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Responding to stereotypes through film:

The Wapikoni Mobile and self-representations of First Nations youth in Canada

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Abstract

The Wapikoni Mobile is a social initiative for youth from First Nations communities in Canada. It is a mobile filmmaking studio where over 5000 youth have learned to express and represent themselves through film. This analysis of First Nations representation was conducted on a corpus of seven of these films which specifically focused on stereotypes. The research question was: how do preferred encodings by young indigenous peoples of Canada in the Wapikoni Mobile project negotiate the terms by which they are represented in films taking stereotypes as central themes? It aimed to approach how young indigenous peoples challenge dominant representations via filmic self-representation. The theoretical framework was based in critical cultural studies and socio-constructivist concepts and the method was greatly inspired by the Encoding/Decoding model of Stuart Hall. The corpus was analyzed in relation with a contextualisation of discursive patterns (stereotypes from dominant discourses and self-representational strategies of indigenous peoples) attempting to define First Nations cultural identities.

First, the analysis concluded that the stereotypes enunciated in the contextualization were generally the ones recognized in the lived experiences of First Nations youth.

Secondly, because of an extensive use of the 'looking' transcoding strategy, the youth represented themselves as the main constitutive force of their cultural identity, thus occupying a central position in the representational struggle and fulfilling indigenous media's political potentialities.

Thirdly, the preferred meanings of the film established that their authors deconstructed the image of the noble savage and its consequent codes, established positive and equal humanities, inscribed their culture in modernity unproblematically while re-claiming their history, accepted the integration of elements from other cultures to theirs, denied their disappearance, considered the effects of colonization while neither negating the intention to de-colonize nor seeing themselves as corrupted, refused to be framed as a 'problem' or a burden for society and called for the dominant groups to educate themselves as their ignorance entertains erroneous and subordinating representations which are not representative of First Nations lived experiences.

Fourthly, the analysis could answer the research question with the main conclusion that the corpus of films of the Wapikoni Mobile having stereotypes as central themes generally deconstructed stereotypes of the dominant discourse in an oppositional code and encoded First Nations as the self-determining 'self', rather than the Other. Although there was an exception in the corpus, this exception still controlled situated logics of the dominant code which it turned positively, from a negotiated position. The corpus coded dominant representations and stereotypes as ignorant and represented First Nations cultural identities with alternative frameworks of coding which it constructed. Across the new alternative codes, three identified themes explain how this conclusion was reached: self-determination, a tradition and modernity nexus and diversity. Self-determination permitted First Nations youth to represent their identities in the revendicated position of the 'self' rather than the Other. The tradition and modernity nexus was deconstructed to extract

negative or fixed meanings from tradition, to incorporate external elements and to actualize tradition in a modern use. Diversity was used to de-essentialize identity, to celebrate difference in equal humanity and to mark difference from the Other. The 'self' was thus represented as able to control the meanings of its traditions and culture, understand the effects of history and claim humanity and new diversities.

In conclusion, I contend that the corpus proved to represent the need and the intention for First Nations to occupy the discursive space attempting to define what is 'true' about them. A limit to this research is that the corpus selection voluntarily favored oppositional discourses, which means that its conclusions aren't necessarily applicable to all First Nations perspectives, but to those centrally focused on challenging stereotypes although they probably echo discourses existing in their communities and nations.

“We know who we are”

- Jemmy Echaquan-Dubé, *Two Pocahontas in the city* (2015)

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1.0 Introduction

Questions of indigenous rights in colonized lands are crucial dimensions of the worldwide debates on globalization and migration. As the national order of the world is challenged, public and political spheres inquire the formation of cultural identities. In this research, my aim was to analyze youth self-representations of First Nations cultural identities in Canada. I used the Wapikoni Mobile films as empirical material. The Wapikoni Mobile is a social initiative for youth from First Nations communities to express and represent themselves through film. It is a mobile filmmaking studio, where over 5000 youth have been given the opportunity to learn to produce films. This thesis focused on the concept of representation, to examine how First Nations youth wished to communicate and construct their cultural identities, amongst the socioeconomic and cultural struggles they are facing.

1.1 Research question

The research question was: how do preferred encodings by First Nations youth in the Wapikoni Mobile project in Canada negotiate the terms by which they are represented in films taking stereotypes as central themes? Specifically, this question aimed to discover how First Nations youth challenge dominant representations by using the film media to represent themselves.

1.2 Relevancy of the research

The insertion of the object of study of indigenous representation in the Global Refugee Studies programme was a vow to recognize the potentialities of the concepts of "refugeeness" and "liminality" (Malkki 1992). Colonization, imposition of the nation state order, life in reserves, as well as legal, political and cultural issues, have led some to define indigenous peoples as refugees in their own lands (Wesley-Esquimaux 2010; Bulkan 2012). This project was driven by an ambition to examine some of the consequences of the inadequacy of the nation state order in the cultural representation of indigenous lives.

1.3 Approach and philosophy of research

The research approach used was the Encoding/Decoding model (Hall 1993). The analysis was conducted on a corpus of seven short films. This corpus was analyzed via its relation to a contextualization of the discursive field of First Nations cultural identities, which was constructed through a literature review of critical cultural studies perspectives on stereotypes and self-representational strategies of indigenous peoples. A discussion on central themes of the analysis intended to deepen the understanding of the results.

The philosophy of the research was anchored in critical cultural studies and socio-constructivist concepts. As should be clear in the presentation of the theoretical framework, ontologically, this research considered 'reality' to be mediated and produced by discourse and representation (Hall 1997). Furthermore, the epistemological considerations of this research framed knowledge as constructed (Hall 1997) and situated (Haraway 1988). Knowledge was here socially constructed, locally and temporally limited and partial. Thus, the research didn't intend to find 'truths', but attempted to position and interpret the forces who struggle over the attribution of meanings.

2.0 Theoretical framework

2.1 Cultural identity

In this research, the concept of cultural identity treated of the cultural elements represented in the corpus of Wapikoni Mobile films. For Stuart Hall, culture is "a place where symbolic challenges of ideologies of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality or gender try to impose their hegemony on minorities who fight discursively to translate the terms by which they are represented" (Cervulle[1] in Hall 2008). In cultural studies, culture is conceived as signifying cultural practices and discourses. It evacuates its meaning of 'high culture' or of an imagined community's (Anderson 1991) artistic landmarks.

Culture obtains epistemological and ontological value as a discursive space of struggle for the establishment of what counts as 'real' and 'true' and where power relations are

[1] Personal translation

inevitably active. Studying cultural identity is to study how and why identities are constructed in relation to power relations. Hall's definition of cultural identity is presented in two positions:

> "The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of the idea of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. […] This second position recognizes that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are': or rather – since history has intervened – 'what we have become'." (Hall 1989 in Prysthon 2016)

Though he argues that both positions impact the cultural identities of the colonized, Hall specifies: "It is only from this second position that we can properly understand the truly traumatic character of the colonial experience" (Hall 1994). From a socio-constructivist perspective, these two positions construct a sentiment of belonging to an imagined community via perceived similarity (1st position) as well as with differentiative mechanisms (2nd position). This second position emphasizes that cultural identity is constantly produced, thus altered, and operates via similarity and difference. This position is opposed to forms of essentialism, where belonging is mostly perceived from the first position: "Essentialism assumes that words have stable referents and that social categories reflect an essential underlying identity" (Barker 2000). For Hall, cultural identity cannot be 'found': "it is as much 'being' something as it is 'becoming' something" (Hall 1989). It is conceived as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation (Hall 1989). This production of cultural identity is therefore a continuous positioning across previous discourses and narratives (Sethi 2005).

First Nations cultural identities were the objects of study of this research approached in one of their analyzable components, representation, to see which preferred meanings First Nations youth wished to code as accurate representations of their cultural identities. In this project, I examined the hegemonic, negotiated or oppositional discourses attempting to establish the 'truth' about these identities.

2.2 Representation

In accordance with the framework presented on cultural identity, this concept of representation has grounds in cultural studies and socio-constructivist perspectives. Hall's position on representation is based on a non-positivist conception of reality. Though he consents to reality's existence, he argues it can't simply be found because it is mediated:

> "Reality exists outside language, but it is constantly mediated by and through language: and what we can know and say has to be produced in and through discourse. Discursive 'knowledge' is the product not of the transparent representation of the 'real' in language but of the articulation of language on real relations and conditions." (Hall 1993)

Representation is conceived as constitutive of reality. It operates through sign-vehicles, such as language (Hall 1997). In films, representation is encoded and decoded in the forms text, sound and moving images. Representation acquires both ontological and epistemological characters: "There is no original meaning circulating outside of representation" (Barker 2000). Therefore, representation constantly negotiates cultural identity, by being a "temporary stabilization of meaning" (Barker 2000). In this stabilization, different ideologies and interests are at play. In this sense, representation is a space of hegemonic struggle (Hall 1989). Hegemony operates with ideology where hidden power relations are active in representations that appear normal by operating on both "a conscious and overt level, and an unconscious or suppressed level" (Hall 1993).

Representation is deemed "not an essence but a positioning" (Hall 1989) amongst difference markers and power distribution. This positioning is precisely what the Encoding/Decoding model is meant to approach. By conceptualizing representation as a positioning, its participation in the construction of cultural identity is analyzable according to the positions it takes. Rather than being found, representation is positioned to entertain, negotiate or apply new meanings to a cultural identity.

In short, this conception of representation gives ontological importance to meaning produced and conveyed in filmic images. It takes films as participating in the social construction of cultural identity through representation. As Gail Valaskakis argues, this conceptual framework "locates artistic and media images within the ideological struggle

of power relations and the dynamic process of building individual and collective identity" (Valaskakis 1993). Therefore, the framework required to step out of the text to relate its representations to the discursive context.

In this research, representation was situated in a colonial context where a power struggle is dominated by the colonizer where different positionings form First Nations cultural identities. In the analysis, I present a contextualisation of First Nations representational struggle from a literature review. This enables to understand how dominant discourses have attempted to fix meanings of First Nations cultural identities and how strategies of self-representation have responded to them. In relation to this contextualisation, analysing specifics positions, such as the ones in the Wapikoni Mobile, gave access to First Nations youth perspectives on their cultural identities.

2.3 Difference

In the cultural identity concept, it was argued that a second position viewed difference as a constructive mechanism, notably via the representation of difference. Difference is a concept which can situate the positionings of a representation.

According to Hall, difference "is essential to meaning; without it, meaning could not exist" (Hall 1997). Representing oneself operates by marking what is different than the self. In cultural studies, difference takes the form of a classification. It organizes people as belonging to categories and imagined communities. It is how cultural identity is constructed: "The marking of 'difference' is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture" (Hall 1997). Representing the difference of others thereby participates in constructing one's own cultural identity, as well as the Other's cultural identities. Hall explains that culture is unstable, but it attempts to counter its instability through the categorization of difference: "Marking 'difference' leads us, symbolically, to close ranks, shore up culture and to stigmatize and expel anything which is defined as impure, abnormal. However, paradoxically, it also makes 'difference' powerful, strangely attractive precisely because it is forbidden, taboo, threatening to cultural order" (Hall 1997). The marking of difference through representation thus excludes some categories and stabilizes cultural identities.

Difference can be represented in binary oppositions, which capture diversity in extremes and in essential traits (Hall 1997). These oppositions are generally characterized by a power relation, where a dominant pole marks and defines the other one, such as the white/black color of skin opposition (Hall 1997). Thus, difference orders and classifies the world in categories that are not equal. In other words, it can construct cultural identities but can apply oppressive meanings.

In sum, difference is a performative mechanism of representation which leads to the constitution of the Other and its cultural identity. The concept was used in this project to speak of an unequal categorization of cultural identities, and of an expulsion mechanism constructing perceived similarities.

2.4 The Other

The concept of the Other serves to scale the power relation characterizing the marking of difference as a constructive mechanism of cultural identities: “we need 'difference' because we can only construct meaning through a dialogue with the Other” (Hall 1997). However, this dialogue isn’t produced outside power relations and a dominant ‘self’ has hegemonically marked the dominated ‘Other’ as different. This discursive process is called Othering: “the construction by a ‘dominant in-group’ (the Self) of one or several ‘dominated out-groups’ (the Other) through the stigmatization of a difference that can either be real or imagined” (Staszak 2008 in Liard 2008). Historically, the dominant ‘self’ has been the white Western world, as is exemplified by Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism (Varisco 2007). The Other’s cultural identity is thus a space where the dominant ‘self’ has attempted to fix meanings to secure its own identity: “The dominant group will always define itself in relation to the ‘other’ which is an umbrella term for all the minority groups. The ‘other’ is further conceived with derogatory characteristics” (Sethi 2005).

The Other’s difference is marked negatively and oppressively, to maintain the balance of power in the advantage of the dominant group. First Nations peoples have been marked as the white colonizer’s Other, who has elaborately dominated this relationship and rendered

it ideological. In this research, the Other was used to speak of an ideological representation of First Nations cultural identities as colonized and dominated.

2.5 Stereotype

An attempt to fix the Other's difference is a stereotype. As difference is an operative mechanism of representation and a productive force of identity, it is a means for the hegemonic discourse to perform ideological closures in representation. Hall explains:

> "the first point is – stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes 'difference'. Secondly, stereotyping deploys a strategy of 'splitting'. It divides the normal acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. It then excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different. […] So, another feature of stereotyping is its practice of 'closure' and exclusion. […] Stereotyping, in other words, is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. […] The third point is that stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power." (Hall 1989 in Prysthon 2016)

Thus, a stereotype is an attempt to fix meaning, to essentialize, to hide diversity and agency, to establish what is normal and to maintain hegemony.

Another dimension of stereotyping is that it implies a degree of fetishization: "a powerful fascination or desire is both indulged and at the same time denied" (Hall 1989, in Prysthon 2016). Fetishization is "implied but cannot be shown" (Hall 1997) and is symptomatic of the attractiveness of difference. Fetishization explains how fantasies of the dominant appear dormant as hidden 'reason to be' of the stereotypes.

In this text, stereotypes were approached as attempted fixities of difference in representation, but also as standpoints from which to analyze resistance to them.

2.6 The imagined community

The imagined community is an expression showing that via these concepts (representation, difference, the Other or stereotypes), cultural identity relies on sentiments of belonging. The concept of the "imagined community" argues that a nation is socially constructed (Anderson 1991). It frames a nation as a group of people not knowing each other yet

imagining belonging to the same community presumably linked by a common culture and limited by boundaries "beyond which lie other nations" (Anderson 1991) First Nations, as is implied, are commonly referred to as 'nations', though they are not nation-states (Montserrat Guibernau 2004). They could best be described as nations without states: "those territorial communities with their own identity and a desire for self-determination included within the boundaries of one or more states" (Montserrat Guibernau 2004).

The imagined community concept was used in this research to trace patterns of representation which emphasize belonging rather in similarity than difference.

3.0 Method

3.1 Identifying stereotypes and self-representational strategies of First Nations

The first part of the analysis establishes the terrain for the Encoding/Decoding model. This chapter takes the form of a critical contextualisation based on socio-constructivist and cultural studies literature on First Nations representation. The objective was to construct a portrait of the historically important notions about the representation of First Nations cultural identities. This portrait acts as a 'state of affairs' of First Nations representational struggles. In second-hand source data were extracted positions of hegemony in the form of stereotypes, as well as negotiated or oppositional strategies of self-representation. The contextualisation acts as a referent for the films of the corpus, who can then be related to their discursive context. Stereotypes were analyzed according to the theoretical framework and permitted to position the representations of the corpus of film.

Critical cultural studies interpret colonized peoples self-representations as "predicated on a critique of the degree of fetishization, objectification, and negative figuration" (Harman 2016). This contextualisation was constructed to recognize that cultural identities are mediated with previous discourses, as Hall argues: "identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Hall 1994). New positions must be related to previous discourses, which explains the relevance of the contextualization.

3.2 Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding model

The Encoding/Decoding model is an analytical tool designed to demonstrate the implication of ideology and power relations in the process of communication notably by examining the positions of encoding and decoding. This model examines how hegemonic discourses and stereotypes were entertained, negotiated or challenged in the corpus of the selected Wapikoni Mobile films.

Hall's model views communication as a circuit: "a circular movement in which [...] dominant perceptions (or ideology) are 'reproduced' " (Bødker 2016). The theoretical level of the model assumes that "meaning is conveyed through the connotation given to signs, such as language and images, and this process is called coding" (Bédard 2019). The model analyzes how these codes come to be, if and how they are decoded and what they become, or influence, in the social world.

The model has 4 moments: *production, circulation, use* and *reproduction*. These form a communicative process. They are linked and articulated together but are distinct moments (Bødker 2016). *Production* is where the encoding starts. A number of influences frame the production into a discursive form, including professional, institutional and ideological forces which assign meaning in a seemingly natural way (Hall 1993). *Circulation* is the transmission of the encoding in signs and to audiences: "technological and hermeneutical processes through which meaning and/or ideology move into 'sign-vehicles'" (Bødker 2016). *Use* is the way the code acquires meaningfulness by being decoded by an audience. *Reproduction* is how the decoding will affect the social world (Hall 1993).

There are three identified decoding positions: *dominant*, *negotiated* and *oppositional*. The *dominant* position understands the encodings, decodes them accordingly, and agrees with them. In doing so, it agrees with hegemonic discourses in society (Hall 1993). The *negotiated* position is described in this way: "[It] contains a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements: it acknowledges the legitimacy of the hegemonic definitions to make the grand significations (abstract), while, at a more restricted, situational (situated) level, it makes its own ground rules - it operates with exceptions to the rule." (Hall 1993). The *negotiated* position recognizes the dominant frame but applies "situated logics" (Hall

1993). The *oppositional* position disagrees with the encodings, and usually will "retotalize the message within some alternative framework of reference" (Hall 1993).

The encoding is a privileged moment: "encoding will have the effect of constructing some of the limits and parameters within which decodings will operate" (Hall 1993). David Morley's conception of the model reiterates the privileged position of the encoding and the limits of the interpretative capacities of audiences: "the 'preferred reading' is undoubtedly a property of the text (…) audience scholars have exaggerated the extent of the polysemy of meanings of media texts and ignored the limits placed by texts themselves on the process of interpretation." (Morley 2006). The encoding position is discursively empowered as it sets the limits of meaningfulness and this research focused on that moment for the analysis.

For there to be 'effective communication', the encoding must construct a meaningful discourse that the decoding moment can meaningfully appropriate (Hall 1993). This 'effective communication' has a negative connotation in the initial model because the encodings represent mass media's and society's dominant ideologies, which is why 'preferred encodings' are considered to represent the established ideologies. Hall said in the initial model: "preferred readings [have] the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them and have themselves become institutionalized" (Hall 1993).

Quite importantly for this research, the conception that 'effective communication' entertained dominant codes of society, and that the agreement with encodings necessarily occupies a dominant position is revised in contexts of oppositional encodings. Hall's model encourages methodologies "focused on questions of ideology and resistance" (Ross 2011). However, necessary adjustments need to be made for the analysis of alternative media instead of mass media. In alternative media, there can be a shift in the encodings' positionings, and therefore in the preferred readings, which don't attempt to limit the decoding to dominant ideology. Reinterpretations of the model argue that encodings can prefer meanings outside of the dominant code (Harman 2016; Liard 2018). To analyze First Nations media encodings, it is essential to recognize that they critique the dominant codes of representation (Harman 2016). Decoding in agreement with this critique could not be conceived as occupying a 'dominant position'. Encodings produced by alternative media,

minorities or the colonized can "challenge the 'dominant code' [by] appropriating the institutional discursive forms through a 'negotiated code' or 'oppositional code'" (Bødker 2016). Thus, by using film, minorities use an institutional discursive form to contest the dominant code (Laurent-Sédillot 2009).

