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Contested Terrains, Inscribed Stories: Representations of Place, Community and Nature in a Rural Region

by

Lorelei Lynn Hanson 

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Canadian Studies

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and the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

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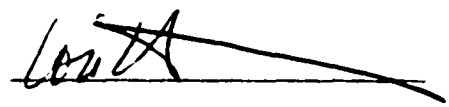

Apt. 202, 6545 – 111 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T6H 4R5

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University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Contested Terrains, Inscribed Stories: Representations of Place, Community and Nature in a Rural Region submitted by Lorelei Lynn Hanson in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Canadian Studies.

Dr. David Whitson

Dr. Debra Shogan

Dr. Hope Olson

Dr. Judith Golec

Dr. Catriona Sandilands

18 December, 2001

Abstract

The following is a theoretically driven, inductive examination of a place called the Upper Oldman River basin and the people who reside in and care about this place. It presents an examination of representations of place through an investigation of space, or more broadly, through spatialities – material, symbolic and imaginary spatial forms explicitly understood as constituted out of social relations. Drawing from the work of social/cultural theorists such as Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall and Chris Weedon, I explore how people discursively construct the spatialities in which they live, work and play, and how these constructions support and conceal understandings of particular forms of place and nature.

My knowledge of the Upper Oldman River basin arises from a case study I conducted on this region over several years in the late 1990s. In collecting and analysing my data, I combined ethnographic and grounded theory research methods with a historical research approach practised by environmental historian William Cronon. A form of social constructionism - which focuses on the intersubjective, shared constructions of meaning - informed my research strategy.

I approached my study of place from a largely poststructuralist epistemology as a means of examining the relations between language, subjectivity, social organisation, power and space. Drawing from the spatial analyses of new cultural geographers including Doreen Massey, Derek Gregory and David Sibley, I propose an understanding of place as an unfixed, contested, multiple articulation of social relations. In thinking through the ways that place is

constituted through and constitutes social relations, I examine its interconnections to community and identity. I map trajectories of place, community and identity onto the Upper Oldman River basin by presenting three different 'stories' of this place, by exploring constructs of identity and community that inform symbolic myths of this place, and by investigating spatial metaphors in order to highlight the spatial context of the lives of those who reside in and value this place. Finally, I consider how this spatial reading points to the unfixed meaning of nature and wild places, and suggests that a primary focus on defending a singular, static notion of wilderness is misdirected.

Acknowledgements

The writing of this thesis has been a long and challenging journey involving travels into unfamiliar territory. Along the way I have encountered both obstacles and fortunes, and have been the recipient of much kindness, generosity and assistance. In that context, I would like to thank a number of people who helped me find my way back to the road, gave me an arm to lean on while I stumbled, or just let me sit for awhile while I tired to rediscover my co-ordinates.

To begin with, thank you to all those folks who agreed to be interviewed and allowed to ask questions about their lives and community. You are the substance of this work and taught me much about what community, livelihood and place.

From the depths of my soul I would like to thank my supervisory committee: Dave Whitson, Debra Shogan, Judith Golec and Hope Olson. Each of you in your own insightful and caring ways helped me significantly. Dave, all your persistence, probing and careful attention to all matters administrative made me think through my ideas and the theory I was using more carefully, got me through the hoops so integral to this process with little trouble, and in the end helped me produce a work of which I could be proud. Most particularly though, I thank you for your concern and generosity when I was ill. The money you provided at that time was crucial in me continuing on and indeed in my being able to get better. Judith, your acumen and calm taught me some important lessons about both what constitutes commendable research, and personal integrity and strength. When appropriate, you provided me a shoulder to lean on, and also gave me a push when I was cowering. Hope, for being so cheerfully agreeable about coming in part way through and for your delightfully brilliant and creative ways of seeing the world, much thanks. It was icing on the cake to find you and learn of the wonders of library science. Debra, your thoughtful, kind and gentle manner provided support beyond what anyone could ever even hope for in a committee member and friend. You provided encouragement when things seemed dark and beyond resolution, suggested alternatives when all I could see were road blocks and helped me believe that not only was it possible to get this project completed but that I could do so with integrity and pride. You introduced me to ideas, theories and people who turned the process of completing a Ph.D. from a chore into tantalising possibilities. You are a rare and exceptional person and I feel honoured to have worked with you and have you as a friend. As well, thank you to Ian and Cate for the important roles you played in this process.

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Chapter One
Introduction: Preparing the Canvas

The landscapes of our making match and reflect society's cultural inscapes. Land use mirroring our North American minds, cries out for changes in attitude toward what surrounds us.

- Stan Rowe, *Home Place – Essays on Ecology*

Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell or hear told, those that we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are reworked in that story of our own lives that we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, somewhat semi-conscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue. We live immersed in narrative...

- Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot*

The landscapes we know and return to become places of solace. We are drawn to them because of the stories they tell, because of the memories they hold, or simply because of the sheer beauty that calls us back again and again.

- Terry Tempest Williams, *Refuge – An Unnatural History of Family and Place*

This thesis is framed by the intersection of ideas and methods drawn from various disciplines, as well as the convergence of my academic and activist pursuits. As a wilderness activist and student of the social sciences, I have long been interested in the confluence of critical social theory with the strategies and thinking of environmentalism. I am intrigued by the idea of nature as a social organising principle and by its on-going representation – its reading, construction, appropriation and currency through time and place as a result of interactions between individuals and groups, society and its products, and humans and the natural world. My attempt in this work has been to explore the symbolic and material significance of nature, and in so doing I have grappled with both theoretical and empirical matters, as well as dabbled in the world of stories, symbolism and myth.

More specifically, this thesis evolved out of contemplating a question posed by environmental historian William Cronon, in the controversial, *Uncommon Ground – Toward Reinventing Nature*. The question he asks is: "What happens to environmental politics, environmental ethics, and environmentalism in general once we acknowledge the deeply troubling truth that

we can never know at first hand the world 'out there' – the 'nature' we seek to understand and protect – but instead must always encounter that world through the lens of our own ideas and imaginings?"[1] Sitting amongst my activist colleagues debating the strategic implications of public demonstrations versus going to the table with government and energy representatives in light of another looming industrial development through critical grizzly habitat, I recognized that for many of them there was no obvious utility in thinking about how an antifoundational epistemology might inform the thinking and strategies of environmentalists. Many would declare this anti-essentialist way of thinking about the nonhuman world to be at cross-purposes with their own strategies and aims. Wilderness conservationists are attempting to make the case for the intrinsic value of wild areas. As a part of this pursuit, they are trying to limit the intrusion of humans into specific natural areas in a socio-economic and cultural climate in which the natural world and humanity's impact upon it are frequently dismissed, if not completely unnoticed. On the other hand, social and cultural studies theorists informed by poststructural and/or postmodern theory are interested in deconstructing essentialist claims and in questioning "grand narratives of legitimation,"[2] including that there is and ever could be one 'truthful' description of nature. I acknowledge that for many people there is a broad abyss between these two ways of knowing the world. My interest is in travelling through this abyss, as well as stopping to view the points of intersection, contradiction and negation that arise in viewing concerns commonly associated to wilderness activists through theoretical lenses informed by poststructural theory.

A proliferation of place discourse

Theoretically, this thesis can be viewed as an examination of representations of place as observed through an investigation of space, or more broadly, through spatialities – material, symbolic and imaginary spatial forms. I am interested in how people discursively construct the spatialities in which they live, work and play and how these constructions support and conceal understandings and the flourishing of particular forms of place. Further, I am intrigued to explore what these discursive constructions might suggest about the social construction of nature.

My initial interest in academic writing on place arose out of recognition of the increasing symbolic currency of the notion of place to the contemporary North American environmental movement, particularly to environmental writers.[3] It was in the course of completing my masters thesis that I was introduced to the lyrical prose and metaphors of environmental place discourse through words penned and spoken by folks interested in sustainable agriculture such as Wendell Berry,[4] Gene Logsdon[5] and Wes Jackson,[6] as well as several writers involved in ecological restoration including Stephanie Mills[7] and Stan Rowe.[8] Not long after, I noticed in the discourse of many of the wilderness activists with whom I worked the appearance of some of the terms and ideas these environmental thought writers had explored so lyrically. Although it was undoubtedly more gradual and sporadic than I perceived, it seemed to me that over the course of a couple of years, the notion of place had taken hold of the collective imagination of the

Canadian environmental movement and suddenly on bookshelves and magazine racks, and in the strategic plans of many of my wilderness colleagues there was a proliferation of environmental discourse on the importance of place: connecting to it, preserving its lessons, designing human communities around it, etc.

