similar attitude to the one Larned expresses: Native American stories—and by extension the Natives themselves—are "coarse, fierce, irrational," and in need of another influence before European audiences may be exposed to them. Yet to "tame" those Native stories present in each book is to detract from and dishearten the

Native American Indian imagination and the pleasures of language games [through] the manifest manners of documentation and the imposition of cultural representation. (Vizenor 1993, 5)

The two-fold purpose of Olcott's and Larned's books—to expose an oral tradition made of magnificent stories, but to reshape them so that they fit the needs and knowledge of non-Native readers—tampers with the "creative source of collective and individual [Native] selves" (Allen 1992, 224) already present in the stories before translation or adaptation takes place. Native American readers and present-day non-Native ones may "be struck not only by the marked differences in style, but also by the tremendous differences in mental attitudes expressed in these ... documents" (Astrov 1962, 4).

Olcott's collection of tales does bridge the distance between capturing the essence of an oral tradition—as understood by an individual of non-Native background—and of disseminating a version of orality beyond its own boundaries through print. In her introduction, Olcott continues to explain that

most of these tales have been issued for storytellers in the columns of the *Saturday Magazine* of the *New York Evening Post* ... so the stories are not only for the children's own reading, but they form a storehouse of Red Indian Nature myths, suitable for story-telling in homes, schools, and libraries. (1917, xix)

Olcott's book, as representative of a "civilized" print tradition, becomes a symbol of a "civilized" Native culture defined within the framework of a

Eurocentric point of view. Although Olcott purposefully claims that the “Indian customs, and life ... are all here [within *The Red Indian Fairy Book*]” (1917, xvii), the Native cultures as seen through her introduction and stories are naturally subjected to her interpretation of the material. The oral tradition is a living entity which, according to Paula Gunn Allen, has the ability

to accommodate itself to the real circumstances of a people’s lives. That is its strength, but it is also its weakness, for when a people finds itself living within a racist, classist, and sexist reality, the oral tradition will reflect those values and will thus shape the people’s consciousness to include and accept racism, classism and sexism, and they will incorporate that change, hardly noticing the shift. (1992, 224)

The result of such a subtle movement is that Native voices are no longer limited to Native Americans. Instead, those voices become hybridized through the transfer of stories from one culture to another, and they acquire a new accent in the process.

William Shelton’s *The Story of the Totem Pole: early Indian legends as handed down from generation to generation are herewith recorded* provides a clear contrast to Olcott’s and Larned’s introductions and adjustments to Native voices. A Native of the Tulalip tribe, Shelton has personally experienced the traditional passing down of his culture’s legends from one generation to another. By recording the stories passed to him in a collection similar to those of Olcott and Larned, Shelton reveals his own attentiveness to the value of having a tangible account of history exist alongside an oral tradition and to communicate it in a form that other cultures can more easily access:

The following legends are recorded as they were told to me by my parents, uncles and great-uncles in days gone by. They were the text-books used by the Indians to teach their children to be brave, loyal and truthful and to illustrate that evil comes to wicked people and that only the good prosper in the end. (1923, 3)

This quotation, taken from the author’s note that precedes the retelling of his life experiences and how he came to write his collection, reveals a desire to preserve the “old Indian teaching[s]” (7) and the Native culture’s belief in the power of the spoken word. The “text-book” to which Shelton refers contains a double meaning, for he is not directly referring to an actual material object when he mentions it in connection to his family and relatives. Rather, he alludes to the permanence established when stories are reiterated time and time again with limited variation. As a result, an

irreplaceable sense of wisdom and a marker of heritage and identity continue to persevere—a paradox reflected in the physical book printed under Shelton’s name. In transforming the oral textbook from which he learned into one made of paper and ink, Shelton hopes that younger generations will “read the stories the way their ancestors had heard them” (Sarris 1991, 3) “for a great many years” (Shelton 1923, 7), while concurrently using the same “conception of the human voice [to] invok[e] power” (Lincoln 1983, 2) in the moments of interplay between the spoken and written forms of the tales he records.