The model is applied to analyze the relationship of the predominant moment of the encoding (Hall 1993) with other previous or active discourses. Given the critical nature of encodings produced by the colonized, they are positioned in relation to dominant discourses and to negotiated and oppositional responses to them. This research relies on a critical contextualisation of the discursive field to position the encodings of the corpus. As Linda Steiner argues: "we must consider the relationship between oppositional encoding and oppositional decoding in order to understand the alternative preferred readings" (Steiner 1988). In sum, this method is revised in a way where a 'preferred reading' isn't necessarily taken as a 'preferred dominant reading' and where an encoding can already be 'negotiated' or 'oppositional'.

Hall's model in film studies is a "dialogue between cultural identity and cinematic representation, a kind of theoretical frame that helps thinking not only the film form, but cultural forms as a whole" (Prysthon 2016), which is why a constant comparison with the corpus of films and the contextualisation was necessary. The model is adjusted to the theoretical framework emphasizing that cultural identity is a positioning, and that representation is an attempt at fixing its meaning, notably via encodings.

3.3 Transcodings

Alike other dominated groups media (Steiner 1988), colonized peoples media challenge a dominant code and propose new preferred representations. Previous representations can be reformulated; a process which Hall calls transcoding: "taking an existing meaning and re-appropriating it for new meanings" (Hall 1997). Hall has identified three transcoding strategies: counter-integrationist, the strategy of 'diversity' and the strategy of 'looking'.

The counter-integrationist strategy is the "aggressive affirmation of (…) cultural identity, a positive attitude towards difference and a struggle over representation" (Hall 1997).

While integrationism attempts to hide the ‘negative’ connotations of dominated representations and copy the dominant manners, this strategy turns the ‘negative’ positively and aggressively. It reverses the way stereotypes are used which has the effect of levelling “the moral playing-field” (Hall 1997). However, there is no guarantee that this reversal can subvert the stereotype as it uses its features (Hall 1997). Hall speaks of such strategy in his analysis of Blaxploitation films.

The strategy of ‘diversity’ tries to use a range of positive images to “construct a positive identification with what has been abjected” (Hall 1997). It constitutes a “celebration of difference [and] expands the range of racial representations and [their] complexity” (Hall 1997). While the markings of difference constructing the stereotypes may be maintained, an effort is made to favor the subordinate position and to attempt to represent equal value of differences. The results can be ambivalent: “adding positive images to the largely negative repertoire of the dominant regime of representation increases the diversity of the ways in which 'being black' is represented, but does not necessarily displace the negative” (Hall 1997). The power relation marking the Other may remain and stereotypes may not be subverted.

The ‘looking’ strategy “is more concerned with the forms of racial representation than with introducing a new content” (Hall 1997). It talks directly to stereotypes to “make them work against themselves” (Hall 1997), as they never fulfill themselves since they take identity for fixed. The action of ‘looking’ is at the core of this strategy: “this strategy makes elaborate play with 'looking', hoping by its very attention, to 'make it strange' - that is, to de-familiarize it, and so make explicit what is often hidden” (Hall 1997). It shows the Other and explores its “shifting, unstable character” (Hall 1997). The Other becomes ambiguous and the dominant codes become senseless.

Transcoding strategies are included in the model to identify and analyze negotiated and oppositional encodings of the corpus which use stereotypes as a basis to represent themselves differently.

3.4 Corpus selection

3.4.1 Indigenous media as empirical material

The choice of film as empirical material is motivated by the media's potential to be an accessible space from which to provide alternative discourses (Calvé-Thibault 2012). For Faye Ginsburg, indigenous media are "a means of self-expression that necessarily involves the political state of affairs for first nations and indigenous people who struggle against ongoing forces of subordination or neocolonial circumstances" (Ginsburg 1993). First Nations films are inscribed in a media tradition of political and cultural struggles, as Lorna Roth explains: "The politic of communication and the communication of politics were seen to be integrally tied together in the development of First People media" (Roth 2011).

They have been theorized as "sites of culture making" (Myers 1994) or "sites of conscious construction of self-representation" (Turner 1991 in Laurent-Sédillot 2009). Ginsburg insists that indigenous media do not solely 'represent' or 'communicate', but they "mediate" (Ginsburg 1993). By entering the discursive struggle as an 'indigenous media' these films must 'mediate' their cultural identity against other forces. According to the conceptual framework, indigenous media are spaces where indigenous 'reality' and cultural identity are produced in mediation with other forces. In this struggle for representation, their positions create a "rupture from the fixed and stereotyped images of indigenous peoples found in mass media" (Calvé-Thibault[2] 2012). As hegemonic discourses attempt to fix their cultural identities, indigenous media generally occupy negotiated or oppositional positions. Their positionings are diverse thematically, formally and discursively, which reflects the diversity of what is means to be 'indigenous' (Calvé-Thibault 2012).

Indigenous media inherently are indigenous positionings, mediations in a representational struggle and sites of culture making. Given its objectives and characteristics, the media is a relevant site of empirical material to analyse First Nations positionings.

[2] Personal translation

3.4.2 Presentation of the Wapikoni Mobile

The indigenous peoples in Canada are people of the First Nations, Inuits and Metis. Their socioeconomic conditions are worse than the non-indigenous according to many variables: unemployment, life expectancy, crime, drug and alcohol problems, amongst others (Calvé-Thibault 2012). Founded in 2003, the Wapikoni Mobile is a mobile filmmaking studio which "travels to Aboriginal communities providing workshops for First Nations youth that allow them to master digital tools by directing short films"[3]. The mission is three-fold: combat isolation and suicide while developing skills, broadcast the issues and cultures of First Nations, and contribute to the preservation of their cultural heritage[4]. Identified as objectives are intervention, training, mediation, job creation, economic growth and networking.

In numbers, "5000 participants were trained or initiated to documentary film"[5]. These participants are from 14 nations and 44 communities in Canada, but also 45 communities and 11 nations across the world. In total, 1145 films and 750 musical recordings constitute the repertoire, qualified as "exceptional indigenous heritage"[6]. Its various recognitions range across artistic, social and cultural accomplishments: 170 participations in festivals and awards such as the 2014 Intercultural Innovation Award from the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC).

The theorized approach is to "travel to" (Barbeau 2006[7]). A filmmaking team comprised of two young mentor filmmakers, an assistant from the community, a social worker and an indigenous coordinator establish a temporary filmmaking studio for 30 days[8]. In this period, films are produced and young people are trained. Through 'active listening' of

[3] Wapikoni Mobile, "History" [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/about/who-are-we/history], consulted on March 17th 2019
[4] Wapikoni Mobile, "Mission, values and objectives" [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/about/who-are-we/mission-values-and-objectives], consulted on March 17th 2019

[5] Wapikoni Mobile, "Wapikoni in short" [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/about/who-are-we/wapikoni-in-brief], consulted on March 17th 2019
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Personal translation
[8]Wapikoni Mobile, "Innovative approach" [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/about/who-are-we/innovative-approach], consulted on March 17th 2019

communities and communication with the indigenous political instances, the Wapikoni Mobile works on the long-term, by often returning to the same communities[9]. Therefore, the Wapikoni Mobile is a training facility for the development of artistic and technical skills, but also a social support, a link to further resources and a space of cultural transmission, development and sharing[10].

3.4.3 Selection of the corpus: validity and limitations

In this research, theory was applied to a corpus which also provided empirical material for further knowledge. The main methodological enquiry was to determine its expected representativity (Charaudeau 2009).

The research question of this project was what Patrick Charaudau calls a representational and interpretative problem (Charaudeau 2009). The corpus is approached with "socio-discursive representations which we suppose are dominant at a certain period of time in the history of a society" (Chareaudau 2009). The interpretation of the social positionings of the colonizer and the colonized groups is described in the contextualisation chapter. The corpus is deemed to represent new specific perspectives which appear when being compared to their discursive context.

The films were selected under the condition that they centrally focused on stereotypes to answer the research question directly. The required characteristics were: a revendicated First Nations origin of the filmmaker and a central thematic involvement in stereotypes of First Nations. The corpus and the contextualisation had two comparable variables: the revendicated origin of the issuer of the preferred meanings (the encoder) and what the preferred meanings about First Nations identity were. The comparison was based on the treatment of the theme of indigenous stereotypes.

I constructed the corpus by searching 'stereotype', 'representation' and 'racism' in the Wapikoni Mobile website's research engine. After careful visioning of all the movies

[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Wapikoni Mobile, "Mobile studios" [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/about/who-are-we/mobile-studios], consulted on March 17th 2019

which appeared, I chose only the ones taking stereotypes of First Nations peoples as central themes. It was considered a central theme when the film repeatedly or exclusively discussed stereotypes. To fulfill the condition of selecting films of First Nations media, I followed Kirsten Thisted's argument on Greenlandic movies: Wapikoni films can be considered as First Nations films as they are filmed in First Nations revendicated lands, are produced by First Nations peoples, take First Nations subjects and use First Nations actors (Thisted 2014). Also, as the filmmakers revendicate a First Nations belonging and because the Wapikoni Mobile's methodology creates favorable conditions for indigenous wills to be respected, the films were deemed 'self-representative' of First Nations perspectives.

The corpus is not representative of the entire range of First Nations youth perspectives. Due to its size, the variety of First Nations was not exhaustive, nor could a single nation's complexity be represented.

Linda T. Smith says that self-representation has two main dimensions: "the notion of representation as a political concept and representation as a form of voice and expression" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). By conditioning the corpus on central involvement in stereotypes, both dimensions were present, but the films had a better chance to be sympathetic to oppositional positions of indigenous representation. Films that had other central themes were excluded although they could be representative of First Nations cultural identities.

Since the theoretical framework argues emphatically that identity is socially constructed and involved in a struggle for meaning where power relations are active, it nevertheless made sense to apply this selection criteria. Furthermore, a central feature of this framework and of indigenous media is that colonized self-representations challenge dominant representations (Harman 2016; Hall 1989). The selection criteria enabled this feature to be voluntarily represented by the filmmakers. This is why the research question specifies that the object of study is self-representation of cultural identities by filmmakers centrally focused on stereotypes. The results of the analysis could give access to First Nations perspectives who voluntarily make a political claim about their cultural identity on a discursive field thus recognizing that a dominant course was participating in the construction of their 'realities'. Rather than attempting to interpret cultural identity from

films taking another theme as central, the criteria gave access to concentrated positionings to the detriment of widening the spectre of positions but to the advantage of deepening the understanding of perspectives of youth media centrally preoccupied with stereotypes, which could nevertheless express a range of strategies and positionings.

On a practical note, this condition had the advantage of directly being concerned by the research question, which permitted a relatively quick passage from theory to analysis and the realization of the thesis in the expected time frame.

3.4.4 The Corpus

Title	Authors	Year	Length
Deux Pocahontas en ville (Two Pocahontas in town)	Jemmy Echaquan Dubé, Marie-Édith Fontaine	2015	3:44
Co-wreck the record	Christopher Grégoire-Gabriel, Craig Commanda, Naomi Condo, Raymond Caplin	2016	7:17
I am L'nu	Naomi Condo	2016	3:29
More than a stereotype	Sinay Kennedy	2018	3:44
Tous humains (All of us Human Beings),	Vicky Moar-Niquay	2015	2:33
Where are your feathers?	Mélanie Lumsden and Widia Larivière	2015	4:52
Correcting the chalkboard	Empreintes-engage-toi collective	2012	4:50

This corpus' objective was to provide empirical material for the analysis of First Nations points of view on the representation of their own cultural identities. Such empirical material is relevant to assess an identified lack of perspectives on indigenous research: "Frequently in the literature more attention has been bestowed on analyzing the European images of the Amerindians than on the Indians' own interpretation and response to Western domination and social representation" (Nygren 1998). This corpus of seven films has been analysed in comparison with a contextualisation of First Nations representations to provide an understanding of First Nations positionings towards stereotypes.

4.0 Analysis

The analysis comprises of two main sections: the contextualisation of stereotypes and self-representational strategies of First Nations, and the analysis of the films of the corpus.

4.1 Contextualisation

4.1.1 Cultural identities of First Nations

In this chapter, I apply the theoretical framework to First Nations cultural identities with the help of critical cultural studies literature of the subject. Indigenous identities are here framed so the effects of colonialism and history are actualized in the construction of identity (Hall 1989), which challenges the romanticized idea of uncovering the Indian behind or before the colonized one, and the positivist claim to find the 'real' Indian outside of discourse. On this matter, Bruno Cornellier identified two paradigms which can hinder analytical approaches to indigenous identity:

> "1) 'correcting' Native American representations or distortions, and 2) critically defining the substitutive function of the 'invented' or 'imaginary' Indian in the face of Native realities. In each case, the reference that representation is meant to designate implicitly suggests the anteriority or pre-discursive reality of Indianness (or nativeness), thought of as outside the discourses or images produced" (Cornellier 2012)

Such paradigms create the positions of "eternal hybridity, silence, absence, alienation, colonial reification, or rootlessness." (Cornellier 2012) for First Nations peoples. As Smith argues, history and colonization have constructed indigenous representation: "Other has been constituted with a name, a face, a particular identity, namely indigenous peoples" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). The experience of colonization has happened and is happening, which profoundly marks cultural identities. Some discourses, which Cornellier conceives as paradigms, tend to construct identities as lost, pre-discursive, pre-historic or reparable. This entertains the indigenous as the Other and estranges its 'self' as being corrupted.

The dominant use of colonization's effects, as well as imagining an identity before it, serve to discredit the forms identity takes today in indigenous lives. Being colonized is, as

Valaskakis says, an “experience of exclusion, or stereotypical inclusion and appropriation [involving] the subaltern experience rooted in the lived reality and the representation of the ‘insider’, the ‘outsider’, and the ‘other’” (Valaskakis 1993). This experience is the product of imposed dominant representations and stereotypes, but it also produces responses, negotiations and redefinitions by First Nations peoples.

Next, I present stereotypes and markings of difference which constructed the First Nations Other and self-representational strategies ranging across negotiated and oppositional positions. The categories of stereotypes and self-representational strategies are constructed for the analysis, but they overarch and penetrate each other at times. In other words, they are identified, but are not exhaustively defined neither do they represent all the spectre of the representational struggle.

4.1.2 Stereotypes

4.1.2.1 The noble savage

One of the most established and enduring stereotypes of indigenous peoples in Canada, and in other colonized parts of the world, is the ‘noble savage’. According to Smith, this Western marking of difference has philosophical roots in Rousseau: “Rousseau has a particular influence over the way indigenous peoples in the South Pacific came to be regarded, because of his highly romanticized and idealized view of human nature. It is to Rousseau that the idea of the 'noble savage' is attributed” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012).

The stereotype dignifies a pre-historic and pre-cultural being of who’s binary opposite is the civilised white man. By applying the concept of difference, this stereotype marks the white as civilised and modern. The noble savage stereotype is the roots of a wide range of other ones: indigenous as naturalized, lazy, ethnographically fascinating, corrupted by civilisation, princess, squaw, warrior, media warrior, poor and socially assisted, etc. The stereotype of the noble savage is dehumanizing and unfulfillable because it exists only as a difference marker serving to maintain the indigenous as the Other and the white as the ‘self’.

Amongst the issues that the noble savage stereotype creates for indigenous representation is nobility's imposed unfulfillment: "The view soon lost favour or was turned around into the 'ignoble savage', when it was found that these idealized humans actually indulged in 'barbaric' and 'savage' customs and were capable of what were viewed as acts of grave injustice and despicability" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). Its purity is a condition that can never be met, because the standards of the nobility originate from the exterior of the represented culture and are vowed to change. The stereotype refers to an ambiguous (at best) humanity of which no one could 'return' to, even if it ever existed. In front of this unfulfillment, the atrocities committed by the colonizer become excused, as they are done in the name of civilisation, progress, education or religion, which are binarily opposed to 'natural' savagery.

Hall's concept of the stereotype argues that there is always something hidden or fetichized in it (Hall 1989). For Thisted, representations of the noble savage imply the drunk indigenous unfit for civilisation and modernity (Thisted 2014). The nobility and the savagery are actualized to speak of the indigenous as corrupted by civilisation. Fetishization is active, as the indigenous represent a lost ideal for white men, an ideal which is exemplified in Rousseau's conception of nature (Tuhiwai Smith 2012).

The white colonizer maintains the balance of power by marking the noble savage's difference, which essentializes and romanticizes an unfulfillable identity that frames today's indigenous peoples as 'problematic' (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). This framing of the indigenous 'problem' in colonization politics entertains other stereotypes such as the 'poor and socially assisted'.

4.1.2.2 An object of curiosity: naturalization and loss of humanity

Both a cause and a consequence of the noble savage stereotype, naturalization is a discursive mechanism that attributes 'natural' features to the culture of the indigenous. Culture becomes reserved to the 'civilised' whites: "Among whites, 'Culture' was opposed to 'Nature'. Amongst blacks, it was assumed, 'Culture' coincided with 'Nature'" (Hall 1997). This difference marker plays on the eternal quality of nature: "'Naturalization' is therefore a representational strategy designed to fix 'difference', and thus secure it forever" (Hall

1997). By imposing a ‘natural’ character to the Other, the dominant position attempts to fix identity as if it was pre-discursive, as if the white ‘self’ didn’t construct it. The natural is hardly alterable, as it is an ‘essence’. Naturalization thus constitutes a denial of a conception of identity as discursive or constructed.

Naturalization codes the indigenous Other as less human. Several discursive mechanisms mark this difference such as “the use of zoological terms to describe primitive people” (Memmi 1965 in Tuhiwai Smith 2012) or the insistence on behavioral change: “wearing 'decent' clothes (…) eating 'properly' at 'proper' meal times (…) reorganizing family patterns to enable men to work at some things and women to support them” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). The lack of humanity attributes character traits, notably laziness and the incapacity to be productive in a ‘civilised’ world. It applies a ‘natural’ fixity underlined by the fetish of nature as uncorrupted. This dominant discourse constructs the Other as primitive and pre-historic by conveying hidden meanings of the colonizer ideology of civilising the savages. The words ‘decent’ and ‘proper’ reinforce the intellectual, civilised and human qualities of the whites while the necessary differences to convey these meanings are imposed on the indigenous, which become ‘indecent’ and ‘improper’ savages. This ideological marking of difference codes indigenous peoples as unequal humans incapable of the same intelligence as white people. As Smith says:

> “One of the supposed characteristics of primitive peoples was that we could not use our minds or intellects. We could not invent things, we could not create institutions or history, we could not imagine, we could not produce anything of value, we did not know how to use land and other resources from the natural world, we did not practice the 'arts' of civilization.” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012)

The ethnographic discipline has been reconfigured due to questions of knowledge construction and of representation of their ‘objects’ of study. The ‘ethnographic authority’ (Clifford 1983) has been the subject of methodological alterations which led to conceive ethnography not as “the experience and interpretation of a circumscribed ‘other’ reality, but rather as a constructive negotiation involving at least two, and usually more, conscious, politically significant subjects” (Clifford 1983). Epistemological enquiries about positivist approaches to other cultures, questions of objectivity, participation and fieldwork, and

claims of a "crisis in representation" in anthropology, ethnography and social sciences (Marcus and Fischer 1986) are disciplinary questionings related to representations of indigenous peoples. Their mention here is to elaborate on the stereotypes these disciplines have entertained about indigenous peoples.