From a wilderness perspective, the understandings and arrangements of space are critical to conservation achievements. Whether a road in a wide montane valley is upgraded to a paved and twinned highway, or dug up and restored as a protected wildlife corridor can make the difference between the long-term ecological sustainability of an area or the extinction of species. Wilderness activists see themselves as defenders of natural places and the ecological processes within these areas, protectors of what still remains untouched by humans. Yet, by limiting the intrusion of humans into specified areas, like the politicians they lobby and the public they appeal to, wilderness activists are part of a cast of characters who are not just preserving or setting aside areas, but playing an active role in shaping the production of places. All of these individuals bring about spatial changes that affect how people interact with and understand the natural world and, ultimately each other.

My interest in place discourse was sustained beyond mere leisure reading in part because of the unease I felt about the implications of some of the social and philosophical ideas being promoted under the guise of 'place-knowledge' by environmentalists and wilderness activists. For example, I read in a great deal of environmental work about place, explicitly, but more often implicitly stated essentialisms about nature (nature as truth; nature as health; nature as purity/pristine, etc.) and humanity (culture as danger; humans as "place-centric; humans as biologically-determined) upon which are layered arguments for a diversity of species and genomes, environmentally sustainable solutions that fit the particularities of place, and ecologically and socially equitable development. It struck me that many wilderness activists are attempting to stretch people's minds to think about ecological diversity, specificity and change with respect to "natural" and particularly "wild" places, but at the same time, they want to hold on to the belief that the natural world is something which can be conclusively defined.[9] To many of them, wilderness is not just a concept it is also a place, a place that is an "indispensable aspect of organic evolution"[10], a place that possesses "authenticity, indigeneity, specificity and spontaneity, resilience and health".[11] It is not only possible to know and identify these places and to set them aside for time immemorial, it is essential.

Discursive constructions of place and space are not limited to environmental prose, however, but are now firmly established within the lexicon of popular culture and a widening circle of academic disciplines. The insistence that geography, place or the landscape matters is a position, even in the postmodern age, that many journalists, writers and artists chime loudly. In Canada, this stance often reveals itself as a statement about how the nation's citizenry are profoundly shaped by the geography of the vast and ecologically varied landscape in which they live. A mere gaze at our two national newspapers, even in spite of their emphasis on Ontario and Quebec, or works within a Canadian Studies text, will offer the reader a view that the political and economic

concerns of Canada are regional to a great extent. Where one lives in Canada affects how one sees the world. Consider for example, the words of Robert Fulford:

> History strives earnestly to teach us its enduring lessons, but in Canada geography is our real teacher, the one to which we must listen with the greatest care. It is geography which sets the tone of Canadian life just as it sets the rules of our working lives and governs our economic relations with other countries. Perhaps the Japanese can mostly ignore their own terrain; possibly Austrians can shove the geography of Austria to the margin of their national consciousness. But Canadians have no such choice. The history of our culture is the history of our attempt to come to terms imaginatively with the variety and vastness of the Canadian landscape...Its presence colours all that we do and feel; it shapes our politics, our public philosophy, our poetry and our selves.[12]

I am uncomfortable with Fulford's insinuation that the force of geography is somehow more important to Canadians than Japanese or Austrians, as well as his insistence "that we are at the mercy of our geography", as if the land is the pre-eminent determining force in every Canadian's life. Yet, I applaud his attempt to bring to the forefront the importance of place in identity formation. As a social species and as individuals, our ideas, activities and relations are affected by the places we find ourselves in, just as our understanding of those places is mediated by our sociocultural contexts.

Well beyond the spatial disciplines such as geography, planning and architecture, there is also amassing work that has been completed by scholars from various disciplines that theoretically explores socio-spatial issues and the implicit rules of exclusion and inclusion that are built into or ascribed onto the spaces between races, classes, genders, sexualities, and cultures. Within cultural studies, women's studies, queer theory and many other areas of research within the humanities and social sciences, geographical terms like boundaries, margins and mapping are in vogue metaphors for exploring a diversity of topics including sexuality, race, fashion and knowledge. It is almost as if the spatial has recently become the nexus of intense diverse cultural and theoretical activity. Certainly it has become intellectually commonplace to conceive of space and place as constitutive parts of social and cultural life.

At the same time, just as I have found troubling particular constructions of place within environmental and popular writing, likewise I have found many poststructural and cultural studies analyses of place problematic. For example, in spite of the current popularity of geographical concepts such as boundaries and mapping as analytical tools for exploring identity formation, there is a striking absence in much social and cultural theory discussing how physical and social space mediate sociocultural processes and identity formation.[13] As Barbara Ching and Gerald Creed point out, "Many recent books and articles which purport to be about "place" simply conflate the term with more fashionable components of identity, using it to argue that one must situate oneself in the nexus of class, race, gender and ethnic possibilities."[14] An examination of the domination of space in

the critique of the hegemonic culture begs questions such as who is excluded and who is welcomed into a place and how are these prohibitions maintained in spatial form and social practice?

Hence, I have found problematic many creative and insightful works by authors who use spatial metaphors to motivate their poststructural ideas but who ultimately treat space as if it is an indifferent mass or human artefact, almost as if they have forgotten that there are parts of the world that impinge on our ideas and actions that are not entirely of our own making. As geographer David Sibley points out, it is still the case that many spatial analyses would benefit greatly from ideas and analyses drawn from the social sciences and humanities, just as many social problems likewise can be profitably spatialised.[15] In accordance, situating oneself both physically and socially is an important aspect of cultural awareness and political resistance. There are important differences between physical spaces, imaginary spaces and symbolic spaces and whatever the topic of concern, it is important that some attention be given to sorting out these spatial factors. I am not arguing the case for material versus symbolic primacy or vice versa, but rather suggesting the need to be constantly aware of the interplay of spatialities, or cognisant of the different kinds and understandings of space informing and being informed by social practices.

Representations of place and nature

In this thesis I explore representations of nature and place using a largely poststructuralist epistemology. In stating my epistemological orientation, I am not arguing that poststructuralism is the only or even the best way to examine and understand place, space and nature. The term poststructuralism applies to a range of theoretical positions that vary considerably in their political implications. This is in part because, as Judith Butler and Joan Scott point out, poststructuralism does not constitute a defined position, but rather, is a critical interrogation of the exclusionary operations by which positions are established.[16] I recognize that not all forms of poststructuralism are equally useful in exploring the social construction of place and nature, but I do believe that many provide a means for examining relations between language, subjectivity, social organization and power. As such, poststructuralism offers a useful perspective for understanding the stability and fragility of social structures and processes (discursive amongst them) that justify and protect particular ways of interacting with space and by extension, the natural world.

For some, poststructuralism and its theoretical cousin postmodernism represent a theoretical crisis. They are seen as questioning the certainty, coherence and accumulation of knowledge and this practice is viewed as inevitably spiralling into social relativism.[17] I do not agree. Rather, I believe that the use of poststructural theory can highlight the competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organising social institutions and processes,[18] and in this sense it has much to offer in terms of environmental analysis. On many fronts, wilderness activism pushes the edges of Western industrial, consumer-oriented society by challenging the use and representation of nature predominantly as a resource for human consumption. However, I believe that

wilderness activism would benefit from a more critically engaged socio-cultural analysis. Those of us who are a part of this environmental movement need to be more than mimicking in a new way old patterns of cultural domination, hierarchy and oppression.

For me the 'deconstructive' intellectual ideas contained within poststructuralism provide some useful tools for such critical social analysis. For example, many poststructural analyses demonstrate how thinking about representations of the world as having a predetermined label, so that it is just a matter of articulating or deciphering that label, represents a failure to acknowledge the interactivity and embodiment that we have as humans in the world. It is humans who decide how to represent pieces of the world, rather than the things themselves coming with pre-established labels. Everything we know as humans about the world is a result of our interactions with and connections to that world. As Derek Gregory and Rex Walford suggest, "our texts are not mirrors which we hold up to the world, reflecting its shapes and structures immediately and without distortion. They are instead, creatures of our own making, though their making is not entirely of our own choosing."[19]

Further, as an activist I have been excited by and intrigued to borrow methods and approaches from postructuralism because it provides one way to take seriously the popular culture of wilderness activism and writing, and to, as bell hooks explains in her introduction to *Outlaw Cultures*,[20] link academic intellectual practice with radical politicisation. As Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren discuss in the introduction to *Between Borders: Pedagogy and the Politics of Cultural Studies*,[21] "cultural studies combines theory and practice in order to affirm and demonstrate pedagogical practices engaged in creating a new language, rupturing disciplinary boundaries, decentering authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes agency, power and struggle."

Arrangements of space function to identify, conceal, control, provide opportunity and exclude ideas, people, other critters and other conceptualisations of society and nature. The defence of social space has its counterparts in the defence of regions of knowledge. Power relations that determine the boundaries of that knowledge and exclude threatening ideas and authors condition what constitutes knowledge. Power is exercised also through the process of creating and inscribing meaning onto places at both a very personal, immediate level, and in broader, more distant societal forms. For example, the process of deciding what constitutes wilderness worth protecting is never only a matter of fulfilling a list of biophysical factors, but is also enveloped in a morass of sociocultural factors that necessarily beg questions such as: Who is more easily able to exercise power? How are the boundaries determined, and who and what is excluded and included? Who benefits and who is negatively impacted? And what alternative possibilities are shut out?