In the realization that Shelton’s stories are now immortalized in a comparable fashion to the collections of Larned and Olcott, one may wonder what may be missed, purposefully left out, or rendered incommunicable through words on the page. The oral tradition as a performed art hinges on the appeal to ears and eyes to successfully capture the listener’s imagination and attention, and the storyteller’s facial expressions and hand gestures emphasize, animate, and complement the spoken words. Although some

believe that printing oral literature dooms it as oral performance[,] others feel that because stories and songs are fast-vanishing relics, performed only for anthropologists and folklorists, they must be captured in books in order to survive. (Ruoff 1990, 14)

The difference in opinion as to whether one form of story preservation is more detrimental toward the other brings Larned, Olcott, and Shelton momentarily together and under a single, common goal: the conservation, dissemination, and encouragement of a conscious awareness of Native cultures through their stories. Thus, in their attempts to help their respective audiences understand the importance of receiving and learning from each collection’s set of tales, Larned, Olcott, and Shelton encourage a level of preservation that echoes the roots of the oral tradition itself through the passing down of stories. As Simon Ortiz notes, “[m]aking language familiar and accessible to others, bringing it within their grasp and comprehension, is what a writer, teacher, and storyteller does or tries to do” (Quoted in Brill de Ramirez 1999, 1)—and under the objective mentioned above, all three authors fall into this specific and influential role.

Yet the responsibility of recording stories and educating a particular audience requires an author’s sensitivity to the context and style of the story as it was originally heard and/or told. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff emphasizes that “because the verbal arts are performed arts, the recordings and transcriptions of them should incorporate as much of the performance

as possible" (1990, 14). Shelton, as he claims in his introduction, recorded his tales as accurately as he possibly could from the memories created by his family's past generations—a notable contrast to the opening statements of Larned and Olcott, both of whom strive to depict a specific kind of Native and Native culture appropriate for Europeans through the tweaking of plot, language, and character.

Likewise, the attention paid to capturing a story's performative quality is also affected. While Shelton provides evidence that he is conscious of how his printed stories must embody the same tone and feeling as when he himself heard them from his parents, uncles, and great-uncles, Larned and Olcott appear to have no such concerns. The Native image represented in Larned's and Olcott's books is constructed in terms of what (mis)conceptions were established in the century before—for example, North America's nineteenth-century mainstream notions surrounding "romantic images of 'noble savages'" (Shanley 2001, 28)—which subjugate Native voices and individuals as Other. As a result, Native voices appear to fall under the need of "re-inscri[ption], re-interpret[ation] and expan[sion]" (Bhabha 2004, 248) before they are suitable for incorporation within European culture. From this perspective, Shelton's publication can be said to challenge Larned's and Olcott's impressions of what Native voices and culture are. Through his commitment to maintaining the performative quality of the word, he also proves that the acceptance of a print tradition does not necessarily mean the passing away of an oral one.

The stories within Shelton's collection were meant to explain the figures carved on the Story Pole that now stands in Everett, Washington (Shelton 1923, 3). There is, however, a striking difference in the way Shelton addresses non-Native individuals in comparison to both Larned's and Olcott's references to the Natives. As Shelton states,

it is hoped that these stories as well as the Pole will stand as a monument to a vanishing race [and] that they will help our white friends to understand a little of the Indian's belief in spirits, or totems. (3)

It is clear that Shelton does not see individuals of non-Native background as trespassers upon, or corruptors of, his heritage, especially in his use of "our white friends" (1923, 3), which challenges the "civilized" versus "primitive" assumptions Larned and Olcott present in their prefaces and stories. Nonetheless, Shelton's mention of the Natives as a "vanishing race" (1923, 3) concurs with the dominant colonialist attitude of the time. History, fortunately, has belied this attitude, and Shelton's collection remains part of the living history of the Tulalip tribe to which he belonged. By participating in the print tradition of his fellow authors, Shelton

encourages the expression of the truth of the word as he understands it—the way orality should function, as well as a firm echo of Old Torlino’s “I hold my word tight to my breast” (Astrov 1962, 3).