A tradition of research operates within the paradigms criticized by Cornellier (Cornellier 2012). It entertains the Other position with essentialist views of cultural identity:

> "In anthropological research on Amerindians there is voluminous literature on ethnic historiography in which the analysis concentrates on the revelation of indigenous cultural imagery, unproblematically defined as 'authentic' and clearly separated as 'there.' Such a perspective easily leads to a nihilistic construction of the other, with the primordial ethnic identity taken for granted and the exotic gulf between modern 'us' and traditional 'them' once more deepened" (Nygren 1998)

This tradition created what is identified as the stereotype of the object of curiosity (Paquette 2006). In the Western quest for knowledge, indigenous agency and humanity were often discarded: "Paulo Freire, Frantz Fanon, and Aimé Césaire have all, in their own ways, explained how colonial languages, knowledge, and discourses have the effect of estranging the human subject from itself" (Cornellier 2012). Through the discursive construction of knowledge, indigenous lives were inevitably translated, and negotiated through research. The product could hardly be separated from the researcher's own cultural or scientific influences. Furthermore, these researches then circulated in the Western world, were debated and possibly accepted as temporary stabilizations of meanings: as representations of 'real' indigenous peoples. This estrangement of indigenous 'selves' is a consequence of the object of curiosity, the Other, acquiring meanings almost independently from the subjects it is supposed to represent.

Travellers tales, and other forms of scientific or literary interest in 'different' cultures, have also participated in the perpetuation of the objectification of indigenous peoples:

> "they represented the Other to a general audience back in Europe which became fixed in the milieu of cultural ideas. Images of the 'cannibal' chief, the 'red' Indian, the 'witch' doctor, or the 'tattooed

> and shrunken' head, and stories which told of savagery and primitivism, generated further interest, and therefore further opportunities, to represent the Other again." (Tuhiwai Smith 2012)

As is argued here, ethnographic approaches and travellers' tales from the 'discoveries' of the Americas up to today, took the 'new' world and his inhabitants as objects of study and fascination, in an Othering and fetichizing manner. This can be understood as the "discoverers' doctrine" (Wolfe 2007 in Cornellier 2011). Differences were marked out by civilised, or scientific, fascinations for the strange Other, while the positioning of the 'self' didn't appear dominant for the ethnographers or the adventurers. Via ideology, all this process seemed neutral, natural and factual.

Ethnographic films have been deemed to code exotic and romantic representations, and recently, they have also entertained the figure of the problematic and poor Indian, which matches attitudes of mass media (Calvé-Thibault 2012). Films, especially in the documentary form (Ruby 1991), are ideal sites for the dominant group to construct and entertain difference because of the illusion of reality they create. Orientalist mechanisms of construction of the Other, even outside of the geographical Orient (Varisco 2007), have been active in creating senses of nostalgia, nobility, savagery and strangeness in ethnographic films and travellers' tales (Thisted 2014). The objectified Indian curiosity became the 'true' indigenous for the dominant group because of the privileged positions of ethnography, filmic representation and travellers' tales. Naturalized representations of these 'curiosities' consequently coded essential features:

> "Representations of 'native life' as being devoid of work habits, and of native people being lazy, indolent, with low attention spans, is part of a colonial discourse that continues to this day. (…) Often it was a simple association between race and indolence, darker skin peoples being considered more 'naturally' indolent." (Tuhiwai Smith 2012)

This marking of difference thus offered a humanistic and scientific justification to the colonial enterprise and hid the dominant positions of the white 'self'.

In sum, the indigenous as 'object of curiosity' is associated to ethnographic projections of difference. For Cornellier, even ethnographers armed with the best intentions have a

difficulty to extract them from the paradigms who entertain colonized representations, by trying to "correct the colonial past [to find] real indianess" (Cornellier[11] 2011).

4.1.2.3. The Indian princess and the squaw

The Indian princess is the main stereotype of indigenous women in history (Valaskakis 1993). Its counterpart is the squaw.

Valaskakis argues that the stereotypes of the Indian princess and the squaw are the hidden consequences of essentialist associations of indigenous women to nature:

> "Women are defined by essential qualities in opposition to men; (…) the physiology and social role of women which constitutes women "the heart of the nation" in Native cultures contains the ideology which constructs both the romanticized image of nature's pristine beauty, the Indian princess and her earthy, beast-of-burden sister, the squaw." (Valaskakis 1993)

The binary opposition of the princess and the squaw is similar to the noble and savage dichotomy. In either case, the unfulfillment of the one of the two attributed codes directs the stereotyped indigenous to its opposed pole. The diversity of indigenous women is hidden behind the screen of an oppositional proposition. These two stereotypes function as fetishes of the dominant discourse constructing them: "The nobility and the savagery of Indian woman have been defined in relation to white males: rescuing them, sexually satisfying them, abandoning their Indian nation for them" (Valaskakis 1993). Sexualized and naturalized difference markers are the dominant group's grasp on indigenous women representation.

These stereotypical representations of fantasy are a burden to which 'real' indigenous women are compared to or considered as. Albers and James speak of these representations as "estranged from lived experience" (Albers and James 1987). The princess and the squaw are therefore objects of fantasy that convey meanings of indigenous women from the outside of lived experience.

[11] Personal translation

4.1.2.4 The poor and socially assisted

According to Laurent-Sédillot, in the 1960s, dominant representations of the First Nations shifted from 'savage' to 'poor' (Laurent-Sédillot 2009). It is argued that social conditions of First Nations, when compared to rest of Canada, are lower (Calvé-Thibault 2012). Via the noble savage stereotype, today's indigenous are represented as corrupted by civilisation. However, the dominant discourse essentializes the indigenous as the 'problem' as they are coded as essentially responsible for their condition:

> "The natives were, according to this view, to blame for not accepting the terms of their colonization. In time social policies - for example, in health and education - were also viewed as remedies for the 'indigenous problem'. By the 1960s this approach had been theorized repeatedly around notions of cultural deprivation or cultural deficit which laid the blame for indigenous poverty and marginalization even more securely on the people themselves." (Tuhiwai Smith 2012)

The 'poor' difference marker becomes the essence of indigenous identity is this discourse, thus implying that they are poor because they are indigenous. This attempt at fixity negates alternatives: "For indigenous communities the issue is not just that they are blamed for their own failures but that it is also communicated to them, explicitly or implicitly, that they themselves have no solutions to their own problems" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). By 'being' a problem, the code implies that the solutions are assimilation or eradication. The projection of the 'problem' in the poor and socially assisted stereotype serves the purpose of excusing colonization. It positions colonization in the past, and views indigenous peoples as eternally corrupted. Poor social conditions are implied as 'normal', thus welfare efforts to help indigenous peoples are a temporary means until they disappear as a cultural identity.

The stereotype covers the dominant group's responsibility for the condition of indigenous peoples. It reinforces the imagined value of civilisation in the form of welfare policies, and fetichizes social assistance as a position of receiving undue favors. Truchon speaks as such of the " 'commodification of victimization' as the sole representation of the contemporary realities of First Nations youth in Canada" (Truchon 2007).

4.1.2.5 The warrior

For Albers and James, the Indian warrior is "the most familiar image of the American Indian" (Albers and James 1987). Its characteristics deriving from the noble savage stereotype are "the unknown primitive, the instinctive animal" (Deloria 1988). If the poor and socially assisted is a code of the savage corrupted by civilisation, today's warrior is encoded as a dangerous revolutionary who wants to undo the institutions of democracy and justice. It is a savage seeking to destroy civilisation.

The 'media' version of the stereotype has roots in the 1990 Oka crisis in Canada, where the Mohawks of Kanesatake resisted the construction of a golf course on the lands of an ancestral cemetery. For Cornellier, the media coverage constructed the opposition of "the 'savage' and confrontational masculinity of the Warriors and the civilized, civilizing and systematic self-control of the Canadian military" (Cornellier 2012). By being represented as fighting for savage livelihoods, their means of resistance are coded as dangerous and violent, because their survival is related to significant questionings of Western civilisation. The media warriors are "transformed primitives, monolithic representations of Indian activists" (Valaskakis 1993). The warrior's violent character is reformulated to fit the time. Today, codes of terrorist representation assign meaning to the indigenous man. Valaskakis describes the media warrior as "the military masculine, criminalized through association with terrorism and epitomized in the ultimate warrior, (…) both the darling of the media and, through the dynamic process of re-appropriating identity, what one reporter called, 'a media slut' " (Valaskakis 1993).

The stereotypical representations of the warrior and the media warrior discard political claims and exclude alternative and contesting discourses. The primitive violence associated to the warrior codes animal-like behavior and uncivilised qualities to the indigenous men. The dominant discourse differentiates itself by occulting its own responsibility and entertaining its sense of civilised rightfulness. Furthermore, the coded brute is associated to the corrupted, problematic, poor, alcoholic Indian.

4.1.2.6 The post-colonial

The post-colonial representation assumes that colonization is a thing of the past (Cornellier 2011). For Cornellier, this representation is linked to encoding the indigenous as "things" (Cornellier[12] 2011). The post-colonial encoding functions by emptying the meanings of today's indigenous, by setting limits of meaning constructing the indigenous as extinct. If the colonial world is post-colonial, then the colonized cease to exist. The colonized existed 'before' and took a new form 'after', but since this 'after' is not reached, especially in the decolonizing project's terms (Tuhiwai Smith 2012), then he is deprived of voice.

The post-colonial Indian acts as a non-representation: it is a power of designation (Cornellier 2011). It nevertheless affects indigenous peoples by depriving them of agency by governing the limits of colonialism (Cornellier 2011). It enacts the fetish that the Indian 'problem' is gone.

4.1.3 Strategies of self-representation

At the core of indigenous self-representation strategies, there is a necessary critique of dominant discourses: "Representation of indigenous peoples by indigenous people is about countering the dominant society's image of indigenous peoples, their lifestyles and belief systems" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012).

This includes the deconstruction of stereotypes (Harman 2016). New codes are "trying to capture the complexities of being indigenous" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). Some self-representations will either challenge the stereotypes in the logics by which they were constructed, and some will construct alternative indigenousness and de-essentialize identity. Self-representational strategies can employ negotiated or oppositional positionings and use any of the three transcoding strategies presented by Hall.

4.1.3.1 Reclaiming equal humanity

Reclaiming a universal humanity, which means to be considered an equal human, is an identified strategy. Dominant discourses have caused indigenous peoples, in their self-

[12] Personal translation

produced representations, to attempt to re-establish their humanity: “The struggle to assert and claim humanity has been a consistent thread of anti-colonial discourses on colonialism and oppression” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). The importance of this dehumanization for subsequent constructions of the imagined communities from the colonized point of view has been to structure some responses to the ‘need’ to establish one’s humanity : “Colonized peoples have been compelled to define what it means to be human because there is a deep understanding of what it has meant to be considered not fully human, to be savage” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012).

This ‘need’ is the ungrateful task of expressing a ‘sameness’ with all human beings, including the dominant group (Sethi 2005). It is a way to subvert to dichotomy of the colonizer and the colonized (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). It can deconstruct the noble savage’s lost authenticity by representing humanity in the celebration of difference and of cultural fluidity. This strategy could arguably be negotiated or oppositional, depending on the objective to either only rehumanize the Other, or to also subvert the codes that constructed the less-human Other.

4.1.3.2 Reclaiming nobility: an overly romantic authenticity?

Another strategy is to restore ‘nobility’ which Smith describes as an “overly romantic authenticity” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012) generated by the binary oppositions of the Western thought. It is both a cause and a consequence of the representation of the noble savage. This strategy seeks to appropriate the ‘noble’ and ‘natural’ characters of the stereotype to reclaim a lost authenticity (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). Smith argues that this is seeing the problem form a Western eye, by interiorising the binary opposition of the civilised and the savage.

In attempting to recover a lost authenticity, it works within the essential limits defined by the dominant discourse. In other words, it tries to enact the ‘noble’ part of the noble savage stereotype, while applying situated logics to show that the nobility was lost because of the effects of colonization. It accepts the general rule that indigenous peoples are problematic, because they ‘should be noble’, but their traditional culture has been destroyed. This position facilitates the persistence of the poor and socially assisted stereotype, which is

caused by the loss of nobility. For example, this positioning has been observed in Greenlandic identities, where in the 1960-70s an ethno-nationalist discourse used a representation of greenlandicness fixed in tradition in its struggle for political independence (Graugaard 2009). The problem is that this essentialism was soon unrepresentative of alternative greenlandicnesses which couldn't imagine their belonging outside of the effects of colonization and didn't believe in the restoration of noble traditional ways (Thisted 2014). This is also comparable to what is going on with First Nations youth in Canada as will be apparent in the corpus.

This strategy tends to insist on essentialized differences with the dominant group which has the effect of maintaining the position of the Other, as Nygren argues: "Overstressing cultural differences in Indian ethnicity can lead to the ethnocentric construction of the other, in which, as was done during the past five hundred years, multiple differences are laid on Indian shoulders" (Nygren 1998). Because it doesn't subvert the general rules of the stereotype but uses situated logics to argue that colonisation caused the loss of nobility, this strategy would generally be positioned in the negotiated position of Hall's model.

4.1.3.3 Reclaiming culture, history and knowledge

Reclaiming traditions and cultural specificities can arguably be done outside the dominant framework enabling the construction of the noble savage stereotype. An important trend of self-representation involves a reinterpretation of history, culture and knowledge which is probably not so foreign to the intention behind the overly romantic authenticity. As Anja Nygren argues, this strategy, if applied outside the rules of the dominant code, involves a 'retelling' of history where colonialism is taken into account in the construction of indigenous identities, in de-othering fashion (Nygren 1998). In this conception, self-representation is linked to the quest to not be represented as the Other, where the indigenous are preoccupied with the appropriation of themselves, their culture and their traditions (Valaskakis 1993). In other words, this strategy focuses on appropriating the meanings of being indigenous in the exploration of culture, history and knowledge. The decolonizing vocation of this strategy has self-determination at its core, rather than the rediscovery of a lost authenticity: "The real issues are not the preservation of 'culture', non-Western or

Western, but the empowerment of social actors to produce their own cultural mediations" (Turner 2002 in Laurent-Sédillot 2009). While this empowerment, or agency, is looking back at tradition, it does so for a modern fight to appropriate the right to construct their cultural identities. The 'preservation' of culture would rather be related to a romantic authenticity which entertains a marked difference of otherness.

This strategy's possible proximity with a romantic authenticity can be ambiguous. In the end, history and tradition can further fix identities, depending on how they are used. In the objective to clarify the positionings of this strategy and the ambiguous positions where it resembles the overly romantic authenticity, it is useful to investigate examples.

The stereotypes presented all have links to naturalization processes and associations of indigenous culture to nature. They are entertained and constructed by a Western conception of culture as superior to nature deemed by Valaskakis to be "the contradictory and essentializing images related to the nature/culture paradigm of the dominant society" (Valaskakis 1993). The self-representational strategy of reclaiming culture, history and knowledge, can promote a new code of the unity of culture and nature from the indigenous knowledge paradigm, which Valaskakis exemplifies: "Indian women have re-appropriated and lived the narrative now transformed in Indian country into the representation of the 'powwow princess'" (Valaskakis 1993). It is therefore possible that indigenous peoples represent traditional ways without the naturalizing connotations of the binary nature versus culture paradigm. It is a way to mobilize indigenous traditional knowledge in a modern use of representation. In such, it is reclaiming and self-determining. Smith refers to this as 're-writing' and 're-righting' history and knowledge, a process characterized by the "need to give testimony and restore a spirit, to bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying" (Tuhiwai Smith 2012).

Representing through history and tradition can arguably be done along any positionings of Hall's model: dominant, negotiated and oppositional. But in this conceptualization of a strategy of reclaiming culture, history and knowledge, I contend that there is a greater chance to find oppositional positions, as the objective is to appropriate, thus self-determine, the meanings of culture, history and tradition, which would negate dominant codes. In

Valaskakis' example, an oppositional position is used, as the codes originate from a framework which is unknown to the dominant code, if not despised by it. By taking the control of defining what tradition means and valuing it as a 'true' representation, the oppositional code refuses the rules of the dominant code. The stereotype of the princess or squaw is transcoded as new meanings replace the old one: the powwow princess is performing the powwow ceremony not for the whites and not for their fetish, but to actualize tradition in the modern use of representing, communicating with her community and to defend a heritage, which is what Valaskakis refers to as 'cultural persistence' (Valaskakis 1993) instead of cultural preservation. If tradition is used to perform closure and fixity, such as in the overly romantic authenticity, then the code is probably negotiated. It would be dominant if history was used to explain why indigenous peoples 'can't' live in the city, for example.

4.1.3.4 Positive images

Another strategy, which is argued to be present in the repertoire of Wapikoni Mobile films (Laurent-Sédillot 2009), is focused of drawing a 'positive image' of indigenous peoples. This representation is used to combat many stereotypes at the same time, notably the noble savage and the 'poor and socially assisted'.

This strategy can be linked to the second transcoding strategy of Hall, where negative connotations are turned positively. I argue that this strategy could occupy the negotiated or the oppositional position. By demonstrating that not all indigenous have alcohol problems, for instance, a self-representation could fail to subvert the stereotype by accepting that it would be normal to associate alcoholism as a constitutive feature of indigenous identity. However, an oppositional position could enunciate the denial of the association and present alternative positive codes.

4.1.3.5 Mobilizing non-essential elements

The strategy of mobilizing non-essential elements concerns the use of elements of colonization, globalization, other cultures, urbanity or modernity in the constitution of cultural identity. Sédillot's research with Wapikoni Mobile filmmakers has shown that

some of them insist on the accordance of "eurocanadian cultural elements" with their cultural heritage (Laurent-Sédillot 2009). This strategy emphasizes the irremediable fact that colonization has happened. Therefore, it is opposed to the overly romantic authenticity strategy and to the noble savage stereotype. It mobilizes elements from a variety of 'external' influences to argue that they can also be constitutive of indigenous culture. This strategy arguably prevents a "slide into essentialism" where cultural identity is opened to be transformed (Turner 2002 in Cornellier 2011).

This strategy can range across the three identified positions. For example, representing that young indigenous peoples can incorporate the colonizer's food habits or enjoy similar music without 'losing' an identity is either negotiated or oppositional depending on the rest of the argument. If coding that the indigenous have to speak English or French in Canada to succeed, then it becomes a rather dominant position which argues that the conditions of success are determined by the colonizer, and that it would be failure to speak only a Native language.

4.1.3.6 Strategic essentialism

Essentialism can be conceived in two dimensions. First, it assumes there is an 'essence' or a 'nature' to identities (Barker 2000; Eide 2016). Second, it applies defining features to all members of an imagined group (Eide 2016).

Though essentialism tends to fix the dominated in subordinate positions, some theorists have argued that essentialism can be part of the political strategies of minorities (Spivak 1988). Such usage of essentialism is conceptualized as 'strategic essentialism'. Elizabeth Eide defines it as: "a political strategy whereby differences (within a group) are temporarily downplayed and unity assumed for the sake of achieving political goals" (Eide 2016). Therefore, in strategic essentialism, minorities may represent themselves as sharing essential traits for political reasons. For its adherents, the use of this strategy is deemed temporary and coherent with the greater goal of deconstructing the power relations from which originate fixed identities (Eide 2016). However, critiques argue that strategic essentialism may "encourage the survival of frozen identities and deepen differences" (Eide 2016).