I acknowledge that for many wilderness activists contemplating such matters not only seems like a futile exercise, but also potentially dangerous. To suggest that wilderness, something that seems so blatantly about nature in its most obvious form, could reveal more about human culture than the natural world seems only to lead into an anthropocentric roadblock. After all, isn't discovering

the meaning and essence of wilderness about lifting the cultural veils, not reapplying them? How can wilderness parks be established if natural places never can be clearly delineated from culture? What do wilderness activists represent if it isn't undefiled nature? In a society characterised by consumption and greed, how can reflecting on human artifice help protect tracts of land from further human encroachment?

The case being made is not to deny the importance of nature as playing a crucial role in our environmental stories, but rather to extend the parameters of the ways in which we understand how discourse, experience and social context influence our interpretations of natural places. I think that many of the concerns and issues raised by wilderness activists are crucial questions that deserve thoughtful responses and on-going negotiation and dialogue. On the other hand, is it possible that some of the more fundamental assumptions that underlie wilderness conservation, including what counts as nature and place, are likewise in need of rethinking? Is it possible that a more socially critical understanding of nature might enhance our efforts to protect 'wild places' in ways that are not only more expedient and ecologically sustainable in the long term, but more just and humane? In a movement that is typified by crisis, is there room for shifting ground, for imagining a different world, or for constructing the conservation discourse in alternative ways?

A community case study

As a study of one place, the work in front of you is principally a case study of a rural community in south-western Alberta. I chose to integrate empirical research about one place into what is largely a theoretically motivated piece of research because it seemed important to me to anchor or test abstract theoretical ideas by looking at their application to actual places and circumstances. So although at one level this thesis is a theoretical endeavour focused on the abstract, on another level the goal has been to discuss some of the spatial and social relations occurring in a specific place, a place I refer to as the Upper Oldman River basin.

The Upper Oldman River basin is geographically situated in south-western Alberta, bordered to the south by Waterton Lakes National Park, the Peigan Reserve in the east, the Whaleback montane to the north, and in the west the Continental Divide (the Alberta - British Columbia border) and the Crowsnest Pass (see Figure 1). The Upper Oldman River basin covers an area of approximately 4000 square kilometres and is home to approximately 6000 humans as well as many other critters who enjoy plain and alpine natural regions including the grizzly bear, golden eagle, cougar, mountain goat and burrowing owl. The region can be described generally as windy territory where the Canadian prairie collides with the Rocky Mountains. Approaching from the east, one gains a panoramic view of the sharp, striated peaks of the Rockies, bordered by an undulating thin green and tan ribbon of gentle ridges and valleys that quickly level out into vast, golden, till plains which stretch east into Manitoba. Along the northern-eastern edge of the region lie the Porcupine Hills, an unglaciated plateau that rises abruptly from the plains to an elevation of over 1600

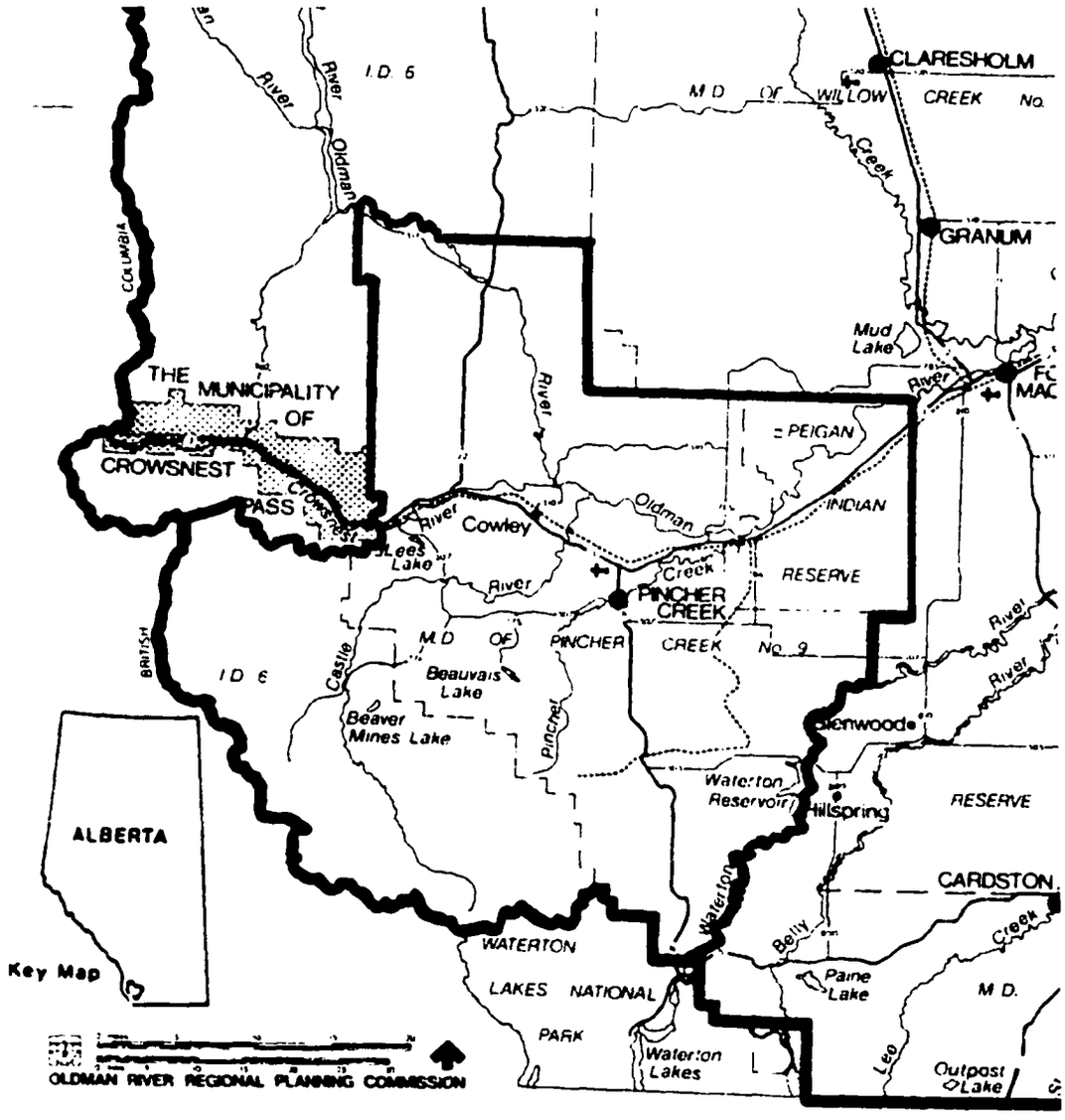

Figure 1: The Upper Oldman River Basin
Source: Oldman River Region Regional Planning Commission, *Oldman River Region Regional Plan* (Lethbridge, AB: n.p., Sept. 1984) n.p.

metres and extends over 100 kilometres north.

In Canada there is a strong tradition, particularly in Eastern Canada, of research on specific geographic communities and my research was greatly influenced by the case studies of several of the Canadian sociologists and anthropologists who have undertaken such research. Studies such as Gerald Pocius' *A Place to Belong – Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*,[22] James Faris' *Cat Harbour - A Newfoundland Fishing Settlement*[23] and Paul Voisey's *Vulcan*[24] (Alberta) were guides to my own research, demonstrating to me how the mundane was telling and significant. They also provided ample comparative material about other communities that allowed me to see more clearly what made the Upper Oldman River region both representative of small, rural communities and unique. Although I think it would be a mistake to depict my research as a traditional ethnographic case study, many of the methods employed by ethnographic researchers were tools I utilised in conducting my own research. I borrowed quite extensively from the research approaches used in these case studies to inform both the research methods I employed and the final account I have written.

Another of the approaches I attempted to mirror to some extent was a historical research method practised and articulated by Cronon.[25] To study place in the sense that Cronon does is to explore the social relations fostered in those places. Mapping out the geography of gender, class and race and the many other ways people divide themselves is essential to understanding the ways in which they define, experience and impact the landscape. According to Cronon, it is important to embed people and their communities in abstract theoretical processes, but without losing sight of what it was like to live through these processes. The historian must always move back and forth between the nitty-gritty details of ordinary life and the larger meaning that people attribute to these activities.

Yet, while this thesis is a story about a community that inhabits a place called the Upper Oldman River basin, and it does build upon an historical story of this region, this is not a piece of historical research. Instead, my attempt has been to undertake a case study that combines elements of critical ethnographic research, Cronon's historical approach and theoretical ideas proposed by poststructuralists, cultural studies scholars, feminists and others. However, be the focus on events of the past century or the past half-decade, my attempt has always been to foreground the natural environment, most specifically to highlight one rural place, that being the Upper Oldman River basin. I have tried to illustrate how this place was integral to the human history of the area, just as that human history created this place.