Indeed, it must also be noted that Shelton’s collection—while true to the Tulalip tribe’s legends—takes a unique stance: it encompasses Native and North American history, particularly the politics of Washington State, in a way Larned’s and Olcott’s books do not. At the time *The Story of the Totem Pole* was written and published, the Natives who lived in Washington were under threat by the United States government, which sought to erase all traces of Native American culture in the Pacific Northwest. The Natives who lived in the state of Washington underwent radical changes on their reserves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which “forced [them] to abandon much of their traditional culture [,] their native tongues [and] sense of self-identity” (Online Highways n.d.). Hence, in recording these stories for the consumption of a wider public, Shelton practices a significant act of cultural preservation. Interestingly, Shelton’s book would not have been published had he not made a deal with then-Governor of Washington State Ronald Hartley, who knew Shelton was not only “a man well-educated in the traditional beliefs and culture of his and other tribes,” but also revered as one of Puget Sound’s last great story pole carvers (Washington State Department of General Administration 2010). Thus, in an attempt to include a piece of Native American art on the grounds of the Washington State Capitol Campus, Hartley asked Shelton to carve a story pole and, in return, helped Shelton to produce and publish his collection of stories. These stories would tell the history of the figures carved on the totem pole.

Although both the story pole and the story collection are laden with the Tulalip legends as Shelton himself had heard them, the agreement which took place between Hartley and Shelton raises an awareness of the context within which a Native writer must write. Shelton did not lose sight of his goal despite the negotiations, yet the permission he needed to obtain for his collection might not have been possible without Hartley’s consent and intervention. Even so, the assertion, confidence, and communal pride exhibited throughout the collection expresses Shelton’s duty to make *The Story of the Totem Pole* “something more than an anthropological document [meant to] engage our aesthetic sensitivities” (Vizenor 1993, 8) and to protect his tribal history from becoming lost to future generations. It is also no surprise that the title of Shelton’s book does not contain the words “fairy tale,” whereas those of Larned and Olcott do. Shelton’s choice to avoid this particular term originating from Old French, Latin, and English (Harper 2010) throws into relief the motives behind Larned’s

and Olcott's collections and their notions of what Native culture is. The deliberate use of *Indian Fairy Tales* (by Larned) and *Indian Fairy Book* (by Olcott) denotes a clear Europeanization of the Native legends present in their collections, transforming them into ones which may resemble fairy tales normally read by non-Native children.

As such, the author's intent and sense of what he or she wishes to communicate through the educational and informative experience of reading his or her story collection must be kept at the forefront. According to Margot Astrov, "The word, indeed, is power. It is life, substance, reality" (1962, 19), and its power to represent or even create a reality is evident when one compares the theme of metamorphosis in the following tales: Larned's "The Girl who became a Bird," Olcott's "The Boy who became a Robin," and Shelton's "Suk-whay." Before engaging with the stories themselves, one can immediately see a distinction between titles as Shelton's is the only one that utilizes the traditional Native name of the male protagonist who magically transforms into a sparrow. Larned and Olcott, on the other hand, generalize their central characters and it is only within the story itself that the reader gains a sense of intimacy upon learning the names of each protagonist. A title is just as important as the story it represents, for it not only describes some aspect of the text to follow, but is also one of the first things a reader sees when looking at a narrative. Although Larned's and Olcott's choice of titles are direct and descriptive of the stories they represent, the absence of Native language is noteworthy. Shelton's "Suk-whay" is the English way of writing the Native word for *sparrow*; and in greeting the reader with a word of Native origin placed directly in the title, Shelton expresses an appreciation for what Astrov designates as the word as power: "to the owner [of the story] every word is fraught with spiritual potency and significance [and it becomes] a condition of direct communication" (Astrov 1962, 45).

The general plots of "The Girl who became a Bird," "The Boy who became a Robin," and "Suk-whay" are similar. Each begins with an adolescent who is forced by an authority figure to endure a challenge that has the potential to end in danger, isolation, or death. The protagonist then attempts to escape the situation, which ultimately results in a miraculous transformation into a bird. To end, each story either finishes on a moralistic note or in the way of a *pourquoi* tale, a popular Native American narrative style "that explains 'why' natural phenomena, animal attributes or habits, or social customs exist" (Stott and Jones 2006, 530).