In self-representation of their identities, young First Nations peoples may at times use strategic essentialism in a negotiated position or in an oppositional position due to the inherent political character of the strategy.

4.1.4 Contextualisation conclusion

This chapter described important discursive trends about First Nations representations. Several stereotypes of indigenous peoples have been presented. One of them, the noble savage stereotype, is arguably the most established one. Its influences are overwhelming, as basically every other stereotype has roots in it. Strategies of self-representation have also been identified. Given its anchor in paradigms entertaining dominant representations, the overly romantic authenticity self-representation is argued to be either of dominant or negotiated positionings. The other strategies enunciated have the potential to occupy the oppositional position.

This contextualisation forms an analytical overview of the discursive situation of First Nations representation. It isn't exhaustive as the discursive dynamics of indigenous representation are highly complex and debated. Additionally, methodologies of indigenous research emphasize that no uniform representation can be applied unproblematically on indigenous peoples (Swiftwolfe 2019). Though common objectives justify pan-national analytical approaches, indigenous diversity and the spectre of the effects of colonization couldn't be seized in a such an overview. Other sites of power struggle have also been influenced by colonization, and the specificities of certain groups' representation (women or Metis people for example) are not equally present in this overview which was interested in general trends of indigenous representation.

If statements were to be made about specific groups, nations or local communities, these should be situated (Haraway 1988). Although trends have been identified, it is necessary to keep in mind that dynamics of nation, group, local, family, age and personal experiences also influence the filmmakers' representations of their cultural identities (Laurent-Sédillot 2009).

However, given the format and methodology of Wapikoni Mobile films, short films made by young people in a context of learning, this overview can cover the main preferred meanings encoded. In this chapter, I attempted to summarize the relevant discursive field in a literature review of similar frameworks to the one presented in this research. In the next chapter, the corpus is analysed in its participation in the construction of First Nations cultural identities through self-representation in order to gain an understanding of youth perspectives on the matter.

4.2 Analysis of the corpus

To answer the research question, the analysis interprets three dimensions of each film: the transcodings of stereotypes, the positionings regarding the contextualisation and the new preferred meanings encoded to First Nations cultural identities.

This can develop an understanding of how First Nations youth reinterpret fixed and dominant representations of themselves (transcoding of stereotypes), how they respond to the dominant discourses entertaining them (negotiated or oppositional) and what they propose as representations of their cultural identities (the preferred meanings of their encodings). After the analysis, recurrent or ambiguous themes are identified in the discussion.

Each film is treated separately, except Naomi Condo's participation in *Co-wreck the record*, which has been integrated to the analysis of her other film, *I am L'nu*, because it uses almost the same text. Films are first summarized in their general form and content. They are then analyzed according to the enunciated stereotypes and their transcodings. A table presenting the results of each film's analysis is available at the beginning of each analysis section. Here is an example a blank table and the legend used along the analysis:

Expressions / stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position

Legend:

Category: noble savage (NS), object of curiosity (OC), warrior (W), poor and socially assisted (PSA), Indian princess (IP), squaw (S), post-colonial (PC)

Strategy: counter-integrationist (CI), 'diversity' (D), 'looking' (L) reclaiming equal humanity (RH), overly romantic authenticity (ORA), reclaiming culture, history and tradition (RC), mobilizing non-essential elements (MNE), positive images (P), strategic essentialism (SE)

Position: oppositional (O), negotiated (N)

4.2.1 *Two Pocahontas in town* (2015) by Jemmy Echaquan Dubé and Marie-Édith Fontaine – 3 :44

Film presentation and content

Two Pocahontas in town is a humoristic documentary about First Nations stereotypes[13]. Through humoristic devices, the movie deconstructs stereotypes that the two filmmakers have been subjected to. The filmmakers are from the Atikamekw nation and live in the city of Joliette. Until approximately mid-point of the movie, they talk about their childhood experiences of intimidation and stereotyping and are presented to the viewer in front of the schools they went to. In the second part of the film, opening with the intertitle "Indigenous lesson 101" (2:04), they enunciate stereotypes and deconstruct them.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Expressions / stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- Exclusion from playing games in school - Being told they are "weird", and "go back where you came from" (1:09)	NS, OC	- Answering to be where they are from (1:09)	L, MNE	O

[13] Echaquan-Dubé, Jemmy and Marie-Édith Fontaine (filmmakers), Deux Pocahontas en ville [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/deux-pocahontas-en-ville-two-pocahontas-in-town] Wapikoni Mobile, (2015), 3 minutes

- Buckskin costume (1:26), traditional clothing and feather headwear (2:08)	NS, OC	- Wearing traditional clothes in modern spaces, taking a selfie, flippancy of "why not?" (2:08) - Being confident (1:26)	L, MNE, P	O
- Dance for rain (2:28)	NS, OC	- Dancing in Joliette's downtown, while techno music plays (2:28)	L, MNE	O
- Smoke signals (2:45)	NS, OC	- Talking on a cellphone saying: "it's kind of forbidden in the city" (2:45)	L, MNE	O
- Bartering (2:55)	NS, OC	- Paying with a credit card in a shop and saying beaver furs are too heavy for pockets (2:55)	L, MNE	O
- Driving pick-up trucks (3:02)	NS, W	- Explaining the use for navigating dirt roads and for hunting (3:02)	CI	N
- "Haven't all Indians disappeared" (3:09)	PC	- Assert their presence - Express doubt about a mural about colonial history (3:09)	L, RC	O
- Reference to all stereotypes	NS, OC	- The expression "Lesson 101" (2:04) - Laughing about stereotypes (2:01) - Stating "We know how we are" (3:25)	L, P	O

In the first part of the film, Dubé says she was an easy target in primary school and was excluded because she was indigenous (0:48). Fontaine was told she was "weird" and that she should go back to where she came from. Fontaine's reply to the kids demanding her 'return' is that she was already "where she came from" (1:09).

The enunciated racism is a consequence of Dubé and Fontaine not fitting the stereotypes other kids deployed on them. It is underlined in the kids' exclusion, attribution of 'weirdness' and demands of 'returning', that First Nations peoples belong in the reserve or in nature, thus creating a confrontation between the imagined Indian and the physical presences of Dubé and Fontaine. Because of their Native physical traits, their presence in the city was 'problematic'. They were 'out of place' as the stereotype of the naturalized Indian collided with their urban presence. Evidently, ignorance, racism, sexism and juvenile intimidation schemes are notable explanatory factors in the other kids' stereotyping. The transcoding strategy involves 'looking' at their belonging to the city.

Fontaine in front her school (1:28)

In secondary school, Dubé presents herself as being more confident in her culture and being unaffected by stereotypes such as: "Where is your buckskin costume?" (1:26). To end this part of the film, Fontaine says: "We have all been bombarded by stereotypes, either on our appearance or our traditions. Today, we put our serious aside and we will laugh of these clichés" (2:01). The filmmakers emphasize the importance of confidence to challenge the stereotypes, thus encoding the indigenous as capable of resisting and voicing, not as passive objects of curiosity. They propose positive attitudes and self-determination to represent their identities.

Intertitle opening the second part (2:04)

The second part opens with “Indigenous Lesson 101” (2:04) with formal importance as an intertitle. They proceed to transcode various stereotypes enunciated by intertitles. The first stereotype concerns being asked if they wear traditional clothing and feather headwear. Their answer is “Why not?” (2:08). A series of shots shows them taking selfies in a supermarket while wearing traditional clothing. The second stereotype concerns being asked if they “dance for rain” (2:28). A series of shots shows them dancing in Joliette’s downtown while techno music plays. The third stereotype concerns the use of smoke signals to which they respond: “It’s kind of forbidden in the city” (2:45). Fontaine is seen speaking on a cell phone, emphasizing the use of modern communication. The fourth stereotype is about bartering (2:55). They deconstruct it by images of them shopping with a credit card while saying beaver furs are too heavy for pockets.

Traditional dance in Joliette (2:38)

Cell phone replaces smoke signals (2:45)

Credit cards replace bartering (2:53)

The stereotypes enunciated concern the noble savage and the objects of curiosity stereotypes. By occupying 'modern' spaces wearing 'traditional clothing', by using a cell phone to take a selfie, along with the flippancy of asking "why not [wear traditional clothing]?" (2:08) they subvert the stereotype by showing its irrelevancy: traditional clothing doesn't confine to 'curious' behavior, savagery or nobility. They appropriate traditional dances by showing their present uses for them: making fun of this difference marker's hidden meanings. Traditional elements are transcoded in a modern use (clothing, dancing) or replaced by modern elements unproblematically (mobile phone, credit card). They contest the traditional elements as difference markers coded with negative traits, thus appropriating the elements, which is an example of the strategy of transcoding which focuses on 'looking' at the stereotype to deconstruct hidden meanings and extract dominant connotations. The noble savage and the object of curiosity stereotypes are coded as erroneous because their features (traditional clothing, dances, smoke signals, bartering) do not convey uncivilised, curious and naturalized hidden meanings.

The next stereotype is that First Nations peoples have pick-up trucks (3:02). They explain that these vehicles can transport a dead moose after a good hunt. The stereotype is associated to the 'barbarism' of the warrior, via the code of the big, polluting and noisy vehicle. Their position is negotiated in a counter-integrationist strategy, as they accept the association with the vehicle, while transcoding it positively. This is accompanied by the

intertitle: “the Amerindians all have pick-ups”. The term ‘Amerindians’ emphasizes the ignorance of the stereotype, and its essentialism is shown with the term ‘all’.

The last stereotype is “Haven’t all Indians disappeared?” (3:09). There again, the use of the archaic term ‘Indian’ encodes the dominant discourse as ignorant. Dubé and Fontaine are seen looking at a mural of a historic scene of the colonial life. They elevate their shoulders, expressing doubt about the scene, suggesting that the colonial life could be portrayed very differently than the peaceful city life the mural represents. They actively reclaim history, by demonstrating that they don’t consider the dominant historical construction of colonisation to be valid. Associating indigenous peoples with disappearance is an enactment of the “lost ideal of white men” (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). By manifesting an absence, the post-colonial stereotype denies indigenous people of voice or capacity to argue for their own existence. By their presence and the enunciation of the stereotype (3:09), Dubé and Fontaine subvert it by transcoding absence (or presence only in an imagined past) into presence, via the ultimate strategy of ‘looking’, which is to demonstrate the impossibility of not acknowledging their presence.

Expressing doubt the mural (3:05)

I argue that via the transcoding strategy of 'looking', *Two Pocahontas in town* subverts several stereotypes (the noble savage, the object of curiosity and the post-colonial). Although 'Pocahontas' is in the title, specific gender related stereotypes are not addressed in the film. In the encodings of their cultural identity, the film incorporates modern and urban elements (credit card, cell phone), values the need for a 'positive' representation and reclaims elements of tradition (clothing, dancing, colonial history, hunting). In doing so, it encodes First Nations identities as not the corrupted Other, but as fluid, resisting and self-determined in reclaiming the past and understanding the present.

The film deconstructs stereotypes in the form of a lesson which encodes the dominant representation as erroneous and "ignorant" (1:28; 3:12). This acts as the general framework of meaning construction of the film. It is positioned in the oppositional code, as of the codes of the dominant discourse, it negotiates only the pick-up stereotype by accepting its general rule. The last sentence of the movie, "We know who we are" (3:25), emphasizes the new self-determining code they represent themselves with.

4.2.2 *Co-wreck the record* (2016) by Christopher Grégoire-Gabriel, Craig Commanda, Naomi Condo and Raymond Caplin – 7:07

Film presentation and content

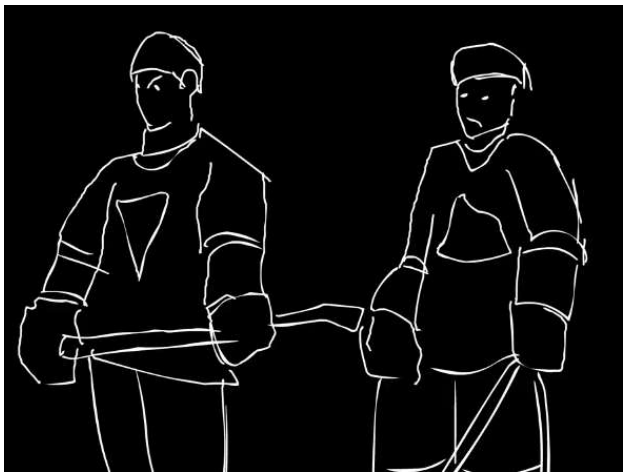
The film is a presentation of four filmmakers' perspectives on stereotypes, plus a collective sequence at the end[14]. In their own separate sequence, the filmmakers address stereotypes that affected them. The title is a play on words implying both to correct and to wreck the dominant discourse. As the film is a collage of four smaller films, I treated each part as separate, discarded the film by Christopher Grégoire Gabriel, as it didn't centrally focus on stereotypes, and joined Naomi Condo's sequence in the analysis of her other film, *I am L'nu*. I also treated the collective sequence separately, which comprises of shots where all the filmmakers add comments.

[14] Caplin, Raymond, Craig Commanda, Naomi Condo and Christopher Grégoire-Gabriel (filmmakers), Co-wreck the record, [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/co-wreck-the-record] Wapikoni Mobile, (2016), 7 minutes

***Co-wreck the record* 1st film*:* Raymond Caplin's enunciated stereotypes and transcodings**

Expressions / stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- Dumb, stupid, unable to defend himself (1:24)	NS, PSA	- Showing talent in art - Representing the lived experience of stereotyping (1:39) - Voicing the pain endured and need to heal (1:50)	L, P	O

Raymond Caplin, a Mi'gmag from Listuguj, challenges the noble savage and the poor and socially assisted stereotypes. In an experimental animated drawings film, he explains that while playing hockey being younger, he was treated like he was dumb, stupid and unable to defend himself (0:57), which forced him to quit. He mentions experiencing stereotypes in real life rather than through media (1:39) which positions stereotyping in lived experience. He states that he copes with the consequences by exploring art and filmmaking (1:50). Caplin transcodes the noble savage and the poor and socially assisted codes via 'looking'. His artistic performance enacts his capacity to subvert the stereotype by transcoding 'dumbness' and 'defenselessness' into the expression of talent. Furthermore, he voices the violence of the unfair treatment in hockey by representing his need to cope with the consequences of stereotyping. He 'shows' both how the stereotype was erroneous, with his demonstration of talent, and how it is unfair given his testimony of the pain he still needs to cope with today.



Caplin's animated hockey players (0:57)

Caplin represents his cultural identity in an oppositional code. The stereotypes are coded as irrelevant and cruel. He positions Mi'gmag cultural identity according to a new code emerging from his life experiences: talented, aware of the pain caused by dominant stereotyping and healing in a positive way. The code does not link the pain and healing to the recovering of a lost authenticity, nor to living corrupted in a civilised world. The general code is the viciousness of the dominant stereotypes, out of which new cultural identities must emerge aware and healthier.

Co-wreck the record 2nd film: Craig Commanda's enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Expressions / stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- Traditional instruments (drums) define Native art (4:50)	NS	- Native people do Native art, no matter the form (5:07)	MNE	O

Craig Commanda is Anishinaabe from Kitigan-Zibi. His film is a short clip of him playing guitar. He challenges the noble savage stereotype by speaking of his view of Native art:

> "As a Native artist we don't have to make native work, but the work that we make is 'Native' art, because we made it (…) But really, if I'm playing the instrument, it is Native music (…) I don't have to conform to the sound of just the drums or just the certain way of chanting. I can take that and move it forward 'cause it's coming from me, a Native person." (5:07)

Commanda playing the guitar (5:04)

Commanda encodes his cultural identity as non-essentialized and self-determined. He challenges the need to play a traditional instrument (the drums) to play Anishinaabe music. He empowers the identity to define itself according to changing dynamics by mobilizing non-essential elements. He demonstrates the constructed nature of cultural identity such as in Hall's conception (Hall 1989). Instead of accepting the dominant discourse's expectation of 'true' Native music, guided by the noble savage stereotype, Commanda claims his Anishinaabe identity by choosing what defines it.

Commanda's encodings empower First Nations to change the codes of belonging to the cultural identity in an oppositional position that breaks the dominant attempt to fix tradition.

***Co-wreck the record* 3rd film: Collective part's enunciated stereotypes and transcodings**

Expressions / stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- Reference to stereotypes in general	NS, OC, PSA, PC	- Voicing the need to heal (5:17; 5:40; 6:06; 6:32) - Hoping to co-wreck the record (6:48)	L, RC	O
- Disappearing (6:32)	PC	- Assert existence (6:32) - Claim space in the digital world, in media, in arts (6:48)	L, RC	O

In this collective part, the filmmakers speak of their motivation to participate in the Wapikoni Mobile project. All of them evoke healing (5:17, 5:40, 6:06, 6:32) from the whole range of stereotypes. Furthermore, Grégoire-Gabriel says: "I want to assert my existence on this planet. I don't want people like to forget me" (6:32). Condo adds that she participates to claim a space for First Nations "in the digital world, within media, and arts" (6:48). Doing so, they contest the post-colonial stereotype specifically. Condo states that she hopes to "co-wreck the record" (6:48), which is to deconstruct dominant representations. Their cultural identities are transcoded as in need of self-determination and of reclaiming the discursive space, by 'looking' at how they 'co-wreck' their record.

The collective part is positioned in an oppositional code, as the filmmakers insist on the wrongdoing of the dominant discourses and opt to speak of their representation struggle as

a healing and a therapy. They connote their cause as a process of emerging from stereotypical representations they never belonged in to take control of the struggle for representation in their own alternative terms.