Stories told about a place

As I have tried to understand this place and the people who have inhabited its vast grasslands, majestic mountains and montane woodlands, I also have searched for the paths out of the area - the connections between this particular rural place and the rest of the world, and to the circumstances that constructed it. I have used the Upper Oldman River basin as a means of exploring the changes

contemporary rural western communities are undergoing and what and how these changes determine, support or exclude future conceptions and formations of place, space and nature. In focusing my research on one community, my attempt has been to explore some of the ways in which this particular place is constructed, imagined and lived in, but also how these perceptions pass into the cultural repertoire of meanings, and how wider, social values and processes impact upon the stories people tell about this place.

The human history of the Upper Oldman River basin can be read as a series of stories that highlight different characters, events and time periods. Taken as a collective, the stories reveal a good deal about the material realities of the lives of people, but also much about the symbolic, the imaginative, the desired, and the reinvented. No one account, be it from a primary or secondary source, explains completely the Upper Oldman River region's past and, as I will show particularly in chapter four, discrepancies occur between and within the narratives. Each presents a 'differential positioning' of the storyteller, the characters in the stories and the places where the stories are set. Yet, there are also many threads that weave these stories together.

When I began interviewing people who lived in the region, I was hoping that many of those I talked with would provide specific details, perhaps even dates of major events and the names of people who were involved in memorable community activities. Much to my naïve surprise, aside from the curator at the local museum, asking the residents about the history of the area did not supply me with a chronology of the Upper Oldman River basin's history nor did many of these individuals make connections between local events and activities occurring elsewhere. What I did receive were snippets of stories about people and events tied to particular places, stories that were premised on certain assumptions and confidences. Perhaps the most pronounced of these assumptions was that these people belonged to and were a part of this place, in short that they "identified with this place" whether they lived there permanently or not. Particularly in chapters four, five and six, I have tried to present a few of these sometimes connected, sometimes disparate, stories of belonging.

However, as I listened to and read more stories about this place, I started to draw connections between these personal stories about living in the Upper Oldman River basin and the larger story of this place as one of many of the rural areas that make up both the Canadian and Rocky Mountain West. In the Canadian and American West one of the most persistent and inspiring stories is that of 'winning the West'. This is a story about conquest and promise, progress and risk, and a frontier of unlimited natural resources there for the taking by hard-working, tenacious and self-reliant men. This is a story that has been reproduced over the past century in movies, literature and song and that in the contemporary Upper Oldman River basin can be seen best acted out at rodeos and cowboy poetry gatherings.

It is also clear that many of the current dominant stories we tell as a society about the Canadian West are incomplete. In the stories of First Nations, one is introduced to stories of displacement, genocide and betrayal that accompanied the stories of conquest. In the writings and histories of women on

the prairies one is introduced to the isolation, community and abuse which offset the stories of independent cowboys out on the range. In the accounts of explorers, trappers and ecologically-minded settlers, we read accounts of the extinction of species, the replacement of sustainable indigenous grasses with European hybrids, drought, the damming of rivers and the loss of topsoil. All of these stories are not new.

One way of reading the current politics of the West is as an attempt by new social movements like feminism, First Nations and environmentalism to retell the stories that are still dominant in the West. For example, the stories many wilderness activists tell can be read as struggles to create "rhetorical space"[26] for a discourse about a nature endowed with intrinsic value. Obviously what is at stake here are more than just stories in the pejorative use of the term. The stories, be they about the West or nature, are in some sense about knowledge – ways of knowing, normative claims about what is right, authentic and 'true', ways of behaving in the world that are considered acceptable, and ways of reinventing our understandings and our reasons for doing things. The stories are ways of identifying places and the people and communities who live in and interact with these places.

Community and identity

In both my readings in environmental thought and in my activities as a wilderness advocate, I have heard repeatedly about the importance of community. Many environmentalists see community as the place where respect for the natural world will be nurtured and put into practice. In order for the movement to be successful in the long-term, a respect for nature must arise not only out of each individual self gaining the capacity to be personally and directly responsible for the fate of each other and the non-human world around them, but it must also be translated into shared visions and collective efforts. The building of healthy, ecologically sustainable communities makes sense in this context.

In a more politically strategic and short-term sense, communities have been of interest to wilderness activists because of the role they have played in opening or shutting the door to new ecologically deleterious developments. For example, in development, resource management and environmental impact assessment hearings, restrictions and regulations have been created to limit the number of people who testify at these public events, and to restrict who can receive intervenor funding to conduct studies on aspects of the development. Commonly, one of the principal criteria for obtaining money and being allowed to participate in such hearings is based on whether you are an individual who is 'directly affected' by the development, someone who is considered part of the community of concern. Obviously, being a part of the community in this sense provides certain privileges – money, a forum to voice one's opinion and legitimisation for one's point of view. To wilderness activists, these are all crucial factors to consider in designing strategies to set aside untrammelled pieces of nature. Working with the communities affected, developing community plans and speaking to community issues and ideals are key to environmental success.

There is a tendency to see or speak of communities as if they are fixed, as if the boundaries and characteristics of community are given static forms or permanent physical markers that define communal structures for time immemorial. While many communities have a physical form in that they are located in a particular space (whether that space is defined geographically or electronically), how we describe communities and the meanings we attribute to that form are culturally, historically and socially circumscribed. Communities are ever changing, both in a symbolic and material sense, and it is worth examining how these changes affect the social and natural worlds. Residency in a place often implies membership in a community and understanding the social relations that create, nurture and threaten a community is an integral component of understanding place as spaces that are lived in, contested, stolen, mourned and celebrated.

Further, just as communities can provide opportunities and be places of celebration, communion and support, communities can also be places of subordination and oppression, penalising and limiting differences. For many individuals, 'community' is an empty term, an idealised concept of something that never was or will be. A close examination of the concept quickly reveals that like nature and place, the word community often is used as fluid metaphor for a host of variously defined general ideas, beliefs, opinions, intuitions, urges and practices. As discursive constructions, these concepts of community establish boundaries that are intended to protect, restrain and enable not only individuals from leaving or entering, but likewise ideas, political beliefs and lifestyle choices. Therefore, as much as the concept of community can be inviting, bringing into discussions ideas about caring and security, it is important to consider all, good and bad, that is enveloped by reference to community.

As a rural community, the Upper Oldman River basin is a place marked by its traditions and also by its transformations. Like most rural communities in Canada, the Oldman basin has undergone rapid change in recent years. Environmental policy, technological developments, commodification of the countryside, agricultural restructuring and the influx of new residents has pushed the boundaries of this place. Like many other "last great spots" in the Rocky Mountain West, the Oldman watershed faces the very real possibility of being transformed from primarily a place of agricultural production into one of primarily consumption in the form of leisure, tourism and recreation. As the spatial division between the urban and rural increasingly is blurred in this neck of the country, new conflicts are arising, conflicts that sometimes are bringing the ranchers and environmentalists in odd agreement with each other.

Like the concept of place, I have explored community as a metaphorical/ symbolic/ imaginary notion as well as an on-going practice/engagement/set of social relations in one locality. The intent has been to explore the material and symbolic elements associated with community by teasing out the contradictions and nuances of this value-laden term, and to marry that with an examination of political/economic factors. In particular, within the context of a rural case study of the Upper Oldman River basin, I tried to explore the relationship between community and place. What are people trying to capture when they package these

two terms together? What do place and community have in common with one another and what elisions are taking place with this coupling? How has this community and place changed over time in a conceptual, experiential and material sense?

In examining the interactions between people and space, I also found myself looking at ways in which identity is impacted by and informs spatial relations. An examination of the relationship between place and identity evokes questions about the ways people cognitively map their position in the world, how spaces enable and limit certain identities, and the relationship between margins and centres. I argue against an essentialised notion of identity in which, for example, one might assume that a woman's concern for the natural world is connected to their 'innate' nurturing ability, or that true environmentalists have a strong sense of place whereas suburbanites do not. Yet, I also want to suggest as Michael Keith and Steve Pile have, that distinct, irreconcilable understandings of space underscore the mappings of the contemporary politics of identity.[27] Our notions of and activities in place inform our sensibilities of our place in the world, just as our sense of identity plays a role in how we conceptualise, experience and interact within space.

Describing the map

What follows is a theoretically driven and inductive examination of a place called the Upper Oldman River basin and the people who reside in and care about this place. I begin with a discussion of my methodology – my epistemological orientation and the methods of data collection and analysis I used. The third chapter provides the theoretical context that framed my research. These are the tools for my analysis of place, space, nature, community and identity that are the central concerns of the remainder chapters.