Similarities aside, the tale exhibiting the most notable European influence on Native voices is Olcott's "The Boy who became a Robin." Beginning with the traditional opening of "Once upon a time" (Olcott

1917, 33) that is found in almost all European fairy tales, Olcott places the young Opeechee in a Cinderella-like situation that would be familiar to most non-Native youth. As a result, Opeechee, the dutiful “Indian lad” (33), is subjected to his proud father’s idea that he should become the greatest warrior of all the boys by fasting for the longest amount of time. Interestingly, Olcott’s description of Opeechee as an “Indian lad” brings the Native protagonist immediately into her European realm, for the word “lad” has decidedly British connotations. Albeit a tiny detail, Olcott’s incorporation of this particular term in the opening lines of her story visibly distinguishes the kind of audience and cultural background she is targeting, as well as the interpretation she is lending to the version she has selected to retell.

Olcott’s story continues with Opeechee respectfully obeying his father’s wish by fasting for twelve days. But when a recurring dream sent by a guardian spirit foreshadows evil if Opeechee does not break the fast, his father refuses to hear anything of it and urges his son to “wait patiently a little longer” (34). Nonetheless—as found, for example, in the well-known European fairy tales of “Cinderella,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Hansel and Gretel,” and “Snow White”—the good and innocent must triumph, and accordingly the child becomes the wiser of the two in Olcott’s depiction of this father-son relationship. Overjoyed that his son has successfully reached the twelfth and final fasting day, the father prepares a meal and hastens to the lodge where Opeechee has lain in silence. Upon reaching the lodge, the father hears a voice, and as he lifts the curtain hanging in the doorway, he finds Opeechee painting his chest with vermilion and saying out loud,

My father has destroyed my fortune as a man. He would not listen to my requests. I shall be happy forever because I was obedient to my parent; but he will suffer. My guardian Spirit has given me a new form, and now I must go! (35)

As he witnesses his son’s transformation into a beautiful, red-breasted robin, the father realizes that he is losing Opeechee and becomes remorseful for the way he has treated him. Happy with his new form, Opeechee pardons his father and vows to sing songs of joy over the village. The moralistic outlook that ends the tale is congruent with an audience of non-Native children who have been raised under culturally-specific societal norms. Death resulting in a peaceful new life, pride giving way to repentance, and the act of forgiveness all speak to the well-known “happily ever after” ending wherein Olcott herself states that the protagonist “shall ever be happy and content” (36).

Aside from the cheerful Eurocentric ending, it is worth noting another method Olcott uses to emphasize the Opeechee tale's sense of morality within her collection as a whole. Through the subject index located at the end of the book, Olcott has classified each of her tales in order "to aid the story-teller" (xix) and, perhaps purposefully, shape the way in which these tales are to be viewed and understood. The subject index includes a general list of animals, trees, seasons, names, verbs, and adjectives followed by whichever story fits into those particular categories. "The Boy who became a Robin" can be found listed under the more common terms of *Robins*, *Opeechee*, *Fathers*, and *Birds and Bird Day*. However, the tale is also placed under the categories of *Cruelty*, and *Ambition*, *Inordinate*. Through these latter categories, Olcott can be seen as attempting to direct storytellers using her collection as to which tales would be beneficial in demonstrating certain educational values.

Larned's "The Girl who became a Bird" is comparable to Olcott's "The Boy who became a Robin," as again it is the father figure who inhibits his child, this time by preventing a daughter, Ran-che-wai-me, from marrying her love, Wai-o-naisa, a young chief who belongs to another tribe. Ran-che-wai-me is the disobedient one, and "nightly, through the long months of summer, [do] the lovers keep their tryst, parting only after each meeting more and more endeared to each other" (Larned 1921, 90). Wai-o-naisa is suddenly ordered off on a secret expedition that does not allow him to say goodbye, and Ran-che-wai-me is heartbroken. She grows even more inconsolable when she learns, after his long absence, that he has died in battle. Not wanting to show her grief in front of her parents, Ran-che-wai-me finds solace in swimming over by starlight to the island where she had met Wai-o-naisa during the summer months "and there, calling upon his name, bewail[s] the loss of him who was dearer to her than all else" (90). One night, the continuous sound of her voice crying out her beloved's name attracts some of her father's people. Startled and weak with sorrow, Ran-che-wai-me desperately climbs a tree in order to hide:

At each repetition of his name her voice became shriller, while ... a soft plumage began to cover her delicate limbs, which were wounded by the briars. She tossed her arms to the sky in her distress and they became clothed with feathers. At length, when her pursuers were close upon her, a bird arose from the bush they had surrounded, and flitting from tree to tree, it fled before them, ever crying—"Wai-o-naisa! Wai-o-naisa!" (91)

Larned captures the elements of the fantastic and tragic within his rendition of the Ran-che-wai-me story. Even though he does not make

literal use of the fairy tale staples of “once upon a time” and “happily ever after” as Olcott does, Larned recreates a love story that is strongly reminiscent of the misfortunes of William Shakespeare’s legendary couple, Romeo and Juliet. Recounting a forbidden love that results in unbearable grief and tragedy, Larned’s story lends a European feel to the Native voice he is representing within “The Girl who became a Bird.” While this story could be considered a Native *pourquoi* tale due to its ending, Larned’s use of the word “maiden” when first introducing Ran-che-wai-me draws attention to a more European usage. As with Olcott’s use of “lad” in describing Opeechee, Larned’s decision to call Ran-che-wai-me a maiden is a minor detail, but it does cause one to wonder how diction shapes stories.

In contrast to both of these tales, Shelton’s “Suk-whay” possesses a different tone in regard to narration and writing style. Even though the tale is presented as a written account, Shelton writes as if he were delivering it orally—the language itself encourages interaction between life, text, reader, and/or listener. Rather than have the traditional fairy tale opening line of Olcott’s tale or the immediate sadness and tragedy experienced by Larned’s Ran-che-wai-me, Shelton provides his readership with stories that flow seamlessly from one to another in his collection. For instance, “Suk-whay” is preceded by the story of “Doh-Kwi-Buhch,” the great and mighty man who created the world, and it is Shelton’s informal way of launching into the story of a man-turned-bird that gives the impression of him sitting beside the listener in the presence of the totem pole and speaking the story from memory:

The next story on the big pole is that of the little bird called Sparrow or ‘Suk-whay.’

Suk-whay lived with a tribe of people who dwelt in a little village, and as years rolled on and Suk-whay became a young man he decided to get married and succeeded in winning as his wife a beautiful girl who belonged to a tribe of higher caste than his own.

When Suk-whay came to his new home and bride he felt very inferior to all his new relatives, because he knew that he was of lower class than they were, yet he decided to win their favor by showing them that he was good for something after all, so he was very industrious—he carried firewood, water and other necessary things into the house and made himself generally useful about the house. (Shelton 1923, 13)

From this beginning section of the story, one immediately notices the fluid style as each sentence flows into the next, a syntax that evokes the oral telling situation.

Shelton goes on to relate that Suk-whay's hard work is noticed by his new relatives and brothers-in-law, but so is his unwashed face which grows dirtier with every passing day. Disgusted with Suk-whay's dirtiness, the brothers-in-law approach their sister and ask that she speak to her husband about the problem. Although the sister complies, Suk-whay pays no attention to her request "for he sa[ys] that if he were to wash his face something terrible might happen" (13). Three days later, the brothers-in-law approach their sister again with the same demand, and upon hearing it from his wife for the second time, Suk-whay reluctantly walks over to the edge of the nearby river and sings a song to his grandfather, the South Wind or Stah-ghwahk, to "'Let the rain come down in torrents ... for I have been told to wash my face'" (13-14). The story ends in the following way:

[Suk-whay] sang a song for a few moments and then stooped and washed his face and he had hardly finished doing so when the rain came down in torrents—harder and faster it came until the whole world was flooded. And it rained for many days until Suk-whay flew away to the South to where his grand-father, Stah-ghwahk, lived and it is said that the great flood of long ago was caused when the dirty little bird called the Sparrow was obliged to wash his face. (14)

Shelton's narrative style maintains the oral rhythms in the written account of Suk-whay more closely than those of Larned and Olcott. For the text to work in "conversive ways that enable the reader as listener-reader to participate more closely in the written story" (Brill de Ramirez 1999, 6), Shelton not only encourages a more informal and relaxed conversational mode than his contemporaries, but also resists explicitly outlining specific lessons the reader and/or listener should take away from "Suk-whay" or the entire collection through the use of, for instance, a structured subject index. The Native voice within "Suk-whay" represents Shelton—as a Native himself—speaking of what he knows rather than attempting to reshape the original tale to serve a new purpose. Larned and Olcott, conversely, both have their own visions of what the Native voice is and how it is to be represented. The purpose behind each collection is driven not just by the writer, editor, publisher, and intended audience—it is also motivated by the differences between Native American and Western literary traditions.