4.2.3 *I am L'nu* (2016) by Naomi Condo – 3:29 and Naomi Condo's part in *Co-wreck the record* (2016)

Films presentation and content

I have joined Naomi Condo's two films together as their texts are almost the same. She is from the Mi'gmag nation in the community of Gesgapegiag. The films are documentaries focused on deconstructing stereotypes about First Nations women[15]. The movies operate on two different dimensions: 'First Nations women' and 'First Nations in general'. Condo presents herself in her origins, beliefs, activities and opinions.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Abbreviations: *I am L'nu* (IAL), *Co-wreck the record*: (CWTR)

Expression / stereotype	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- "uneducated squaws, drunk, dirty, hypersexualised, welfare bums or the Indian Pocahontas princess draped in buckskin, holding feathers, knows all about the weather, standing stoically beside her white savior prince" (1:52 IAL; 3:01 CWTR)	NS, IP, S, PSA	- "These stereotypes are a lie" (…). So, who are you? Strong, educated, vocal, athletic, beautiful, courageous, loved, warrior" (2:28 IAL; 3:23 CWTR).	D, P	O
- a sexist commercial, a pornographic image, a cartoon princess bound and sexualised, a website selling sexualized princess clothes, an excerpt of a film showing an indigenous woman being raped by a white man and a video game with a bound indigenous woman being raped (3:04 CWTR)	IP, S	- Angrily kicking a chair after watching stereotypical images (3:04 CWTR)	L	O

[15] Condo, Naomi (filmmaker), I am L'nu [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/im-lnu] Wapikoni Mobile, (2016), 7 minutes
Caplin, Raymond, Craig Commanda, Naomi Condo and Christopher Grégoire-Gabriel (filmmakers), Co-wreck the record, [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/co-wreck-the-record] Wapikoni Mobile, (2016), 7 minutes

- “Long black hair, brown skin, dressed in buckskin” (0:40 IAL) - “Indian princess society says I should be” (0:40 IAL; 2:03 CWTR) - “your Pocahontas or your uneducated squaw” (1:53 IAL; 3:06 CWTR)	NS, IP, S,	- “I am not the Indian princess society says I should be” (0:40 IAL; 2:03 CWTR) - “I am not your Pocahontas or your uneducated squaw” (1:53 IAL; 3:06 CWTR) - ‘looking’ at physical appearance - Expressing the roles of the mother and the warrior	L	O
- the physical “norm” (2:35 IAL) - the “Indian DNA deficiency” (1:02 IAL; 2:27 CWTR) - the devotion to indigenous identity and to white identity (1: 22 IAL; 2:40 CWTR)	NS	- By “refusing to conform” (2:35 IAL) - “I never chose my place on the spectrum of the stereotypes on the Indian scale. Sure, I am on the paler side of the spectrum” (1:14 IAL; 2.27 CWTR) - “I am the one walking in the middle of the street. One group I don’t look like, and the other I don’t think like” (2:52 IAL; 3:32 CWTR) - Showing photos of both traditional elements (clothing, hunting) and modern elements (a computer selfie, a photo with a hockey player from the Montreal Canadiens (2:07 CWTR) - Adhering to Mi’gmag culture as to “participate in ceremonies, collect medicine, use the language as fast as I can learn it, live on the reserve and raise my kids to embrace our culture” (0:56 IAL; 2:11 CWTR) - ‘looking’ at physical appearance	L, RC MNE, SE,	O

First dimension: First Nations women

On the First Nations women dimension, I identified transcodings of the Indian Princess and the squaw stereotypes in two transcoding strategies: 'diversity' and 'looking'.

Via 'diversity'

In both films, Condo enunciates the stereotypes that indigenous women are subjected to:

> "The stereotypes placed on indigenous women are endless, but they range from one extreme to the other: uneducated squaws, drunk, dirty, hypersexualised, welfare bums or the Indian Pocahontas princess draped in buckskin, holding feathers, knows all about the weather, standing stoically beside her white savior prince." (1:52 IAL; 3:01 CWTR)

Condo shows awareness of the main stereotypes directed at women identified in the contextualisation. She denies their representativity: "these stereotypes are a lie" (2:11, 3:23). She proposes positive adjectives to describe indigenous women: "Strong, educated, vocal, athletic, beautiful, courageous, loved, warrior" (2:28 IAL; 3:23 CWTR). Transcoding via the 'diversity' strategy proposes a range of positive images to counter a negative stereotype (Hall 1997). She codes alternatives ways to be First Nations women, namely within the positive dynamics of self-determination, resistance and love. Condo's strategy arguably uses an oppositional code, as she explicitly refutes the hegemony of the dominant stereotypes which are coded as lies.

By 'looking'

Her oppositional code is also explicit with the strategy of 'looking'. Condo shows that the stereotypes originate from 'society' in two examples: "I am not the Indian princess society says I should be. I don't have long black hair, brown skin or dressed in buckskin. (0:40 IAL; 2:03 CWTR) and "I am not your Pocahontas or your uneducated squaw" (1:53 IAL; 3:06 CWTR). In *I am L'nu*, these words are accompanied by the images of her physical appearance, of her boxing and of being a mother. In *Co-wreck the record,* she visually associates the stereotypes to a defying posture (2:03 CWTR). The motherly and warrior figures alongside Condo's physical appearance make the stereotypes work against

themselves, as the two figures are unsettling for the princess and squaw dichotomy which becomes irrelevant to the representation the viewer is 'looking' at (Hall 1997). The warrior unsettles the princess-like shyness and the mother neutralizes the squaw's savagery.

Condo boxing (1:00 IAL)

Condo's defying posture (1:58 CWTR)

In *Co-wreck the record*, she is seen sitting in front of a screen showing stereotypical images of the Indian princess (2:32 CWTR). The images are: a butter commercial, a pornographic image, a cartoon princess bound and sexualised, a website selling sexualized princess clothes, an excerpt of a film showing an indigenous woman being raped by a white man and a video game with a bound indigenous woman being raped by a white cowboy. In response, Condo angrily kicks the chair she was sitting on. She codes the dominant discourse as violent, racist and sexist by 'showing' it on screen. She presents oppositional encodings of due frustration and need for positive and self-produced representations of women.

Condo looking at stereotypical images (2:45 CWTR)

She transcodes First Nations women as loving and strong, capable of critical awareness, rage and power of self-determination in front of stereotypical representations and their violence. The hidden meanings, the fetishes of the white man, are deconstructed in the mother and fighter who dismiss the sexual object. The princess' voiceless wait and the squaw's savagery are transcoded in fighting and loving attributes united in a strong figure of indigenous resistance.

The second dimension: First Nations in general

The dominant discourse codes First Nations peoples with certain physical traits, a process of naturalization inherent to the noble savage and the object of curiosity stereotypes. She approaches these stereotypes by first 'looking' at her light skin color in response to "her Indian DNA deficiency" (1:02 IAL; 2:27 CWTR) as her mother is Irish and her father is L'nu Mi'gmag (0:44 IAL; 2:03 CWTR). She contests imposed sets of physical attributes to define belonging to First Nations: "I never chose my place on the spectrum of the stereotypical Indian scale" (1:14 IAL; 2.27 CWTR) and says she threatens both white and indigenous stereotypical identities (1:22 IAL; 2:40 CWTR).

By putting forward her mixed genetic background, she de-essentializes the physical codes of belonging and accepts to 'look' at the legacy of colonisation. While not sharing the essential physical attributes of the stereotypical indigenous, Condo adopts an essential Mi'gmag culture: "I identify as Mi'gmag, participate in ceremonies, collect medicine, use the language as fast as I can learn it, live on the reserve and raise my kids to embrace our culture" (0:56 IAL; 2:11 CWTR). By representing herself as both 'in-between' essentialist physical traits, but culturally Mi'gmag, she positions herself in a culturally essentialized, but physically de-essentialized split.

She strategically essentializes dominant codes to assert her adherence to Mi'gmag culture: "I am the one walking in the middle of the street. One group I don't look like [indigenous], the other I don't think like [white]" (2:52 IAL; 3:32 CWTR). She decides when to essentialize and when to de-essentialize cultural identity, thus replacing the dominant code, which she contests: "Far from the norm, refusing to conform. (…) My existence threatens you but make no mistake: I am L'nu" (2:30). Doing so, she codes Mi'gmag cultural identity as reclaiming culture (ceremonies, medicine, language, education) and self-determined.

However, in *Co-wreck the record,* she nuances cultural essentialism by presenting her cultural identity with series of photos of both traditional elements (clothing, hunting) and modern elements (a computer selfie, a photo with a hockey player from the Montreal Canadiens) (2:09). She mobilizes elements of traditional culture and of modernity, as well

as her genetically mixed physical appearance to encode a new identity where skin color is secondary to feelings of belonging.

Posing with a professional hockey player (2:07 CWTR)

In sum, being Mi'gmag is transcoded as embracing a culture and a language, alongside a portion of genetic background, to affirm the belonging rather than letting the dominant discourse mark the difference.

Conclusion for Condo's films

From an oppositional position, the challenged stereotypes in the films are the Indian princess, the squaw, the noble savage and the object of curiosity. She directly 'looks' at them by explicitly naming them, discredits them, and codes indigenous women in alternative terms. I argue that the encodings play on the split between strategic essentialism and mobilizing non-essential elements in a demonstration of self-determination. She represents the Mi'gmag cultural identity as its own defining force, which positions it not as the Other but as the 'self'. Her new encodings reclaim cultural elements (tradition and

language), mobilize non-essential elements (white skin color) and create positive and self-determined elements of identity construction (women as mothers and fighters).

4.2.4 *More than a stereotype* (2018) by Sinay Kennedy – 3:44

Film presentation and content

More than a stereotype is an essay by Sinay Kennedy of the Dene nation from the Clearwater River community[16]. The moving images propose a series of shots showing a single continuous action for the duration of the movie: Kennedy applying paint on her hand. She paints the indigenous medicine wheel which is a cultural symbol of Native beliefs and knowledge. In doing so, Kennedy represents her cultural identity's knowledge system and her adherence to it, while she contests stereotypes.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Expressions / Stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- "Moose meat, bannock, fish" (0:52)	NS, OC	- "I also ate French fries, lasagnas and tacos" (0:52)	L, MNE	O
- "moose mits" (0:59)	NS, OC	- "I also wore hoodies, jeans and Converses" (0:59)	L, MNE	O
- Not speaking Dene (1:59) - Cultural loss (1:59)	NS, PC	- Painting of the medicine wheel - "My culture is how I live and practice it now. Just because I do not speak Dene, it does not mean I've lost my culture. Culture is how we speak now, how we live now, and how we look at the world around us now" (2:04) - "I shouldn't be defined by my culture's history. If I can't speak my Native language, play hang drums, wear traditional clothing, or own a tipi, does that mean I've lost my culture or my way of life? Excuse me, but my culture is wearing jeans, speaking English while I understand Dene, watching movies, eating hot-dogs and an occasional moose meat dinner if I'm lucky" (2:28)	L, MNE, RC	O

[16] Kennedy, Sinay (filmmaker), More than a stereotype, [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/more-than-a-stereotype] Wapikoni Mobile, (2018), 3 minutes

Kennedy breaks essentialist positions of the noble savage and the object of curiosity stereotypes by exploring binary oppositions of Western and indigenous codes. She demonstrates the effects of time and colonization on the examples of food and clothing: "I grew up eating moose meat, bannock and fish, but guess what? I also ate French fries, lasagnas and tacos" (0:52) and "Yes, I wore moose hide mits, but I also wore hoodies, jeans and Converses" (0:59). By using symbols representing each pole of the binary oppositions and by concentrating them in a single person's cultural practices, she challenges the rigidity of the dichotomous categories of the indigenous and the colonizer. The difference markers used, food and clothing, don't capture her full 'essence' if they are kept apart.

Kennedy uses the transcoding strategy of 'looking'. The difference markers of traditional food, clothing and language do not convey the hidden meanings of the noble savage, just as Western food, clothing and language do not convey the hidden meanings of corrupted identities or cultural loss. She subverts both the noble savage and the corruption by modernity or Western elements. She uses the strategy of mobilizing urban, modern and external cultural elements, thus representing a fluid Dene identity.

She also argues that the Western world attempts to set the limits of 'authentic' culture:

> "I shouldn't be defined by my culture's history. If I can't speak my Native language, play hang drums, wear traditional clothing, or own a tipi, does that mean I've lost my culture or my way of life? Excuse me, but my culture is wearing jeans, speaking English while I understand Dene, watching movies, eating hot-dogs and an occasional moose meat dinner if I'm lucky." (2:28)

She positions the stereotypes of the noble savage and the object of curiosity as society's, thus far from her 'true' Dene culture. Kennedy's conception of culture reflects Hall's concept of cultural identity (Hall 1989): "Culture is how people live now. Culture is not stuck in a certain time period. There are traditional values and teachings, but there are modern day teachings and values too" (1:50). This statement opposes historically fixed cultural identities.

The images of her applying paint on her hand represent adherence to indigenous knowledge. Alongside the fluidity of identity represented, these images code the Dene as

respecting their culture and their past while refusing the fixed meanings of the noble savage stereotype. In other words, the Dene are shown as determining themselves what they can incorporate to their culture, instead of a dominant discourse deciding when they are 'true' indigenous or when they are corrupted.

Kennedy applying paint on her hand (3:00)

She challenges the idea of 'cultural loss' (Dybbroe 1996) and thus the post-colonial paradigm, the noble savage stereotype and the overly romantic authenticity strategy. Cultural loss is coded as a mechanism entertaining the post-colonial stereotype by attempting to fix an absence. Kennedy states that it is not because she doesn't have a perfect knowledge of the Dene language that she has lost her culture (1:59). In other words, she is not less Dene because of that, even though the dominant discourses attempt to say so:

> "Just because I don't fit in society's stereotypical role of an Indian, or Native, or Aboriginal, or whatever the latest politically correct word is for who I am, does that mean I have lost my way or my identity? I'm not ashamed of where I come from. I do appreciate my heritage, where I come from and my history. I love my people and the Dene nation, but it doesn't mean I have to be stereotyped by that. I just don't appreciate society's stereotypes of indigenous people. I don't have to conform to a certain category, just to fulfill society's stereotypes." (2:31)

She voices her knowledge and respect of her tradition and history and positions her cultural identity outside a historically fixed representation in new encodings where tradition is reclaimed, but not fixed. She contests that dominant discourses could tell her if she's disappearing.

Kennedy's film is arguably positioned in the oppositional code. Her representation of the Dene cultural identity rejects rules of the dominant code and denies being the Other. She establishes new codes where the dominant discourse cannot define a fluid cultural identity empowering the Dene to be able of reclaiming tradition and adapting to the effects of history and colonization in their own terms. She prefers the meaning that 'true' Dene is what the Dene decide, in an understanding of the effects of history, which rejects dominant codes. Instead of constructing her cultural identity within the dominant dichotomies of nature and culture, urban and rural, Western and indigenous or tradition and modernity, she chooses an alternative and oppositional framework of reference. This framework is built on non-essential, adaptable and self-determined codes of representing the First Nations cultural identities.

4.2.5 *All of us human beings* (2015) by Vicky Moar-Niquay – 2:33

Film presentation and content

All of us human beings is a documentary by Vicky Moar-Niquay from Joliette and the Atikamekw nation[17]. The film presents a perspective less present in the corpus as it challenges stereotypes but applies a degree of fixity on the meaning of being Atikamekw. She speaks of traditions, while the images show her walking in nature and present her family.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

(Table moved to next page for readability)

[17] Moar-Niquay, Vicky (filmmaker), Tous humains, [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/tous-humains-all-humans] Wapikoni Mobile, (2015), 2 minutes

Expressions / Stereotypes	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- First Nations are related to nature (1:02)	NS, OC	- "we have a privileged link to nature" (1:02) - Partial acceptance of the dominant code - Critique of the dominant discourse's ignorance - Marking of difference with the dominant group - Transcoded as: educational, modern and civilised	D, RC, ORA, P, SE	N
- Living in a tipi, bartering, not paying taxes (1:43)	NS, OC, PSA	- "we don't live in tipis without paying taxes and we don't barter, we pay with money" (1:43) - Shopping in a supermarket, living in a house	L, MNE	O
- "Alcoholics without jobs" (1:43)	PSA	"We are not all alcoholics without jobs" (1:43)	D, P	N
- Being called Blacks, Redskins, Browns, Mexicans or Asians (1:52)	OC	- "We are not Blacks, Redskins, Browns, Mexicans or Asians, nor the other definitions which many use to describe us." (1:52)	L, RH	O

The relationship to nature, which is pejorative and conveys oppressive hidden meanings in the noble savage stereotype, is transcoded positively in the film. Furthermore, a certain degree of fixity is applied between 'being Atikamekw' and 'being close to nature': "Us, we are indigenous peoples. We are Atikamekw. It is true that we love nature. We feel we have a privileged link with her" (1:02). The dominant code's own marking of difference is apparent when she uses the expression "It is true that we love nature". She marks a difference from the dominant culture, rather than from the stereotyped Other. This essentializes her culture in the difference marker of being close to nature. The 'we' operates a closure on Atikamekw identity, as Atikamekws who would find themselves outside the 'we' would be excluded. By mentioning a 'privileged' link to nature, she codes Atikamekw culture as specifically close to nature and as different from the Western culture. Doing so,

she strategically essentializes her culture to mark the difference from the colonizer's culture.

The privileged link to nature (1:03)

Traditions are coded as constitutive of Atikamekw identity. They are actualized in the modern uses of intergenerational communication and community building (Dybbroe 1996) and used positively: "Family is at the center of our lives. It constitutes our strength and our identity. It is together that we celebrate the Pow-Wows. These big parties help us remember our culture and our heritage. It is together that we go to the sweat lodges, when we need to recover" (1:25). Moar-Niquay values her traditional knowledge to critique racism: "my grands-parents told me that we all came from the same place" (0:41). The dominant discourse is then coded as 'ignorant': "Now I know why racism exists; it is because of ignorance. Some don't know that we all come from the same place" (1:57). In this example, tradition is transcoded as educational, modern and civilised. However, the traditions remain coded under the general logics of the dominant framework marking the First Nations as Others. They attribute a degree of fixity to the relationship to nature presented as being an essence of Atikamekw cultural identity which entertains Otherness under current relationships of power. The dominant stereotypical connotations related to the essential 'natural' character of First Nations are not fully subverted.

Traditional objects (1:59)

However, she challenges the object of curiosity and the noble savage stereotypes in situated logics: “We don’t live in tipis without paying taxes and electricity and we don’t barter, we pay with money” (1:43). She addresses specific elements of tradition that she codes as truly outdated and stereotypical and shows her family in a supermarket and in front of a house, thus mobilizing non-essential elements as well.

Mobilizing non-essential elements such as the supermarket (1:41)

On a different level, Moar-Niquay formulates an oppositional encoding to the dehumanizing mechanism which constructs all the Others of the Western world into uniform objects of curiosity: “We are neither Blacks, Redskins, Browns, Mexicans or Asians” (1:33). In this context, the oppositional code arguably serves the purpose of reinforcing the Atikamekw’s essentialized traditional culture. The position of the Other is maintained in the film’s overall negotiated code, and thus being Atikamekw is encoded as not being ‘any Other’.

Moar-Niquay’s film also challenges the poor and socially assisted stereotype via ‘looking’ at her and her family to reclaim equal humanity: “Yes, certain things concerning us are true, but we are not all alcoholics without jobs” (1:43). She gives the dominant discourse a certain degree of legitimacy but applies situated logics to loosen up its stereotypes.

'Looking' to recover humanity (1:12)

The film is positioned in the negotiated code, represents Atikamekw as positive and reclaims traditions. This negotiated code recognizes the stereotypes as having an anchor in ‘reality’ by maintaining an ‘essential’ link to nature. It creates new ‘noble’ representations of the cultural identity from inside the position of the Other, which can be viewed as the overly romantic authenticity strategy. Moar-Niquay transcodes the noble savage (and its

alcoholic counterpart) into a community marking its difference from the colonizer with actualized traditions and essential traits. The film is less concerned with the relationships of power inherent to the stereotypes and it doesn't subvert the Othering marking of difference of the dominant discourse. However, the film applies situated logics by contesting the codes judged erroneous like tipis and bartering. It opposes the poor and socially assisted stereotype by encoding some indigenous as 'problematic' and some as 'positive'. It also turns positively and in equal humanity the close link to nature via the 'diversity' strategy. This Other is encoded as specifically Atikamekw, which serves the purpose to build an imagined community rather than contesting the dominant codes of representation.