Chapter four presents three stories about the Upper Oldman River basin, stories that trace the social and spatial trajectories of people across the Basin. These chapters are intended to provide the spatial, historical and social context of the study as they offer three representations of this place and the community that has inhabited this space. Separately, some might read them as three different, yet in some respects overlapping chronologies of the Oldman basin. Taken together, what I intended they illustrate is what Doreen Massey calls "the momentary coexistence of trajectories, a configuration of a multiplicity of histories all in the process of being made."[28] Our representations of a place and negotiations through that space are pluralistic, sometimes they intersect and connect but other times they completely veer off in different directions. In this sense, the stories in chapter four very purposefully are presented and written so that they do not provide a singular story but rather unsettle that very order.

The discussion of identity in chapter five addresses questions of 'human agency' - "of the powers and capabilities of human beings"[29]- within a spatial context. In chapter five I examine the ways in which individuals often construct themselves to be coherent, stable subjects and see their experiences as providing them access to the truth about themselves and the places where they live. I explore how some individuals in the Oldman Basin construct their sense of self as

bound to both specific spaces, and to a collective, mythical narrative about ranchers. Finally, I look at how identity is defined in oppositional positioning to 'others'– (the agriculturist versus the environmentalist, the rancher versus the farmer, the Natives versus the whites) and is inherently unstable.

Chapter six explores three broadly defined representations of space and place. Building on material from chapters three, four and five, I highlight the 'hidden geography' of the social trajectories that I discussed in the previous chapters in order to explore spatial representations as locally specific, spatial orderings. I am interested in how discursive constructions of space and place find expression as concrete forms, institutional policies and socio-economic arrangements and how these forms in turn reaffirm and reproduce spatial and other social discourses.

The conclusions constitute the substance of chapter seven. This chapter not only provides a short summary of the thesis, weaving together identity, community and space and place, but also brings the discussion back to an examination of what the representations of place and space indicate about social constructions of nature.

Chapter Two
Methods: A Case Study of the Upper Oldman River Basin

> *For me, there is no way the world is; and so of course no description can capture it. But there are many ways the world is, and every true description captures one of them...If I ask about the world, you can offer to tell me how it is under one or more frames of reference; but if I insist that you tell me how it is apart from all frames, what can you say? We are confined to ways of describing whatever is described. Our universe, so to speak, consists of these ways rather than of a world or of worlds.*
>
> - Nelson Goodman, 1960

> *Why should our bodies end at skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin?*
>
> - Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and the Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century."

Introduction: the research directives

The central and ancillary questions guiding my research are as follows: What kinds of place are being invoked through spatial discourse? In exploring this question, more specifically I explore the kinds of spatialities being produced and ask: What is included or excluded from these spatial representations? Who benefits and who is negatively impacted? And what alternative spatialities are disabled or silenced?

How do community and identity inform discursive constructions of space and place?

What, if anything, can these spatial representations indicate about the social construction of nature?

In pursuit of answers to these questions, I undertook a study that broadly speaking falls under the general heading of qualitative research. In leafing through the pages of many qualitative research texts, I read the expression of considerable contradiction, variance and tension, but also a thread that connects much of this research and many of these researchers, be it simply in what they are reacting against, or that for which they strive. Tensions and common threads are likewise found in discussions and critiques about what constitutes a case study,

ethnography, poststructuralism, and discourse analysis – research strategies I relied on extensively in my study. It seems appropriate, therefore, to clarify my own research approach.

In this chapter I will provide a detailed description of the research process I was engaged in within a much broader discussion of qualitative and case research as they pertain to my exploration of representations of space and place.

A question of case

I felt it necessary to limit the focus of my research to one case study site to allow for more in-depth exploration and analysis of the concepts of place and community. I chose the Upper Oldman River basin as my case study site for both practical and methodological reasons. The Upper Oldman River basin is a place that has been the focus of more than half a century of environmental conflict. Four of the largest environmental controversies that occurred in the area include: concern over the health effects to humans and cattle from sour gas emissions associated with natural gas processing plants and flaring in the area; the siting and construction of the Oldman River Dam on the Three Rivers site just north of Pincher Creek; the possible drilling for gas in the Whaleback, the largest remaining intact montane region in Alberta; and the development of an all-season resort in the Castle Wilderness area, an important wildlife corridor. This is a region where for decades people have given considerable thought to what makes this place unique and important, and what kinds of activities should be going on in this place.

In addition to choosing this locality because of on-going environmental conflicts, I selected the Upper Oldman River basin as my case study site because of my familiarity with the area. My knowledge of the Basin began when I participated in a witness camp aimed at raising attention about the detrimental impacts that would result from drilling a gas well in the Whaleback, public land that borders the region's northern edge. Through this event I became acquainted with a number of residents from the region. Following this, I was asked to help out with a community development project in the Oldman basin, and shortly thereafter, offered a job co-ordinating a health promotion research project which focused on the area. All of these factors combined, as well as the need for employment while I was conducting my case research, led to my choice of the Upper Oldman River basin as my case study site.

Using the word 'case' implies particularity but also alleges that the case has generality in that it is a case of something larger, and hence comparisons can be made and collectivities formed. To speak of my research as case research implies that I can delineate the boundaries of this research and that I can speak to the matter of what this research 'is a case of'. Providing details about these matters speaks to important issues concerning the research process and results by bringing to the forefront epistemological and methodological questions regarding how the researcher knows what she knows and how she produces the results. In the introduction to the book, *What is a Case?*, co-editor Charles Ragin constructs what he calls a conceptual map, which illustrates four different ways

of thinking about what constitutes a case. As Table 1 illustrates, Ragin believes that one has to decide whether or not the case is composed of empirical units or theoretical constructs, and then, whether these are understood to be general or specific. The dichotomy distinguishing between empirical units and theoretical constructs illustrates a debate common in discussions of social science methodology over the differences between realism and nominalism. A nominalist sees cases as theoretical constructs that are created to conform to theories or conventions as they serve the interests of the researcher. In contrast, a realist believes cases to be either given or empirically discoverable. The second dichotomy concerns the generality of the case study: is it specific and developed over the course of the study, or is the case general and external to the research process?

In considering Ragin's quadrant, my study largely fits in the nominalist-specific corner. Yet, for practical reasons, I utilised several empirical units that are often treated as if they are 'objectively real' and bounded, and require no discussion of their construction. For example, at a glance, one might conceive this thesis as a case study of a particular locality, the Upper Oldman River basin, that I largely delineate by using political boundary references and describe in ecological terms. I utilise these descriptors because I find them to be practically useful, but equally as important because they are the vernacular used by many with whom I have spoken and hence of considerable symbolical currency. However, all the time I tried to keep in mind that these are conventions. Similarly, as my discussion of community in chapter six will illustrate, how the locality is defined, what constitutes a community, and who is a member of that community were topics all possessing a plurality of meanings. While individuals spoke of these terms as if they were unproblematic and consensus had been reached about their definition, a comparison of the discourse of those with whom I spoke reveals considerable variation of opinion on these matters. Similarly, a quick review of this topic in academic literature and the popular press reveals a gamut of views both on the definition of community and its normative value. More importantly, Ragin's conceptual map encourages the reader to think about the different ways in which they may have conceptualised case and how these cases are a part of the work's overall rhetoric.[1] As Ragin points out, most research involves the use of multiple forms of cases.[2] Ragin speaks of the process of determining what a qualitative research project is a case of as a process of moving through an integrated series of questions. First, the researcher must determine the relation of ideas to evidence. Then they pinpoint and demonstrate the theoretical significance of several concepts to determine what theoretical construct(s) are represented or emerge in the research material. Finally they consider the comparisons that can be made between their own projects and others.[3] I would add that the definition of what a case study such as mine represents is in part dependent upon who the reader is and what particular reading she applies to the text and data. Some of the more likely reads of what my study is a case of might include: a rural community which like many in the Rocky Mountain West is in the midst of economic transition; a recent and ongoing site of

Table 1
Conceptual Map for Answers to 'What is a Case?'

Understanding of cases	Case conceptions	
	Specific	General
As empirical units (realism)	1. Cases are found	2.Cases are objects
As theoretical constructs (nominalist)	3. Cases are made	4. Cases are conventions

Source: Charles Ragin, "Introduction: Cases of 'What is a Case?'" *What is a Case? - Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Eds. Charles. C. Ragin and Howard. S. Becker (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 9.

environmental conflict; competing perceptions of place, nature, identity and community; and, the influence of place on human experience and conversely the impact of human activities on the natural world.

The account I initially planned to tell was a contemporary one about different perceptions of place, space and community as articulated and acted upon by various communities of people within one locality. However, in trying to make sense of the many stories, metaphors and referents I heard and read, I found myself scouring through history texts for greater understanding. In the end the story I tell is primarily a contemporary one, but to fully understand the current perspectives, ideals and actions of the human characters and the state of the natural world, I discovered that a historical context was also required. Hence, I explored the ways in which local méntalities are historical evolutions by searching through local archive materials (materials on display at the local museum and nearly a century of weekly editions of the region's newspaper, *The Pincher Creek Echo)*, and theoretical or historical discussions which demonstrated or discussed how current local, western Canadian and rural practices, attitudes and social structures have emerged out of earlier ones. Meanings are not fixed or immutable, rather they are socially, circumstantially and historically variable, but current notions often have strings to past ideas and

beliefs, and so this material provided a much needed context for developing a better understanding of more current perspectives.