Those differences also have an impact on images and their power to record and reflect perceptions, yet not always in the way one might expect. In flipping through Larned's and Olcott's collections, one quickly realizes that all images are drawn. Feathered headdresses and clothes made from

animal skins are worn by the Native individuals featured, and additionally, they are placed within a natural environment with trees, plants, and animals to surround them. According to S. Elizabeth Bird, “images produced by popular culture play a real role in shaping people’s perceptions” (1996, 11), and there were many who would fail to recognize a “real” Native if he were not costumed and/or situated in the way described above. “Nineteenth-century tourists wanted to see traditional clothing and quiet nobility” (1996, 4) displayed by Natives, and it appears that notion remained the same in the early twentieth century. As is evidenced by the illustrations found in Larned’s and Olcott’s books, the images—and the stereotypes embedded within them—would be purposefully recognizable and satisfactory to non-Native publishers and audiences alike.

Interestingly enough, the images placed in Shelton’s collection are family photographs that also conform to the expected qualities of the noble savage imagery mentioned by Bird. Not only does the front cover of *The Story of the Totem Pole* feature Shelton with a friendly smile and sporting the traditional Great Plains ceremonial garb complete with feathered headdress—despite him being of the Northwest Coast—but he also holds a large American flag. Featuring this specific symbol on a collection of Native stories significantly gestures towards a sign of peace and highlights the convergence and incorporation of two cultures, two storytelling traditions, and two opinions and purposes. It may even implicitly allude to the deal Shelton made with Hartley. The cover photograph—along with the family portrait located inside the collection that displays Shelton with his wife and daughter dressed in customary attire and sitting on a woven mat—accentuates what Shelton, as a sought-after performer and spokesman for Native American culture, once said about the Great Plains garments he consistently wore in public: they were “clothing he claimed would be most easily recognized as Indian” (Riddle n.d.). Due to this statement, one may read into the image Shelton constructs of himself as a picture of “the quintessential Other, whose role is to be the object of the White, colonialist gaze” (Bird 1996, 4).

In acknowledging the need for clothing that would be easily recognized as Native, Shelton reveals an understanding of the stance he has undertaken in preserving Native voices in the non-Native world. The sense of orality and personality embedded throughout the collection, nonetheless, encourages readers and listeners to distance themselves from viewing him as an object. In the first-edition copy owned by the University of Alberta’s Bruce Peel Special Collections Library, the inscription found on the title page—“William Shelton / my Indian name / Wha-cah-dub”—

is a declaration that not only uses both his English and Native names to signify “the two cultures he loved and sought to bring together” (Riddle n.d.), but also expressively parallels the cover photograph of the traditionally-dressed author clutching his American flag. In this way, Shelton urges those who read and listen to his stories to move in time with the changes society presses upon them, while cautioning them not to overlook the heritage and traditions he has chosen to record on the printed page.

While the Native voices present in the collections of Larned, Olcott, and Shelton demonstrate the authors’ own understanding of Native American culture, the complexities of who and how one may represent a group of individuals is greatly influenced by the function their books have within their societies and times. The existence of these three collections and a comparison of them address how the representation of orality, like orality itself, contains “many voices telling many tales in many tongues” (Brill de Ramirez 1999, 3). Moreover, it accentuates the ways in which an analysis of the print tradition highlights the complexities of representing Native voices with paper and ink. The various levels of sensitivity expressed between Larned, Olcott, and Shelton are due to the difference in perceptions born of specific cultural backgrounds and a knowledge touched by both assumptions and assessments. While one can recognize that these compilers are products of their historical contexts, it is important to note the power of words to shape readers’ perceptions for generations to come.

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