4.2.6 *Where are your feathers?* (2015) by Melanie Lumsden and Widia Larivière – 4:52

Film presentation and content

The movie features two pairs of sisters who discuss First Nations stereotypes[18]. With anecdotes and opinions, the sisters are mostly addressing the white Canadians, in an attempt at mediation. The visual form resembles an interview: the actresses sit and face the camera.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Expression / stereotype	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- "*Where are your feathers?*" (0:00) - "Do you live in a tipi?" (1:52) - "She thought that feathers grew out of my hair" (2:34) - "It was like if we were dreamcatchers" (2:22) - "objectified like folkloric objects" (2:22)	NS, OC	- "there is a lot of ignorance" (1:52)	L	O

[18] Larivière, Widia et Mélanie Lumsden (filmmakers), Où sont tes plumes? [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/ou-sont-tes-plumes-where-are-your-feathers] Wapikoni Mobile, (2015), 4 minutes

- "you look normal!" (2:02) - "you speak so well!" (2:41)	NS, OC	"Native people are normal too" (2:02)	D, L, RH, RC	O/N
- "you don't pay for Hydro" (2:50) - "have you received your cheque yet?" (2:56)	PSA	- "Yes, I pay for my Hydro" (2:50) - "Which cheque? If you have one, give it to me!" (2:56)	L	O
- "Go back to where you came from" (0:06) - Racism in history, notably the Oka crisis, and their lived experiences (0:39) - "You know, if it wasn't for us, you wouldn't have progressed". (3:05)	PC, NS	- "this is where I came from" (0:06) - "If we hadn't been there, you wouldn't have survived!" (3:05) - "The biggest force to say that we are not a forgotten identity is to put education and to put a clear block of our history so that not only the people that are non-native, but also that are native that can live in this pride, within this force, within this link of the whole nation. Then we can work together, then we can have reparation, then we can move past the colonialism. Then maybe the native people will have a certain pride, a certain force and voice" (4:23)	L, RC	O

The film's title is itself an enunciation of the object of curiosity stereotype. It is mentioned to be deconstructed via the 'looking' transcoding, as the four actresses don't wear feathers. They remember being asked "do you live in a tipi?" (1:52). The question, and thus the noble savage stereotype, are coded as "ignorant" (1:52).

They recall being told: "I've never seen a Native person, you look normal!" (2:02). The sentence constitutes a marking of difference as the Other coded in the surprise to see that the 'Native' could be 'normal'. Therefore, dominant representations code First Nations as 'abnormal', where 'normal' means 'white', while 'abnormal' means the stereotypical object of curiosity, probably wearing buckskin clothing and feathers. Their reply is "Native people are normal too" (2:02), thus transcoding 'normal' into 'equal human' and positioning themselves and their cultural identity outside of Otherness.

This ‘problematic’ normality is further explored. The sisters mention being considered as “dreamcatchers” (2:22) and being touched physically by people as if they were some sort of talisman. Another example is told of someone touching their hair thinking “that feathers grew from her head” (2:34). Their objectification as curiosities is explicit in these actions interpreted as being “objectified as folkloric objects” (2:22). However, they believe the intentions to be ‘good’, which is a substantial example of the object of curiosity’s complexity. In mentioning these events, the filmmakers code the dominant representations as ‘ignorant’ and ’stupid’ and demonstrate via the ‘looking’ strategy how the stereotypes work (very easily) against themselves.

Imitating someone touching them to see if feathers came out of their heads (2:26)

The preferred representations of First Nations are transcoded in a new ‘normality’. This new code is rather of a universal ‘humanity’ than the ‘normality’ position perceived within the dominant discourse. They are defending the right to be equally valued, while not associating ‘normality’ with being white, as they revendicate First Nations origin. In this way, they position themselves as not being the curious Other, but the ‘normal’ human ‘self’. It is a way to reclaim humanity by positioning their culture as ‘normal’ and showing that their ‘difference’ doesn’t imply the dominated positioning of the Other, and code the

‘same’ humanity as the issuer of the dominant discourse. They celebrate difference by coding ‘diversity’ as equal.

On another level, they contest the ‘poor and socially assisted’ stereotype. They recall being asked if they paid for the electricity bill (2:50), which assumes that First Nations peoples don’t pay taxes. In similar fashion, they were asked about receiving the ‘cheque’, which refers to welfare money issued every month by the government. Their answer is jokingly: “which cheque? If you have one, give it to me!” (2:56). Alike for the electricity bill, which they say they obviously pay (2:47), they argue that First Nations are not welfare bums and are paying taxes. The stereotype is transcoded via ‘looking’ at what First Nations peoples are and say.

The film is also involved in exploring the roles of history and education in the representation of First Nations. They mention that racism was worse in times of the Oka crisis of 1990 (0:39) and one recalls episodes of racist violence towards her sister (1:07). Though they argue that today’s times are better, they demonstrate that they are still being stereotyped, thus saying that no post-colonial stage has effectively been reached. For example, they recall being told: “You know, if it wasn’t for us, you wouldn’t have progressed” (3:05). They answer: “If we hadn’t been there, you wouldn’t have survived!” (3:05). They establish a need to reclaim and voice First Nations representation via retelling and rewriting history. They transcode First Nations identities as ‘not forgotten’ and in need of a “pride and voice” (4:23). By expressing this need and participating in the discursive field of First Nations representation, they transcode the post-colonial stereotype into a resisting and self-defining cultural identity via the ‘looking’ strategy. In their argument, this could be done by educating people and combatting ignorance, which is another way to code the dominant discourse as ignorant. The revendicated objective is to teach First Nations history differently and to have the non-indigenous recognize the treatment that the indigenous have been subjected to, which is to reconsider what it means to reach a post-colonial stage. They transcode the post-colonial stereotype into a cultural identity actively built, alive and aware of the importance of the past and of colonisation in the making of their identity.

Pleading to rewrite and retell history (3:20)

In sum, the new encodings are reclaiming humanity, culture and voice by subverting the noble savage and the post-colonial stereotypes. They reclaim their humanity by transcoding 'normality', via 'looking' to de-essentialize a naturalized cultural identity (being dreamcatchers, feathers growing as hair, living in a tipi). They also argue that they are active citizens and are not 'poor and socially assisted' (paying taxes, not waiting for the 'cheque'). They represent their cultural identity as in need to be communicated differently and in process of reclaiming their history. Doing so, they emphasize the need to recover a voice and manifest their presence. By reclaiming humanity in sameness with all humans while marking a difference with the Other, the filmmakers reposition themselves as the 'self' (Sethi 2005).

Their insistence on the 'normality' of First Nations cultural identities, attempts at mediation through education and mentions of the good intentions of ignorant people don't legitimate the dominant framework of construction of meaning. In fact, the coding of 'normality' codes the dominant discourses as ignorant. The demand of using alternative codes to understand history discredits the dominant historical discourse which is asked to recognize its faults and its ignorance. Therefore, the code is oppositional because it challenges the

dominant code in all aspects, while at times being understanding of the structures entertaining ignorance in the dominant group.

4.2.7 *Correcting the chalkboard* (2012) by the Empreintes-Engage-toi collective - 4:50

Film presentation and content

This film is co-directed by several children and youth from Manawan participating in the Empreintes-Engage-toi collective. The concept of the film is to write stereotypical expressions on a chalkboard, erase them and write something else[19], which is itself a transcoding. Each youth presents their own stereotypes and replacements. The visuals are a series of shots of the chalkboard where the youth write and erase words.

Enunciated stereotypes and transcodings

Expression /stereotype	Category	Transcoding	Strategy	Position
- "they called me a savage and that I ate anything" (1:00) - "return to your village" (1:04) - "savage" (1:12) - "a gang insulted us, saying things like 'Kawish' and many other words like 'savage' and insults about Indians" (1:27) - "live in a tipi" (1:36) - "Hey Atikamekws, go back to where you came from" (1:47) - "wear feathers" (1:52) - "a lot of people call us Kawish" (2:08)	NS, OC	- "We're human like them, it hurts us too, we're not savages" (2:38) - "We're all equal" (2:41) - "I'm not Kawish, I don't live in a tipi" (2:44) - "it is fun to be Atikamekw I am proud of myself, proud to be Atikamekw" (4:04) - "I am nice" (3:10) - "I will be a pilot" (3:15) - "my house is my castle" (3:17) - "I like sports" (3:21) - "generous" (3:26) - "mother of a young girl" (3:31)	D, L, RH, P	O

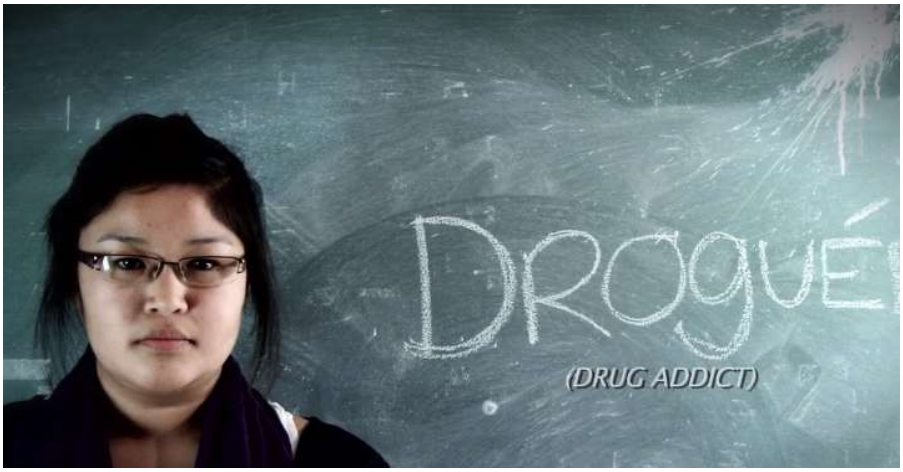
[19] Collectif empreintes-engage-toi (filmmaker), Corriger le tableau, [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/correcting-the-chalkboard] Wapikoni Mobile, (2012), 4 minutes

- “people sometimes say bad things just because we speak Atikamekw. They think we’re weird just because of our mother tongue” (2:49)		- “I will be a musician in New York” (3:36) - “passion for music” (3:39) - “good at school” (3:43)		
- “Atikamekw are nasty” (1:07) - “cigarette smuggler” (1:15) - “They called us cigarettes sellers, bridge blocker, and all those things” (1:27) - “poor” (1:31) - “drug addict” (1:40) - “on welfare” (1:43) - “alcoholic” (1:56) - “doesn’t pay taxes” (2:00) - “lazy” (2:14) - “don’t pay my rent” (2:25)	PSA	- “cooks well” (3:48) - “I am a future hockey player” (3:56) - “I make people laugh” (3:58) - “I am Atikamekw and proud to be” (4:06)		

While the kids are writing stereotypes on the board, youth voices tell hurtful anecdotes. The camera follows the handwriting, and at times halts to focus on the immobile faces of the youth. In this manner, the audible anecdote or the written word are directly confronted to the innocent faces of the youth. This confrontation codes the responsibility of the hatred with the dominant discourse and codes the youth as victims. It constitutes an invitation to look directly, and sensibly, at the young people, through their subverted stereotype.

'Looking' at the youth, to code the hatred with the stereotype, and the youth as victims (1:04)

"Atikamekws are disgusting" (1:08)



"Drug addict" (1:41)

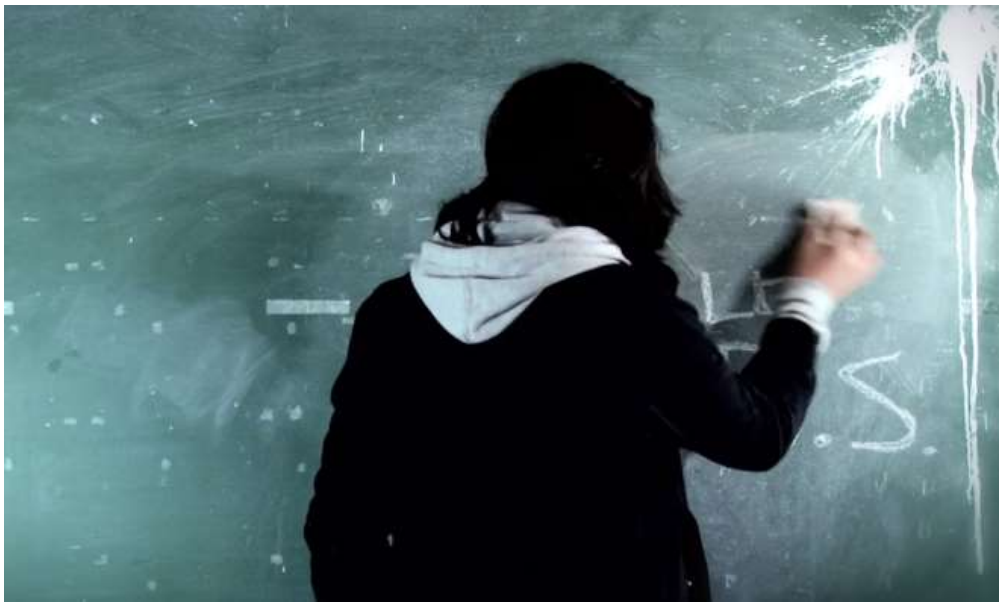
The audible stories are to be called a savage that eats anything (1:00), to be called a Kawish (1:27; 2:08), to be called a cigarette smuggler and a bridge blocker (1:27), to be asked to return where they came from while being thrown food (1:47), and to be called weird for speaking Atikamekw language (2:49).

The stereotypes the youth write and want to 'correct' are: "return to your village" (1:04), "the Atikamekw are nasty" (1:07), "I am a savage" (1:12), "a cigarette smuggler" (1:15), "poor" (1:31), "I live in a tipi" (1:36), "drug addict" (1:40), "on welfare" (1:43), "I wear feathers" (1:52), "alcoholic" (1:56), "doesn't pay taxes" (2:00), "lazy" (2:14) and "I don't pay my rent" (2:25). Often, two shots come back to back: one middle size with the words on the chalkboard and the youth, and one closer on the youth's face, generating a need to 'look'. These stereotypes reflect a wide range of the dominant discourse's codes, with an importance of the poor and socially assisted stereotype. They are linked visually to the faces of the youth they attempt to represent, revealing their violence and injustice. The 'looking' strategy of transcoding is deployed to represent the 'human' character of the youth.

1st shot, middle size (1:56)

Second shot, closer, generating a need to look (1:59)

A sequence marks the transition from these stereotypes to their transcoding. The audible voice says: “We are humans like them, it hurts us too, we are not savages. We are all equal. I’m not Kawish, I don’t live in a tipi!” (2:44). They establish their humanity and equality and oppose the stereotypes, making it visually explicit by erasing them from the chalkboard.



Erasing the stereotypes (2:48)

They then start to write new codes on the board : “I am nice” (3:10), “I will be a pilot” (3:15), “my house is my castle” (3:17), “I like sports” (3:21), “generous” (3:26), “mother of a young girl” (3:31), “I will be a musician in New York” (3:36), “passion for music” (3:39), “good at school” (3:43), “cooks well” (3:48), “I am a future hockey player” (3:56), “I make people laugh” (3:58), “I am Atikamekw and proud to be” (4:06). They transcode the stereotypes into personal dreams, qualities or statuses (of mother and of proud Atikamekw). This acts as both the diversity and the ‘looking’ transcoding strategies. They are re-coding themselves how they desire to be represented with empowerment and self-determination.

Although the title, and the general idea, is to ‘correct’ the chalkboard, it is not done to discover a ‘real’ Indian behind the stereotypes. No overly romantic authenticity is meant to be found in the transcoded representation. In fact, the new encodings empower a self-asserted humanity, positiveness and diversity in the Atikamekw cultural identity. By transcoding the stereotypes into universally positive codes such as dreams and qualities, the encodings opt to step out of the dichotomies of colonizer and colonized, savage and civilised, urbanity and nature and tradition and modernity. Instead, they prefer meanings of positiveness associated to an equal humanity. While the stereotypes are not attacked directly, the codes become discredited nonetheless. They are enunciated to show their cruelty and ignorance, and the proposed encodings of positiveness act as a new framework of reference to address Atikamekw identity.

The film challenges particularly the poor and socially assisted and the noble savage stereotypes to reclaim a positive humanity outside the position of the Other. This framework is an alternative and oppositional code which exploits the transcoding strategies of ‘looking’ and ‘diversity’ to self-determine a positive humanity. The dominant code thus fails to maintain hegemony and is replaced.

4.3 Conclusion of the analysis

I have argued that all but one film of the corpus are positioned in the oppositional code. Most of the films subvert the stereotypes they enunciate and formulate alternative frameworks of coding to represent their cultural identity. Doing so, they reject the role of

the Other. This is probably due to the parameters of corpus selection and the research question, which voluntarily favored the appearance of critical approaches to representation from the point of view of the filmmakers. These perspectives presented preferred meanings of encoders with a central awareness of stereotypes, and how they wished to transcode their identities.

The analysis showed that all films challenged the noble savage stereotype, although one of them accepts its general rule. Almost all films challenged the object of curiosity stereotype as well. 2 films challenged the Indian princess and squaw stereotypes, 5 films challenged the poor and socially assisted stereotype, 4 films challenged the post-colonial stereotype and the warrior stereotype was basically absent. The transcoding strategy of 'looking' was the most present which is understandable as it is the strategy the most focused on de-essentializing stereotypes (Hall 1997). The transcoding strategy of diversity was present in a few films, while the counter-integrationist was only noted once. 3 films opted to represent an equal humanity, 1 represented an overly romantic authenticity, 5 reclaimed culture, history and knowledge, 5 mobilized non-essential elements, 5 chose to represent 'positive images' and 2 used strategic essentialism.

The films did challenge the stereotypes that were enunciated in the contextualisation, which means that these are recognized in these youth lived experiences. These stereotypes are thus not fictional or solely abstract structural issues.

The important use of the 'looking' strategy hints that these youth wish to be at the center of the mediation of their cultural identity and are willing to present themselves to the world as the 'real' indigenous to deconstruct erroneous images of them. Doing so, they use the film media's potential to vehiculate 'real' images of the world and reiterate indigenous media's political dimensions.

The results show that these youth are concerned and aware of the range of consequences of the noble savage stereotype. Mainly by reclaiming culture, history and knowledge and by mobilizing non-essential elements, they presented an identity that can take multiple forms and evolve through time. They transcoded their culture, history and traditions by

rejecting the dominant coding of these elements, fixed in a noble savage essentialism. This rewriting permitted the coexistence of their belonging to a specific culture, with its own history and knowledge, and the voluntary or involuntary integration of elements of other cultures.

They represented a determination to affirm their existence, and in a positive way. They coded that they have by no means disappeared, that they are not burdens to society and that they should be equally valued as human beings. They refused to be essentialized as a 'problem' by 'looking' at the difference between the stereotypical 'problem' and them. They recognized the effects of colonization but denied being forever essentially corrupted by it. Finally, they called for the dominant groups to educate themselves and stop stereotyping them, as they entertain subordinating representations of First Nations peoples which are not representing their lived experiences. The next chapter digs deeper into these conclusions.

5.0 Discussion

In this discussion, I present three main themes which became apparent after analyzing the corpus according to the Encoding/Decoding model: self-determination, the tradition and modernity nexus and diversity.

5.1 Self-determination

An important theme of the encodings is self-determination. Self-determination is a heavily debated principle falling in a nexus between international law and UN resolutions (Emerson 1971), amongst others. This discussion will not go deep in the legal, political or philosophical issues of self-determination, but will approach how it has been presented in the films of the corpus.