It was in this context that I turned to the historical research method practised and articulated by William Cronon. Cronon's historical method provides stories about specific places that carry the reader "back and forth across a boundary between people and nature to reveal just how culturally constructed the boundary is - and how dependent upon natural systems it remains."[4] His aim, which in many ways mirrors the intent of many ethnographic researchers, is to use the specific place he studies to illuminate the connections to other places and other times, and to explore how environmental change relates to other changes in human societies. He accomplishes this task by integrating in his research the study of three broad elements: "the ecology of people as organisms sharing the universe with many other organisms, the political economy of people as social beings reshaping nature and one another to produce their collective life, and the cultural values of people as storytelling creatures struggling to find the meaning of their place in the world."[5] The stories that result from his analysis are not only insightful examinations of specific places and times, but richly detailed stories of humanity's connections to the natural world.

Constructing a bricolage: a general orientation

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Sociology*, "Qualitative methods are ways of studying the qualities of everyday life, from life's actions and narratives, to its signs, circumstances and sense of reality."[6] The term qualitative research is applied to a wide array of research perspectives and interpretive practices, and there is no one theory or distinct set of methods that is entirely its own. Nonetheless, much of this work is also connected by a broad commitment to a naturalistic perspective and an interpretive understanding of human experience, features that have remained characteristic of this form of inquiry. Historically, in sociology at least, one can trace this approach to Max Weber's concept of 'Verstehen', which involved an empathetic and intimate understanding of the behaviour of a social actor in terms of his interpretive meaning and motives.[7] While Weber saw positivists as avoiding metaphysical impulses and subjective meanings, he outwardly revelled in them. For Weber, concrete reality was not that which is out there, independent of the people speaking of it, but rather, reality was an individual's contextualized experience of his negotiated social world.

Many contemporary qualitative researchers are less confident than Weber was about the degree of empathy a researcher can sustain, the formality of the method required to explore social meaning construction, and more fundamentally, differ in their ontological and epistemological presuppositions. Yet, Weber's influence is still evident in varying degrees in most forms of qualitative inquiry. Consider John Cresswell's characterisation of qualitative researchers as "interested in *meaning* – how people make sense of their lives, experiences and their structures of the world."[8] While Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln see the production of knowledge as socially and historically situated, and the researchers as interpreters possessing certain observational and other research

skills but not necessarily endowed with special insight, they nonetheless also stress an interpretive approach. In their words:

> Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials - case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts - that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand.[9]

An illuminating and descriptive analogy used by many[10] to describe qualitative researchers depicts them as 'bricoleurs' employing emergent, pragmatic, strategic approaches and utilising multiple methods and materials to produce a complex, reflexive, collage-like 'bricolage' of the phenomenon under study. Practitioners of qualitative inquiry often characterise the research process they are engaged in by what it is not. It is not a mechanical process nor a routine involving a series of motions that can be to be taught to each prospective qualitative researcher and just repeated. The reason for this largely is due to the pragmatic nature that this form of inquiry requires, precluding the development of any general formulae or recipes. By piecing together and integrating sets of research practices, the researcher is able to provide solutions to the concrete problems she encounters in the field, all the time working on creating a detailed, vibrant picture of the research subject. Mastery of qualitative research becomes possible then only through close analyses of appropriate exemplary studies, combined with on-going reflection about and engagement in the research process.[11]

In an overview of the evolution of qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln illustrate how the multiple meanings and practices used by qualitative researchers are in part a consequence of the many histories which surround each method or strategic approach.[12] According to Denzin and Lincoln, the history of qualitative research can be divided into five historical moments: the traditional (1900 – 1950), the modernist phase (1950 - 1970), blurred genres (1970 – 1986), the crisis of representation (1986 – 1990) and the postmodern or present moment (1990 to present).[13]

Each historical period is loosely associated with a set of interpretive perspectives and research strategies. For example, in the traditional period, qualitative researchers like Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and Bronislaw Malinowski were concerned with producing valid, reliable and objective accounts of foreign cultures. This was the period of the 'Lone Ethnographer,' the larger than life figure who ventured to distant lands and returned with stories of 'strange' people. The dense, descriptive accounts produced by these classic

ethnographers were structured according to four beliefs: a commitment to objectivism, a complicity with imperialism, a belief that they were supposed to create a museum-like picture of the culture they studied, and a belief in timelessness.

In contrast, in the postmodern or present moment, a crisis of legitimation has consumed many qualitative researchers. The direct link between experience and the text has been problematised, and the traditional criteria (validity, generalisability and reliability) for evaluating and interpreting qualitative research questioned and in some cases rejected. Heavily influenced by postructuralism and postmodernism, the search for grand narratives has been replaced by local, small-scale narratives that describe specific problems and situations. The latter best describes the type of inquiry I have conducted.

While qualitative research has undergone a general evolution in terms of the appearance of new epistemological commitments and research strategies, it is not the case that the more recent vintages of this form of inquiry have replaced their predecessors. Rather, the five historical moments operate simultaneously. As such, the field has burgeoned to include everything from researchers like Mathew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman who state: "...given the fact that words are slippery, ambiguous symbols, the possibility of researcher *bias* looms quite large; we must be concerned with the *reliability* of qualitative analyses,"[14] to Jane Flax who argues against truth claims as the road to freedom and justice. In her words: "We need to learn to make claims on our own and others' behalf and to listen to those who differ from ours, knowing that ultimately there is nothing that justifies them beyond each person's own desire and the discursive practices in which these are developed, embedded and legitimated."[15]

As a broad interpretive practice, qualitative research encompasses multiple theoretical paradigms and epistemological frameworks and is often seen as not privileging any particular methodology over another. In this sense, the umbrella of qualitative research might aptly be viewed as a web that ties together a composition of research styles, as well as foundational assumptions. However, let me qualify this characterisation by suggesting that too often people use the term qualitative research rather loosely, failing to recognize that the term means much more than simply a focus on description rather than variable analysis.

In their book, *Critical Theory and Methodology*,[16] Ray Morrow and Dave Brown argue that much of the contemporary discourse on sociological methods mistakenly constructs a distinction between quantitative/qualitative methods which focuses on techniques (empirical precision versus theory development), rather than examining the ontological commitments which underlie the analytical strategies that really separate these two research approaches. According to Morrow and Brown, the substantive axis a researcher must consider is not about an alignment regarding empiricism, but rather how social reality is represented within the research: has he provided an *intensive* account focussing on individual explication or comparative generalisations, or an *extensive* research-oriented correlational account of the phenomenon under study? There is no predetermined incompatibility between an intensive research approach with its focus on

explicating social structure and process and the utilisation of techniques of quantification, nor of the integration of macrostructural (e.g., social classes) and sociocultural (e.g., sites of social agency and institutional reproduction) data. The incongruity is in using statistical causal analysis of an observed set of variables as a tool for theoretical inquiry, a matter that is sometimes overlooked in qualitative research texts.[17]

In my own case, while I have been eclectic and pragmatic in my use of research methods, nonetheless I have utilised an intensive research approach as a tool for theoretical inquiry. Following the tradition of bricoleur, my research approach includes traces of the traditional Verstehen roots of qualitative methods, a research strategy grounded in critical ethnography and a guiding ontological/epistemological position informed by the writings of theorists such as Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall and Chris Weedon. While in chapter three I will discuss some of Hall and Foucault's ideas and how they contribute to my thinking and research approach, I will at this point speak to the influence of Weedon's work on feminist poststructuralism in terms of the project I undertook.

Feminist poststructural epistemology is characterised by Chris Weedon as a theory of knowledge that examines the relations between language, subjectivity, social organisation and power.[18] Weedon admits that not all forms of poststructuralism are necessarily productive for feminism. There are feminist issues and questions that poststructuralism is not very effective at addressing, questions that need to be answered using other forms of feminist theory. Nonetheless, poststructuralism provides a useful framework for examining the mechanisms of power in society and possibilities for change.[19] For example, it is able to provide an understanding of many of the existing conditions women encounter in their daily lives such as workplace inequality, and what strategies they might use to overcome these injustices.

Central to a poststructural orientation are two concepts: discourse and subjectivity. A concern with discourse directs attention to the ways in which representation is a site of struggle and potential change. An underlying premise of the analysis of discourse is the belief that representation (be that in oral, printed, visual or any other form) is not transparent and does not simply reflect or describe the real world but is constitutive. From a Foucauldian perspective this means that discourse is historically and socially specific. A focus on subjectivity (our sense of ourselves, and our understanding in relation to the rest of the world) decentres humanist discourse of the individual as a wholly rational, conscious and coherent self. Instead, subjectivity and consciousness are seen as produced through discourse. Hence, subjectivity is not fixed and unified but the product of society, culture and history, and it shifts according to the discursive field in which it is constituted. So as Weedon points out, discourses and the subjectivities they produce represent political interests and therefore a constant site of battle for status and power.[20]

Applied to a study of place and community, Weedon's discussion of feminist poststructuralism points to the importance of examining power, discourse and subjectivity in understanding spatialities. Discourses about place offer

competing ways of giving meaning to the world and as such are important sites of political struggle. These discourses are governed by historically specific social factors and forms of power and in turn they provide for a range of subjectivities, subjectivities that affect the conception of the possibilities for change in this place. So for example, if the future of a place like the Upper Oldman River basin is envisioned as attracting telecommuters and individuals seeking recreational properties this has significant impacts on the extent and kinds of agriculture that can occur in this space and the kind of place it eventually becomes.

Paradigmatic orientation

Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln provide a comparative overview of the paradigms guiding social science research which they see as including four general types: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and related ideological positions, and constructivism.[21] As Table 2 illustrates, each of these paradigms constitutes a different set of ontological, epistemological and methodological beliefs. Guba and Lincoln note that aside from positivism, the other three paradigms are still in their formative stages and hence no final agreement has been reached about the definitions, meanings, or implications of the terms associated with these belief systems.[22] Consequently, although terms like constructivist or criticalist routinely appear in the lexicon of much contemporary social science methodology, theses terms are more appropriately viewed as general descriptors whose particular meanings are shaped by their author, rather than being read as signifiers of specific and commonly accepted concepts.[23] Also, while the cells within Table 2 are represented as quite distinct, there is often considerable overlap between rows indicating the hybridisation of paradigms that is evident in much qualitative research, including my own.

In terms of Guba and Lincoln's table, the paradigm guiding my own research would be characterised principally as a combination of critical theory and constructivism. Critical theory is a term often evoked to refer to a theoretical tradition developed by Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse who engaged in discussion focused on German philosophical and social thinkers such as Marx, Kant, Hegel and Weber. With respect to qualitative research, critical theory is more aptly viewed as a sensitising concept that steers the reader in the general direction of the particular form of inquiry but does not provide a precise definition of what they will see. The researcher must clarify their epistemological commitments and specific methods. In an attempt to clarify my own methodological interpretation of critical theory, I will draw on the thinking of Joe Kincheloe and Peter McLaren. For these researchers, a criticalist is a researcher or theorist who accepts the following assumptions:

> ...that all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted; that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription; that the relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption; that language is

Table 2
Basic Beliefs (Metaphysics) of Alternative Inquiry Paradigms

Item	*Positivism*	*Postpositivism*	*Critical Theory et al.*	*Constructivism*
Ontology	Naïve realism – "real" reality but apprehendable	critical realism – "real" reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendable	Historical realism – viritual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time	Relativism – local and specific constructed realities
Epistemology	dualist/objectivist; findings true	modified dualist/ objectivist; critical traditional/ community; findings probably true	Transactional/ subjectivist; value- mediated findings	Transactional/ subjectivist; created findings
Methodology	experimental/ manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative methods	Modified experimental/ manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods	Dialogic/ Dialectical	Hermeneutical/ dialectical

Source: Egon S. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research," *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna .S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 1994) 109.

central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness); that certain groups in any society are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging vary widely, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable; that oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression versus racism) often elides the interconnections among them; and finally, that mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race and gender oppression.[24]

According to Kincheloe and McLaren, the criticalist tradition encompasses four schools of social thought: neo-Marxism, Foucault's genealogical approach, poststructuralism and postmodernism. While they do not deny the tensions between these different theoretical orientations, they nonetheless believe these forms of inquiry are connected by a focus on empowerment and emancipation. The kind of emancipation of which they speak is not a master narrative about the 'blessed redeemer'. Rather, borrowing from Judith Butler, they speak of emancipation as a "contingent foundation out of which further dialogue can develop that is attentive to the contextual specificity of the local and over-determining characteristics of the larger institutional and social structures."[25] Interested in particularity, critical theorists are concerned with the concepts of multiplicity and difference but without forsaking the investigation of larger social structures and relations.

The term constructivism is somewhat related to critical theory in that it reers to an ontological/epistemological perspective in which realities are seen as multiple, intangible mental constructions that are local and specific in nature and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions.[26] Thomas Schwandt characterises constructivists as anti-essentialists who argue that the world is plastic and pluralistic – "pluralistic in the sense that reality is expressible in a variety of symbol and language systems; plastic in the sense that reality is stretched to fit purposeful acts of intentional human agents."[27] A constructivist research practice celebrates the world of the first-person, subjective experience, but does not prescribe the use of any particular method.[28] Instead it focuses attention on the investigator and phenomenon under study being interactionally linked because the findings are believed to be created in the process of the investigation. The aim is not to represent 'reality' or the 'truth', but rather, to produce a picture of the phenomenon under study that is informed, sophisticated and useful.[29]

Like critical theorists, the practitioners of constructivism provide strong critiques of positivism and instrumental rationality, contending that knowledge does not accumulate in an absolute sense, nor is the production of science a uniquely disinterested, impartial and value-free activity. Instead all knowledge is socially and historically situated. With varying emphasis, constructivists as well as critical theorists have argued for the critical examination of the author's frame of reference. Within social sciences like sociology, the push is for the discipline as a whole to become more reflexive by examining the passions, polemics, politics and methods that necessarily impinge upon the conclusions drawn by writers, theorists and researchers.[30] Moreover, the appeal is for authors to locate themselves as contingent constructs within their own discourses, acknowledging their privileges of race, gender, geographic location and sexual identity.[31]

While qualitative researchers such as Guba, Lincoln and Schwandt use constructivism as a general term to point broadly to an anti-essentialist stance, in my reading in environmental studies, geography and even social theory, the more commonly used terms are "constructionism" or "social constructionism". For example, the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*[32] distinguishes constructionism from

constructivism and explains constructionism as a general term applied to theories that emphasise the constructed nature of reality. Constructionism is often traced back to the work of William Issac Thomas and the Chicago School of Sociology, as well as phenomenologists like Alfred Schutz who spoke of social reality as invented. The term social constructionism was more formally introduced to society through Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman's, *The Social Construction of Reality*, in which they argued that society, knowledge and humans are social products. Following the publication of this work, the term constructionism gained more general usage in a number of different disciplines, in many cases losing its ties to phenomenology. Broadly the term was used as a contrast to essentialism and taken-for-granted assumptions about the naturally given roots of phenomena. On the other hand, in psychology, constructivism is associated with the work Jean Piaget and refers to the processes by which the cognitive structures that shape our knowledge of reality arise through interactions with the environment.

These variable understandings of constructionism and constructivism can cause some confusion, and certainly the multiple understandings of them indicates the need for those using these terms to clearly define how they understand them. Outside of reference to Guba and Lincoln's table, I more generally refer to my own research strategy as informed by a form of social constructionism which closely parallels Schwandt's understanding of the term. Schwandt defines social constructionism as one of the five forms of constructivism, the others being: radical constructivism, feminist standpoint epistemologies, Guba and Lincoln's constructivist paradigm, and educational connoisseurship and criticism. As a form of constructivism, social constructionism is an anti-essentialist position, such as I've outlined above, that is directed at the rejection and dissection of the 'naturalness' of categories, labels and words. However, unlike some other forms of constructivism, social constructionists focus on intersubjectively, shared constructions of meaning and knowledge rather than individual and cognitive processes.[33] Like poststructuralism, from a social constructionist perspective, language and other forms of representation do not simply reflect or passively transmit meaning. Instead representations are constitutive elements of social, cultural and linguistic systems through which meaning is produced. Meaning does not inhere in things in the world, but rather, is constructed. Meaning is the product of processes that are embedded in human values, choices and experiences. Not fixed out there in nature, meaning is never finally decided but changes with corresponding transitions in human thought, changes with different discourses. Hence representations of the world can be seen as a practice, an activity all humans engage in using material objects and effects in order to construct meaning, make the world meaningful and communicate that meaning to others. Use of the term social construction highlights the idea that representations of the world are made and not found.

However, social constructionists do not deny the existence of the material world.[34] Rather, they insist that it is not the material world that conveys meaning, it is our language or other representational systems through which meaning is produced. Words are not merely labels applied to objects but our systems of signs

and words also have the ability to create worlds, to offer possibilities, to produce action and to give form to thoughts that have no material form. Our representational systems allow us to think about things, whether they are present or never existed.

Yet, meaning is not just in our heads. Cultural meanings construct, organize and regulate our social practices and consequently, have real effects. We give objects, people and events meaning, and therefore significance, through the interpretations we bring to bear on them. The meanings we attribute to things create associations in people's minds, forging links between concepts, ideologies, events and so on. For example, one can look at the common associations made between femininity and passivity. While femininity is always open to multiple interpretations, there are dominant or hegemonic representations that feed common understandings of what it means to be a woman. Hence, the common representation of femininity as associated with passivity plays a role in how it is we choose to raise girls, what kinds of laws we institute to regulate the actions of women, the kinds of activities we decide are appropriate for girls and women, and so on. In this sense, we can begin to see how meanings have significant material effects.