In Joanne Barker's interpretation of the UN resolutions, cultural dimensions are of central importance in the concept of self-determination: "self-determination is the right to participate in the democratic process of governance and to influence one's future—politically, socially and culturally. Self-determination embodies the right for all peoples to

determine their own economic, social and cultural development." (Barker 2015). Self-determination has close links to cultural identity and a whole school of thought, referred to as 'the cultural interpretation', interprets the principle as "an expression of the right to culture" (Tamir 1997). The specific 'cultural' aspect of self-determination can be conceptualized as 'cultural self-determination': "the right of a distinct and identifiable group of people or a separate political state to set the standards and mores of what constitutes its traditional culture and how it will honor and practice that culture" (Miller 2001). Self-determination's relevancy here is its recognized ability to define one own's cultural identity. Indigenous media's role in self-determination is then to mediate one's cultural identity in the public space (Tamir 1997). In addition, the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) specifically addresses the relevancy of the concept in indigenous lives: "Indigenous peoples possess rights conventionally associated with statehood to the sovereignty of governance, territorial integrity, and cultural autonomy" (Barker 2015).

Although the entire strategies of self-representation mentioned in the corpus are arguably self-determined, I identified this as an important theme because self-determination was explicitly mentioned to be revendicated. In this case, self-determination becomes the revendicated object which is represented.

In two films, *More than a stereotype* and Commanda's sequence in *Co-wreck the record,* 'Native art' is represented as solely being the result of self-determination. In both cases, the filmmakers argue that no specific form or subject is necessary to represent a First Nations point of view. In Commanda's case, the condition that a Native person produces art replaces the idea that traditional instruments, such as drums, are necessary features of 'Native' music. In *More than a stereotype,* Kennedy ultimately says: "I want to be remembered as a filmmaker who just happens to be of Aboriginal heritage" (3:22). Thus, she challenges that her films should represent what is 'expected' about First Nations, and instead proposes that her cultural identity is determined by what she is.

Another strategy where self-determination is explicit is to address 'society' as the creator of a false First Nations identity. When 'society' is mentioned, it is to promote self-

determination. Kennedy speaks of not conforming to "society's stereotypical role of an Indian, or Native, or Aboriginal, or whatever the latest politically correct word is for who I am" (3:01). Condo says: "I am not the Indian princess society says I should be" (0:40 IAL; 2:03 CWTR). Condo also repeatedly uses the term 'your' to represent where stereotypes come from (1:22, 1:53, 2:28 IAL; 2:40, 3:06, 3:38 CWTR). She subsequently self-determines new essential traits of her identity and argues that 'society' 's representation is a lie. In *Two Pocahontas in town,* the filmmakers refer to 'them' as the ignorant issuers of stereotypes, before stating: "We know who we are" (3:25). The obvious concepts of the titles *Correct the chalkboard* and *Co-wreck the record,* also work in the same way: to take control of the representation of one's cultural identity which has been defined wrongfully by others before them. Addressing 'society', 'you' or 'them' to deconstruct stereotypes is an explicit demand of self-determination which serves to empower First Nations to create new codes of belonging. In similar fashion, coding the dominant discourse with 'ignorance', which is overwhelmingly present in the analysis[20] separates the 'truth' from the dominant discourse. In this way, the filmmakers acquire the capacity to determine themselves the 'truth' about their identity.

Where the strategy of reclaiming culture, history and knowledge is identified, self-determination is also explicit. For example, in *Where are your feathers?,* the interviewees ask the dominant group to "recognize the history of the First Nations" (3:41) which is to present their version of history as the 'real' one. Other examples are the ways in which traditions in *Two Pocahontas in town* or *All of us human beings* are either re-used in artistic or humoristic ways or explained in their modern uses, their meanings becoming self-determined.

These various examples follow the results of the analysis which emphasized that all the films except one have operated in an oppositional code, meaning that the dominant code was discredited. However, a negotiated code can also be self-determined. For example, *All of us human beings* maintains the position of the Other in a negotiated code, though some essential traits are self-determined. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the corpus represents

[20] *All of us human beings* (2 :10), *Two Pocahontas in the city* (1:47, 3:16), *Where are your feathers?* (1:52, 3:15),

a general vow of self-determination for young First Nations peoples of Canada. It is arguably one of the strongest messages of the corpus that young indigenous peoples wish to influence how they are represented.

5.2 Tradition and modernity nexus

As is apparent in the analysis, the representation of the First Nations cultural identities has a complex relationship with the tradition and modernity nexus. Most films position themselves across this nexus by questioning the foundation of the dichotomy that fixes tradition in one end and modernity in the other. This questioning led the films to deconstruct stereotypes of the noble savage and the object of curiosity, and to negate representations of an overly romantic authenticity. In the analysis, I have spoken of how these films actualize tradition in a modern use. In *Two Pocahontas in town,* traditional elements are used in a satire subverting the negative connotations they were initially coded with. In *I am L'nu,* traditional elements are claimed to show a belonging to a nation which transcended ethnic codes. In *All of us human beings,* tradition is used to present indigenous knowledge and wisdom across intergenerational communication. In *Where are your feathers?*, filmmakers code traditions as something to revisit and to teach differently in order to rewrite history and combat ignorance. In *More than a stereotype*, traditional elements are valued in their unproblematic relationship with elements of other cultures and modernity.

In stereotypes of First Nations peoples, tradition is a difference marker entertaining the position of the Other. It is coded with problematic insertion into civilisation, nobility, savagery, naturalized features, lack of humanity, etc. In this essentialist lens, tradition is fixed outside of modernity. However, Susanne Dybbroe argues: "Opposing traditional to modern is therefore tautological: any so-called traditional way still in existence is found in a present-day context and must be understood in this context" (Dybbroe 1996). By using tradition in another way than its stereotypical purpose, the filmmakers break the dichotomy of tradition and modernity. More importantly, they transcode it in a new meaning. While in *All of us human beings*'s negotiated positioning traditions are turned positively, in the other films, traditions are used to subvert stereotypes.

Tradition approached through this dichotomy is also linked to the post-colonial stereotype. *Two Pocahontas in town, More than a stereotype* and *Where are your feathers?* emphasize that First Nations identities have by no means disappeared. What is disappearing is the hegemony of the dominant codes of tradition in stereotypical representation. Instead, traditions obtain either new codes in modernity, as in *All of us human beings*, or they become sites of historical reclaiming and of representational struggle, as in the other movies.

The main self-representational strategies which approach the tradition and modernity nexus in the corpus are the reclaiming of culture, history and knowledge and the mobilization of non-essential elements. Nygren expresses how these strategies collaborate: "An important part of the postcolonial struggles for ethnic identity in Native America is the active 'retelling' of the past, where the Indians construct themselves not as aboriginal others but as people who have for hundreds of years been mediated by colonialism" (Nygren 1998). Via these strategies, which are very apparent in the corpus, First Nations youth can represent themselves unproblematically while incorporating the elements of other cultures to which they've been in contact with or which they like (Graugaard 2009). They can make peace with the effects of history and contest traditionalist representations and their pressures.

Except for *All of us human beings,* the investigation of the tradition and modernity nexus encodes First Nations cultural identities outside the position of the Other. They opt out of the dichotomy which limits the Other's representational struggle in two alternatives: cultural loss or problematic modernity. Dybbroe argues that the real issue in indigenous use of tradition in self-representation is self-determination (Dybbroe 1996), not cultural loss. Tradition becomes incorporated in development and self-determination instead of fixed as a problematic difference marker.

It is possible to compare most films' encodings with new positionings of Greenlandic identities "formulating a cosmopolitan and urban modernity that reflects a range of globalisation processes" (Thisted 2014). They are positioning their identity as also modern and urban, by subverting the stereotypes designed to keep them out of it. They encode First

Nations peoples as not romantically authentic and show that traditions don't mean nobility or naturalized behaviors. Rather, they represent themselves as capable of reclaiming tradition and culture in their own interpretations.

In sum, in the corpus, First Nations cultural identities are mainly represented as non-essentialized, self-determined and operating through oppositional codes to leave the position of the Other. They notably do so by deconstructing stereotypes anchored in a dichotomy of tradition and modernity.

5.3 The question of diversity

Another theme of the corpus is the representation of diversity in First Nations cultural identities. This theme is identified in indigenous research methodologies and in literature about the Wapikoni Mobile in its positive and negative aspects. For example, while Smith speaks of the shift from "cultural deficit" views to "cultural diversity" views (Tuhiwai Smith 2012), which entertain the indigenous as Others, she also contends that experiences of indigenousness are plural and need to be approached as such (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). There are thus at least two dimensions of diversity that can be represented in the Wapikoni Mobile films. The first dimension is to represent diversity in the equal differences of cultures and namely of the dominant culture, which is what Hall calls the "celebration of difference" (Hall 1997). In this level, the transcoding strategy of' 'diversity' can fail to subvert the power relations and can maintain the position of the Other. The second level is to represent diversity by estranging the figure of the Other. In subverting the Other's representativity, alternative codes can represent new diversities within a cultural identity no longer positioned as the Other. For Calvé-Thibault, this is how the Wapikoni films operate as "spaces of visibility" where they present a "plurality of perspectives" (Calvé-Thibault 2012). I observed that through two transcoding strategies, 'diversity' and 'looking', most films of the corpus are preoccupied with proposing fluid codes to represent First Nations cultural identities.

'Diversity' as a transcoding strategy is not necessarily a gage of subverting the dominant discourse or stereotypes. Cornellier critiques the Wapikoni Mobile as a producer of First Nations representations which entertain the colonial power by representing difference

while remaining inside the position of the Other. His arguments are that the project constitutes "the experience of piety", "the practice of the gift" and "the romanticized ideal of the intercultural exchange" (Cornellier[21] 2011). The structure of the Wapikoni Mobile, a project driven by a white woman, satisfies the colonizer's fantasy of seeing an 'authentic' Other. Therefore, the dominant group comforts its position in a humanist vocation to let Others express their difference behind the screen of equality (Cornellier 2011). In other words, the films of the Wapikoni Mobile are important for the colonizer's own representation and for maintaining unequal relations of power.

However, Cornellier's arguments assume that the function of the Wapikoni Mobile is to 'correct' First Nations 'real' cultural identity (Cornellier 2011). He approaches the represented diversity as the projection of the search for the 'authentic' Other. I argue that because of the corpus' condition of taking stereotypes as a central theme, the chosen films express an indigenous diversity which challenges the paradigm Cornellier speaks of. Cornellier bases his argument on the film W*apikoni, escale à Kitcisakik* (2009) (Cornellier 2011), which is a film 'on' the Wapikoni project made in collaboration with the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) rather than produced 'by' First Nations youth. I argue that amongst the hundreds of Wapikoni Mobile films, my selection criteria served to find alternative and oppositional discourses which are aware of Cornellier's paradigm and wish to challenge it by representing diversity and estranging the Other. While his argument may be relevant to many films of the Wapikoni Mobile, it arguably isn't representative of most of the movies of the corpus.

I argue that the diversity represented in the corpus seldom reflects Cornellier's opinions about maintaining the position of the Other. Through the transcoding strategies of 'diversity' and 'looking', diversity is rather 'shown' to permit First Nations to mark their own difference from the Other.

Helen Faradji noted that through the years, First Nations representations in the Wapikoni Mobile films evolved from producing "depreciative and miserabilist" images to construct new positive ones (Faradji 2009). As she was writing about the films of 2007 and 2008, I

[21] Personal Translation

concur that the corpus pursues that trend, but that these new positive diversities are generally unrelated to an overly romantic authenticity.

In challenging the poor and socially assisted stereotype, *All of us human beings* and *Correct the chalkboard* code new positive representations of First Nations peoples. In *All of us human beings,* the filmmaker challenges that First Nations people are all alcoholics without jobs and prefers to encode a representation partially fixed in a relation to nature and in indigenous knowledge which explains that the diversity of the world should be valued. I argue that this example is the only one which could fit Cornellier's critique, and it is the only one identified as using a negotiated code. In this example, the Other position becomes somewhat of a refuge where 'true' identity remains. Although the filmmaker argues that First Nations can be 'positive', she doesn't provide grounds to think that the 'negative' is a stereotypical construction of the dominant discourse. It is an example where the 'diversity' strategy doesn't subvert the stereotype.

However, in *Correct the chalkboard,* diversity is used to reclaim universal humanity through the strategy of 'looking'. Dreams, passions and personal qualities represent First Nations peoples in a positive diversity of their personalities and interests. In this case, diversity is used via 'looking' at the difference from the stereotyped Other, thus recovering humanity in its universal features (having personal dreams, for example) while revendicating belonging to a different culture. Diversity, which is 'looked at' in the faces and words of youth who are also expressing the horrible connotations they've been coded with, serves to estrange them from the fetichized Other. The same goes in *Where are your feathers?*'s encodings of 'equal humans' who pay taxes and don't wear feathers. Indigenous diversity is differentiated from the noble savage and is promoted through the appeal for a comprehensive education of First Nations history.

In *More than a stereotype,* Kennedy challenges 'cultural loss' and assumes a cultural identity made of diverse influences. She encodes First Nations identities in a diversity of possible avenues in which to define themselves. In both of Condo's films, diverse ethnic backgrounds are coded as constitutive of First Nations identities and women are represented through a variety of roles and qualities. These films encode First Nations

identity as constituted of diversity, not of a romantic authenticity. In these cases, diversity is 'looked at' to mark a difference from the image of the Other.

The promotion of diversity in these examples has the effect of deconstructing the fixity of stereotypes and of de-essentializing identity. Except *All of us human beings,* the films of the corpus contest the position of the Other as it doesn't represent them, hides the diversity of their cultures and exaggerates the differences between the dominant culture and them. There is a link with the tradition and modernity nexus because diversity challenges any kind of revendicated authenticity, which can be entertained through the fixity of tradition. Nygren argues: "There is no monolithic Amerindian identity, but rather multiple identities, whose meanings and practical salience vary according to historical experiences, cultural imagery, and prevalent position in the structures of power" (Nygren 1998). Whether is it to argue that belonging to a 'different' culture does not consist of being the Other, to argue that their cultural identity is made of a variety of influences or to argue that their cultural identity comprises of different equal humans, the films of the corpus approach the theme in its complexity. The complexity of diversity is that First Nations attempt to be equal humans but to express their difference both from the dominant culture and from the position of the Other at the same time. Rumina Sethi argues that this represented complexity is a feature of indigenous resistance:

> "the oppressed groups can then make the claim, which, in the first account I have given of identity, is impossible: that they are both same and different. This appears to be a contradiction, but a contradiction which oppressed groups have to claim. To be either same or different will not work. If a group states that it is the same as the dominant group, it loses its own distinction and charge. On the other hand, if it says that it is different, it opens itself to attacks from the dominant group who will weaken it." (Sethi 2005)

The oppositional codes which are identified in the corpus are coherent with these notes on indigenous markings of their own differences. It seems clear that most of the corpus does not research the 'authentic' difference, as feared by Cornellier. The corpus generally uses diversity to challenge the fixity of the presumed authentic difference which is concentrated in the position of the Other. Calvé-Thibault argued that the Wapikoni Mobile explores the 'plural character of the indigenous reality' (Calvé-Thibault 2012). I argue that the corpus

selected here follows this statement notably by deconstructing representations who deny indigenous expressions of their own diversity.

6.0 Conclusion

This paper followed the research question: How do preferred encodings by young indigenous peoples of Canada in the Wapikoni Mobile project negotiate the terms by which they are represented in films taking stereotypes as central themes? The films of the corpus, by having stereotypes as central themes, have been answering a discourse which is constructed by the dominant group and voluntarily favored the appearance of oppositional discourses. Thus, the conclusions aren't necessarily applicable to all First Nations perspectives, although they probably echo discourses existing in their communities and nations.

First, I noted that the stereotypes identified in the contextualization section are generally the ones filmmakers have attempted to challenge, which reveals that the contextualization and the academic sources it is built on are not fictional or abstract structural issues but are recognized in the lived experiences of young First Nations people.

Secondly, because of the extensive use of the 'looking' transcoding strategy, the youth represented themselves as the main constitutive force of their cultural identity. They occupied a central position in the representational struggle and fulfilled indigenous media's political potentialities.

Thirdly, all films challenged the most established stereotype presented in the contextualization, which is the noble savage. They also considerably challenged the object of curiosity, the poor and socially assisted and the post-colonial stereotypes. One filmmaker focused on deconstructing the Indian princess stereotype and the warrior stereotype wasn't specifically present in the corpus. The strategies used ranged from using 'diversity' and 'looking' transcoding strategies to reclaiming equal humanity, reclaiming culture, history and tradition, mobilizing non-essential elements, using strategic essentialism and proposing 'positive' images. Through this communicative process, First Nations youth concerned with stereotypes of their cultural identity used the film media to

deconstruct dominant discourses and used alternatives codes to represent themselves. The new preferred meanings deconstructed the image of the noble savage and its consequent codes, established positive and equal humanities, inscribed their culture in modernity unproblematically while re-claiming their history, accepted the integration of elements from other cultures to theirs, denied their disappearance, considered the effects of colonization while neither negating the intention to de-colonize nor seeing themselves as corrupted, refused to be framed as a 'problem' or a burden for society and called for the dominant groups to educate themselves as their ignorance entertains erroneous and subordinating representations which are not representative of the First Nations lived experiences.

Fourthly, according to the Encoding/Decoding model used for analysis, the main conclusion is that the Wapikoni Mobile films having stereotypes as central themes generally deconstructed stereotypes of the dominant discourse in an oppositional code and encoded themselves as the self-determining 'self', rather than the Other. One film, positioned in the negotiated code, didn't opt out of this position, while it did insist on positively representing the Other position in which the author built her imagined community. The corpus coded dominant representations and stereotypes as ignorant and represented First Nations cultural identities with alternative frameworks of coding which it constructed.

Across the new alternative codes, three identified themes explain how this conclusion was reached: self-determination, the tradition and modernity nexus and diversity. Self-determination was represented in different facets, but it was mostly argued that whatever its form, it permitted First Nations youth to represent their identities in the position of the 'self' rather than the Other. The tradition and modernity nexus was generally deconstructed to extract negative or fixed meanings from tradition, to incorporate external elements and to actualize tradition in a modern use. Diversity was used to de-essentialize identity, to claim diverse First Nations humanities and to mark difference from the Other and the dominant group. There was only one case where it was used to approach a 'real' Other. The 'self' was represented as being able to control the meanings of its traditions and culture, understand the effects of history and claim humanity and new diversities.

In conclusion, I contend that the corpus constituted a voice from some of the young First Nations peoples who are preoccupied with stereotypes about their cultural identity, and they proved to represent the need and the intention for First Nations to occupy the discursive space attempting to define what is 'true' about them. I was surprised to see that the media warrior or the warrior weren't approached in the corpus, though they are arguably present in dominant representations, given the importance of the Oka crisis in the collective memory of Canada. Perhaps it would be fruitful to conduct a similar study with a focus on indigenous discourses that are more radical than youth movies in a social initiative. This could enable a comparison between the self-representational strategies of young people in a relatively peaceful social project and those appearing in contexts of protests or wars.

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Larivière, Widia et Mélanie Lumsden (filmmakers), *Où sont tes plumes*? [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/ou-sont-tes-plumes-where-are-your-feathers] Wapikoni Mobile, (2015), 4 minutes

Moar-Niquay, Vicky (filmmaker), *Tous humains,* [online: http://www.wapikoni.ca/movies/tous-humains-all-humans] Wapikoni Mobile, (2015), 2 minutes

8.0 Annex

Transcription of the movies' scripts

Co-wreck the record **(2016)**

Narrator: Today we are hosting an unfiltered round table about being a Native youth in today's contemporary world. Constantly being misrepresented in the media and dealing with hurtful stereotypes. Here are those stories. (0:31)

Caplin: My name is Raymond Caplin. I am Mi'gmag from Listuguj, Quebec. (0:39)

Caplin: When I used to play hockey, when I was a lot younger, my father brought me into it, and over there they had a... It was in English! It was kind of an English group of people, group of kids I would play with. (0:50)

Caplin: I was, me and my brother, we were the only First Nations in that hockey team. And so we'd always have these expectations, or these …, the white kids would always say these things like: "oh, they're Natives, don't pass 'em the puck, they won't know what to do with it", and so forth. (1:07)

Caplin: 'cause the expectation that we're dumb, we're stupid, we're unable to defend for ourselves, and so…, this kept going on, and on, and on, to a point that I actually had…, I actually left hockey, 'cause like, the stereotype was always left on me. (1:24)

Caplin: My brother, he didn't really care, but I don't know, I took it a bit personally or something. (1:29)

Caplin: It wasn't through media that I discovered all these stereotypes and racism. It was mostly through word of mouth, people encountered. (1:39)

Caplin: When people ask me: "Who do you make your work for?" It's like mostly for myself because my work, my art, it's a coping mechanism for, I don't know, the crazy stuff you go through in the daily life. (1:50)

Condo: Hi, my name is Naomi, and I'm Mi'gmag, from the community of Gasgapegiag. (1:56)

Condo: I am not the Indian princess society says I should be. My mother is Irish and my dad is L'nu Mi'gmag. (2:03)

Condo: I identify as Mi'gmag, participate in ceremonies, live on the reserve and raise my kids to embrace our culture. (2:11)

Condo: My looks are a reminder of my Indian DNA deficiency. I never chose my place on the spectrum of the stereotypes on the Indian scale. Sure, I am on the paler side of the spectrum, but I am a product of love. (2:27) I threaten your devotion to indigenous identity and I threaten your devotion to white identity. (2:40)

Condo: The stereotypes placed on indigenous women are endless: uneducated squaws, drunk, dirty, hypersexualised, welfare bums, and even the Indian princess standing stoically beside her white savior prince. (3:01)

Condo: I am not your Pocahontas, nor your squaw. (3:06)

Condo: I understand the struggle to accept me, it upsets me too. If these stereotypes are a lie, then who are you? Strong, educated, vocal, athletic, beautiful, courageous, loved, a warrior. (3:23)

Condo: I am the one walking in the middle of the street. One group I don't look like, and the other I don't think like. (3:32)

Condo: I threaten you, but make no mistake, I am L'nu, through and through. (3:38)

Commanda: You're listening to Craig Commanda. I'm Anishinaabe Algonquin from Kitigan-Zibi First Nation. (4:41)

Commanda: I find it kind of funny just to think about it you know. As a Native artist we don't have to make Native work, but the work that we make is 'Native' art, because we made it. (4:54)

Commanda: But really, if I'm playing the instrument, it is Native music. (4:57)

Commanda: I don't have to conform to the sound of just the drums or just the certain way of chanting. I can take that and move it forward 'cause it's coming from me, a Native person. (5:07)

Commanda: I look at my art, my films my music, it's a coping mechanism, a release from all the stuff that goes on in my head. (5:17)

Condo: I make films to express myself. I use it as a source of therapy. I'm giving you a visual of what's inside of me. (5:40)

Caplin: It's like your best work comes when you're sad, because it can channel all your energy, negative vibes and so forth and make it work. And that's good, but when you're happy and all that, you kind of look just happy, and it doesn't go as well, I think. (5:58)

Commanada: How to keep going when times are tough and spirits are low, kind of thing. Take that feeling and push through with it. (6:06)

Grégoire-Gabriel: Part of the biggest reason why I make art is because I want to assert my existence on this planet. I don't want people like to forget me. I don't want to be like one of those forgotten souls that are buried in the ground and you'll never know their name, you know. Second reason why is like so I can heal, you know. (6:32)

Condo: I hope that we are reclaiming our space within the digital world, within media, within arts. And I hope that we are actually co-wrecking the record. (6:48)

***I am L'nu* (2016)**

I am not the Indian princess society says I should be. I don't have long black hair, brown skin or dressed in buckskin. (0:40)

My mother is Irish, and my dad is L'nu-Mi'gmag (0:44)

I identify as Mi'gmag, participate in ceremonies, collect medicine, use the language as fast I can learn it, live on the reserve and raise my kids to embrace our culture. (0:56)

My looks are a reminder of my Indian DNA deficiency. (1:02)

I never chose my place on the spectrum of the stereotypical Indian scale that I would most naturally look like. Sure, I am on the paler side of the spectrum, but I am a product of love. (1:14)

I threaten your devotion to indigenous identity and I threaten your devotion to white identity. (1:22)

The stereotypes placed on indigenous women are endless, but they range from one extreme to the other: uneducated squaws, drunk, dirty, hypersexualised, welfare bums or the Indian Pocahontas princess draped in buckskin, holding feathers, knows all about the weather, standing stoically beside her white savior prince. But I am not your Pocahontas, or your uneducated squaw. (1:53)

I understand your struggle to accept me, it upsets me too. If these stereotypes are a lie, then who are you? Strong, educated, vocal, athletic, beautiful, courageous, loved, a warrior. (2:28)

Far from the norm, refusing to conform. Strength from the culture you adore. (2:35)

I am the one walking in the middle of the street. One group I don't look like, and the other I don't think like. My existence threatens you but make no mistake: I am L'nu through and through. (2:52)

There once was a war inside of me, between the me you see and the me I feel. For myself, that war is won. I am L'nu. (3:08)

More than a stereotype **(2018)**

My name is Sinay Kennedy. I grew up on the Clearwater River Dene nation reservation. (0:30)

Yes, I am an Indigenous person. (0:34)

Although I cannot fluently speak my native language, I understand Chipewyan Dene when I hear it. (0:39)

I am now learning to speak Dene with my mom at home. (0:44)

Yes, I grew up eating moose meat, bannock and fish, but guess what? I also ate French fries, lasagnas and tacos. (0:52)

Yes, I wore moose hide mits, but I also wore hoodies, jeans and converse. (0:59)

I do not live in a tipi, nor build a fire to keep warm. I switch on the furnace in our family's house. (1:03)

Once, this non-Native person was talking to me: They talked to me for a minute, then asked me if I can speak my native language. I told them that I didn't but that I can understand it. Then they said: "Oh, that's sad. Language loss is happening often and people are losing their culture". (1:22)

I hear the same sentiment so often from many different people and organizations. (1:28)

So, what is culture? The dictionary defines culture as a particular form or stage of civilisation, as that of a certain nation or period. (1:38)

Culture is how people live now. Culture is not stuck in a certain time period. There are traditional values and teachings, but there are modern day teachings and values too. (1:50)

My culture is how I live and practice it now. Just because I do not speak Dene, it does not mean I've lost my culture. (1:59)

Culture is how we speak now, how we live now, and how we look at the world around us now. (2:04)

I shouldn't be defined by my culture's history. If I can't speak my native language, play a hand drums, wear traditional clothing, or own a tipi, does that mean I've lost my culture

or my way of life ? Excuse me, but my culture is wearing jeans, speaking English while I understand Dene, watching movies, eating hot-dogs and an occasional moose meat dinner if I'm lucky. (2:28)

Just because I do not fit in society's stereotypical role of an Indian, or Native, or Aboriginal, or whatever the latest politically correct word is for who I am, does that mean I have lost my way or my identity? I'm not ashamed of where I come from. I do appreciate my heritage, where I come from and my history. I love my people and the Dene nation, but it doesn't mean I have to be stereotyped by that. I just don't appreciate society's stereotypes of indigenous people. (3:01)

I don't have to conform to a certain category, just to fulfill society's stereotypes. (3:10)

When I do make it one day as a filmmaker, I want to be remembered as a filmmaker who just happens to be of aboriginal heritage. (3:22)

***All of us human beings* (2015)**

Je ne comprends pas pourquoi le racisme existe. Ni le mot d'ailleurs. (0:17)

I don't understand why racism exists. Neither the word.

C'est peut-être parce que le monde est constitué de personnes qui sont de religion, de culture et de couleur de peau différentes. (0:26)

It is maybe because the world is constituted of people of different religions, cultures or skin colors.

Mes grands-parents m'ont dit que nous venions tous du même endroit, que nous sommes tous issus de la même personne et que nous avons évolué de différentes façons. (0:41)

My grand-parents told me that we all come from the same place and person, but that we evolved differently.

Nous, nous sommes autochtones. Nous sommes des atikamekw. C'est vrai que nous aimons la nature. Nous ressentons que nous avons un lien privilégié avec elle. Nous aimons la chasse et la pêche. Nous sommes reconnaissants de la nourriture en ne gaspillant rien. (1:02)

Us, we are indigenous peoples. We are Atikamekw. It is true that we love nature. We feel we have a privileged link with her. We love hunting and fishing. We are thankful for food by not wasting anything.

La famille est au centre de nos vies. Elle constitue notre force et notre identité. C'est ensemble que nous célébrons les Pow-wow. Ces grandes fêtes nous permettent de souligner notre culture et notre héritage. C'est ensemble que nous allons dans les sweat lodge, quand nous avons besoin de nous ressourcer. (1:25)

Family is at the center of our lives. It constitutes our strength and our identity. It is together that we celebrate the Pow-Wows. These big parties help us remember our

culture and our heritage. It is together that we go to the sweat lodges, when we need to recover.

Oui certaines choses nous concernant sont vraies, mais nous ne sommes pas tous alcooliques et sans emploi. Nous ne vivons pas dans des tipis sans payer de taxes et d'électricité et nous ne faisons pas de troc, nous payons avec de l'argent. (1:43)

Yes, certain things concerning us are true, but we are not all alcoholics without jobs. We don't live in tipis without paying taxes and electricity and we don't barter, we pay with money.

Nous ne sommes pas des noirs, des peaux-rouges, des bruns, des mexicains ni des asiatiques, ou les autres définitions que plusieurs utilisent pour nous décrire. (1:52)

We are not Blacks, Redskins, Browns, Mexicans or Asians, nor the other definitions which many use to describe us.

Mais maintenant, je sais pourquoi le racisme existe, c'est à cause de l'ignorance. Plusieurs ne savent pas que nous venons tous du même endroit, que nous sommes tous issus de la même personne et que nous sommes avant tout des êtres humains. (2:10)

But now, I know why racism exists. It is because of ignorance. Many don't know that we all come from the same place, that we all come from the same person and that we are all human beings.

***Two Pocahontas in the city* (2015)**

J: *Kwei*, mon nom est Jemmy Echaquan Dubé. J'ai 22 ans. (0:13)

Kwei, *my name is Jemmy Echaquan Dubé. I am 22 years old.*

M-E: *Kwei*, je m'appelle Marie-Edith Fontaine et j'ai 17 ans. (0:17)

Kwei, *my name is Marie-Edith Fontaine and I am 17 years old.*

J: J'étudie en arts visuels en vue d'une carrière dans la mode. (0:21)

I am studying visual arts to pursue a career in fashion.

M-E: J'étudie en *Law, Society and Justice* pour pouvoir devenir procureure de la Couronne. (0:26)

I am studying in Law, Society and Justice *to become a Crown Attorney*.

J, M-E: Voici notre film. (0:28)

Here is our film.

J: À l'école primaire Sainte-Marie, j'étais une cible facile. Toute ma classe était contre moi et m'interdisait de jouer à certains jeux, juste parce que j'étais autochtone. (0:48)

At the Sainte-Marie primary school, I was an easy target. All my class was against me and prevented me from playing certain games, only because I was indigenous.

M-E: Les Mélèzes était ma troisième école primaire et elle était privée. J'avais environ trois amies, très gentilles et ouvertes d'esprit, et on se réunissait toujours autour d'un arbre à la récréation. J'avais à peu près le même nombre d'intimidateurs. Ils me disaient que j'étais bizarre et que je devais retourner d'où je venais, mais j'y étais déjà. (1:09)

Les Mélèzes was my third primary school and it was private. I had around three friends, very kind and open-minded, and we always gathered around a tree during recess. I had around the same amount of bullies. They told me I was weird and that I should go back to where I came from, but I was already there.

J: À Barthélémy-Joliette, beaucoup de choses avaient changé avec moi-même. Je m'affirmais plus et je ne me laissais plus faire. Des préjugés comme « il est où ton costume en peau ? » n'étaient pas offensants pour moi. Ce n'était que des mots. (1:26)

At Barthelemy-Joliette, many things had changed with myself. I affirmed myself more and defended myself. Prejudices like "where is your buckskin costume?" didn't offend me. They were just words.

M-E: À Thérèse-Martin, je ne vivais pas littéralement l'intimidation, mais plutôt le racisme et l'ignorance. J'avais quelques amis, mais j'étais pas très sociable à cause des ignorants. Un jour, quelqu'un m'a demandé si c'était vrai qu'on avait tous des gros pick-ups**.** Alors, je lui ai répondu : As-tu déjà vu ça toi un orignal sur une petite Smart qui roule dans gravel? (1:47)

At Thérèse-Martin, I didn't literally live intimidation, but rather racism and ignorance. I had a few friends, but I wasn't very social due to the ignorants. One day, someone asked me if it was true that we all had big pick-ups. I answered him: "have you ever seen a moose on a little Smart rolling in a dirt road?

J: On a tous déjà était bombardé par les stéréotypes. (1:51)

We have all been bombarded by stereotypes.

M-E: Que ce soit sur notre physique ou sur nos traditions. (1:55)

Either on our physical appearance or our traditions.

J: Aujourd'hui, on met notre sérieux à l'écart, et on va rire de ces clichés. (2:01)

Today, we put our serious aside, and we will laugh of these clichés.

M-E: On nous demande souvent si on porte encore nos habits traditionnels avec nos plumes sur la tête. Ben pourquoi pas? (2:08)

We are often asked if we still wear our traditional costumes with feathers on the head. Well, why not?

J: On nous demande de faire la danse du soleil quand il pleut, on nous demande de faire la danse de la pluie quand il fait trop chaud. On a essayé dans le centre-ville, mais ça n'a pas fonctionné. (2:28)

We are asked to do the sun dance when it rains. We are asked to do the rain dance when it's too warm. We tried downtown, but it didn't work.

M-E: Est-ce qu'on communique encore en signaux de fumée ? Disons que c'est un peu interdit dans la ville… (2:45)

Do we still communication in smoke signals? It's kind of forbidden in the city…

J: Ça devient tannant de toujours se faire demander d'échanger nos fourrures de castor contre des fourchettes. C'est parce qu'à un moment donné, ça devient lourd des fourrures de castor dans les poches ! (2:55)

It's annoying to always be asked to trade our beaver furs for forks. At some point, it's heavy to have beaver furs in the pockets!

M-E: Ben la, Jemmy, on aurait pu les transporter dans nos pick-ups… ! On a tous des pick-ups! (3:02)

Well Jemmy, we could transport them in our pick-ups. We all have pick-ups!

J: Certains sont encore stupéfaits qu'on soit pas tous dans des musées. Rendus là, y'aurait des musées à tous les coins de rue. (3:10)

Some are still surprised that we are not all in museums. At this point, there would be museums every corner.

M-E: Tout ça pour dire que, des ignorants pis des racistes y'en a partout et il va toujours y en avoir. (3:16)

All this to say, there will always be some ignorants and racists.

J: Donc, au lieu de toujours prendre leurs commentaires au sérieux, on devrait en rire, parce que c'est eux les ignorants, pas nous. On sait qui nous sommes. (3:25)

So, instead of always taking their comments seriously, we should laugh of them, because they are the ignorants, not us. We know who we are.

***Where are your feathers?* (2015)**

S: Go back to where you came from. I'm like, this is where I came from. (0:06)

S: There's Natives everywhere. (0:12)

S: You just don't know it, but they are everywhere. (0:17)

M: I have a point of view that has evolved concerning racism towards First Nations in Canada. I would say that the biggest impression was really the Oka crisis. I was 12 at that time. It was in 1990. We experienced a lot of racism. (0 :39)

B: I went to a nearby village school which was Longue Pointe. At that time, young people made a difference between those who were Quebecois and the Indigenous. (0:50)

N: When we came to Quebec in 1990, Swaneige was attacked by a little boy, I think, in the schoolyard. He threw a piece of ice at her head. It was very serious actually, and I think, she like, passed out or something. (1:07)

S: Aaaah the godamn Indians (1:09)

N: It was really bad, it was like an act of targeted violence against my sister. What I did in response to that, I started giving like little classroom teachings. I'd bring like dry meat, and spruce needles and stuff. And say this is what we put in the bottom of our tents up there in the Northwest territories. (1:37)

N: I think that there is a lot of ignorance, having worked with the public, I came into constant confrontation with stereotypes, or like, you know, "do you live in a tipi?" (1:52)

S: Or like "I've never seen a Native person" and they're like "you look normal". Well ya, Native people are normal too. (2:02)

M: It was like if we were dreamcatchers, or we brought happiness because we were indigenous. "Come on, touch the tree with me", that also happened. That was strange! The problem was that this came mostly from good intentions. It was genuine interest, but it was an interest where we were a bit objectified like folkloric objects. (2:22)

S: She was like "where are the feathers?". That was a pretty stupid question. She thought that feathers grew out of my hair. (2:34)

B: "Are you a real one", Well, yes. "But you speak so well!", Well, yes (2:41)

B: "Anyway, you don't pay for Hydro". Yes, I pay for my Hydro. "Yes, but not on your reserve". On my reserve too. We pay for it everywhere. (2:50)

B: Or the question about the cheque: "have you received your cheque yet?". Which cheque? If you have one, give it to me! (2:56)

B: "You know, if it wasn't for us, you wouldn't have progressed". I say, "If we hadn't been there, you wouldn't have survived!" (3:05)

N: I don't think all Canadians are racist. I think that it's just like a small portion of the population who are just kind of ignorant about history. (3:15)

M: To recognize the history of the First Nations, to recognize the residential schools, the reserves, the abductions of 1960s, to recognize the treatment that has been done to the Mohawks during the Oka crisis. I am not telling you what to do, to make you feel bad, but it is good you recognize those things. That they happened and continue, to have an

influence on how First Nations see themselves, and also how we relate to one another. This is how we can forward. (3:41)

S: The biggest force to say that we are not a forgotten identity is to put education and to put a clear block of our history so that not only the people that are non-Native, but also that are Native that can live in this pride, within this force, within this link of the whole nation. Then we can work together, then we can have reparation, then we can move past the colonialism. Then maybe the Native people will have a certain pride, a certain force and voice. So education! (4:23)

Correcting the chalkboard **(2012)**

Once, when I lived in town, I may have been about 8 or 9 years old, they called me a savage and that I ate anything. (1:00)

Once, we were at Mont-Laurier, a gang insulted us, saying things like "Kawish" and many other words like "savage" and insults about Indians. They called us cigarettes sellers, bridge blocker, and all those things. (1:27)

When we went to Joliette, we walked around town to buy things, a man said: "Hey Atikamekws, go back to where you came from". Then, he threw food at us. (1:47)

When we go to the movies after a school fieldtrip, a lot of people call us Kawish, and things like that. (2:08)

Also, people sometimes say bad things just because we speak Atikamekw. They think we're weird just because of our mother tongue. It's really discouraging. (2:49)

We're human like them, it hurts us too, we're not savages. (2:38)

We're all equal. (2:41)

I'm not Kawish, I don't live in a teepee. (2:44)

I'd like to say that it is fun to be Atikamekw I am proud of myself, proud to be Atikamekw. (4:04)

I am proud to be Atikamekw. (4:07)