Methods and data

When I arrived in my research study site, I initially planned to conduct a critical ethnography and analyse the data using a grounded theory approach.[35] Grounded theory is a qualitative research method "that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon."[36] I employed grounded theory as a means of integrating social theory into the inductive discovery of meaning and its social organisation. Rather than focusing on collecting as much rich, descriptive detail of the case under study as is possible, which is characteristic of traditional ethnography, I followed a grounded theory approach articulated by Derek Layder, in which the researcher selects what appears to be theoretically relevant data.[37] In the service of generating grounded theory, the researcher employs a strategy of selecting comparison groups according to their theoretical relevance in generating emergent categories, properties and hypotheses that allow for the integration of theory. This constant selection and control of data allows for the generation and integration of theory into the data collection and analysis process. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss emphasise grounded theory research as "theory in process", stressing the idea of theory as an ever-developing, flexible entity constantly extended and modified, rather than as a constant, perfected product that can only be confirmed or negated.[38]

In my case study site I remained committed to the broad aims of grounded theory, viewing my research activities as focused on "theory in process". However, the specific data collection methods I chose were largely determined by the situation, or context within which I found myself, and so I proceeded as if no method was privileged over any other. Not tied to any particular method of data collection, I tried to consciously cross-fertilise ideas and research techniques as a

means of collecting relevant data and stimulating new theoretical ideas and insights. For some qualitative researchers, this triangulation of methods provides a means of ensuring the validity of the research and analysis. However, from a social constructionist perspective, the use of multiple methods is not a validation strategy but rather an alternative to validation. Combining several research methods allows for a greater possibility of rigour, depth and breadth.

The data I collected consisted of interview, observational and archival data. The interview and observational data includes materials I actively recorded myself: interviews, field notes from observations and conversations, and, photographs. As well, I collected a substantial variety and amount of archival data or material that others created - public notices, newsletters, newspaper articles, maps, and hearing transcripts. In collecting this data my interest was in securing rich description of the settings, interactions and conversations of individuals in order that I could explore the variable representations of place as they pertained to the Upper Oldman River basin. I was also interested in how spatial structures impact the lives of the people who both live in the region and environmentalists who continue to have a deep and abiding concern for this place. Finally, because my initial interest in place derived from reading about environmental prose on place, I was also interested to compare environmental discourse on place to that of residents who did not self identify this way.

I selected individuals to speak with using a 'snowball technique'. The initial participants I talked with were individuals I knew before I started the project because of work I was doing on another qualitative study, or because of my activities as a wilderness activist. Some of these people then suggested and made arrangements for me to meet and talk to other people in the community. I also interviewed individuals whom I met as I was undertaking the collection of secondary data, or because of other activities I participated in while in the Oldman basin region. I chose people to speak with who appeared thoughtful, willing to speak with me and provide a viewpoint I had not yet heard. I tried to be somewhat selective about those whom I interviewed, trying to talk to people with a variety of socio-economic and individual experiences, and varying attitudes about environmental issues. I speculated on an individual's socio-economic status by examining their material conditions and made assumptions about their environmental perspective by finding out what labels they themselves or others used as identity markers (e.g., redneck, liberal, 'Import', etc.). I also asked a few people I knew well in the community about the identity of certain residents. These identifying techniques did not always prove reliable in terms of predicting people's attitudes and values, but in the end I was left with a diversity of perspectives about the place, which was my overall objective.

In total I completed 20 face-to-face interviews (see Appendix 1). Thirteen interviews were with current and long-time residents of the Upper Oldman River region. Three of these individuals interviewed self-identified as environmentalists. Of the remaining seven interviews, two interviews were with people who had lived for an extended period of time in the community, knew it well, and were currently working there, but did not reside in the area. I also spoke

to an individual who grew up in the region, still frequents it and calls it home, but lives and works in a nearby community. Finally, I spoke with four individuals who have never resided in the community long-term but have a deep and abiding interest in this place because of family and environmental reasons. Three of these non-residents self-identified as environmentalists.

The archival materials I collected include select public hearing transcripts and submissions, articles from the local newspaper, *The Pincher Creek Echo*, history texts, promotional materials, economic studies and regional planning documents. The transcripts come from three separate sets of public hearings focused on the building of a dam on the Oldman River: *Management of Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin; South Saskatchewan River Basin Planning Program;* and, the *Oldman River Dam Environmental Assessment Panel, Public Hearing Proceedings.* Rather than reading through all the transcripts from each of these three hearings, which would amount to tens of thousands of pages, I was selective in what I examined. I chose to analyse transcripts that met at least one of the following criteria: they came out of a meeting held in a one of the towns or hamlets within the Upper Oldman River basin (Pincher Creek, Brocket, Cowley and Lundbreck); they were of the statements given by people who I could identify as residents of one of the communities within the Oldman region (usually the presenters provided such information to the panels or their place of residence was recorded in the hearing transcript appendices); or, they were statements by an environmentalist. The hearing transcripts provided ample supplementary material on the different meanings people attribute to the spatial milieu in which they live their day-to-day lives, play, and work.

Analytical strategy: exploring discursive representations and metaphorical structures

As I mentioned in my introduction, I began collecting data with the belief that it would be fairly easy to get people to discuss a sense of place and community, particularly individuals who lived in or had a long-term interest in the location I had chosen as my case study site. So in preparation for the interviews, I thought through various techniques for eliciting from my respondents their understandings and experiences of these concepts, particularly as they related to the Upper Oldman River region. The interviews were largely open-ended and I tried to build on the respondents' answers to direct them to think and speak about place and community. However, after reviewing the first several transcripts, I became concerned about the subject matter discussed in the interviews. I had collected plenty of data that would help me develop a contemporary picture of the human community that resided in the Upper Oldman River region, but detailed discussion of place seemed far less frequent. With so few instances in the data of detailed discussion of the sense of place individuals held for the Oldman basin, I began to wonder if I was collecting any material at all related to my thesis topic. Intent on sticking to the subject I had chosen, I chose to broaden my analytical strategy to consider discussions of space.

While I still found that the word place seldom appeared in either the interview or archival data, it seemed to me that frequently people spoke about notions related to space. Sprinkled throughout much of the data were metaphorical references to the spatial often couched within the context of another topic or broader story. Therefore, in order to distill from the data a robust description and understanding of place required that I needed to stop looking for the word 'place' and instead start examining spatial metaphors.

In their book, *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argue that not only are metaphors pervasive within our conceptual system, but that ordinary thought is largely metaphorical in nature. Metaphors are not only parts of language but structural concepts that influence how we understand and act in the world. They write:

> The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of the intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor.[39]

While we hardly notice their presence or influence, metaphors largely direct our understandings of the world. Metaphors are a persuasive force in influencing the direction and nature of discourse. Metaphors are grounded in our physical experiences as well as our cultural understandings of the world, and in turn, they influence how we understand and act in the world. Hence, to a large extent, metaphors as integral components of discourse define our reality.[40] Their persuasiveness is not limited to their role within individual sentences but extends to the broad contours of intellectual inquiry. As Richard Rorty asserts, "it is pictures rather than propositions, metaphors rather than statements, which determine most of our philosophical convictions."[41]

Much of the current work carried out on metaphors makes the case that users of 'large' metaphors are frequently unaware of all of the freight attached to the metaphors they utilise, and as a result are led unconsciously to espouse propositions with which they might not entirely agree.[42] For this reason, it is often helpful, if not necessary, to exhume the dead metaphors we unwittingly employ and inspect them for their coherence, consistency and compatibility with other things we might want to say. Metaphors tend not to be randomly chosen but rather collectively create coherent structural forms. As Geraldine Pratt,[43] Barbara Ching and Gerald Creed[44] point out, this is particularly true with respect to spatial metaphors (for example, boundaries, margins, mapping). The purely metaphoric place that emerges in much contemporary social and cultural theory is an intellectual trend that frequently blocks from view the hidden geographical and social implications of the metaphors themselves. Simply put, while the speakers may say one thing, the metaphors they use may indicate something quite different.

Pratt more specifically addresses how many of the spatial metaphors circulating within cultural studies, while useful for problematising positionality, nonetheless create a number of conceptual problems that continue to hound discussions of space. Not only do these metaphors frequently function to reproduce the traditional subject positions they critique, they underwrite new dividing practices and promote the masking, or ignorance of human influence on places. She identifies three sets of spatial metaphors commonly utilised in contemporary academic discussions: "ones that draw upon the rhetoric of mobility (for example, 'nomadism', 'travelling', 'migration', the 'flaneur'); others that emphasise the opposition of marginality and exile; and a third that represents the borderland as a place."[45] She cautions that while this talk about movement, representation of self-knowledge, and deconstruction of conceptual stasis and cultural hierarchy is immensely suggestive, these metaphors can cloud as much as liberate our thinking about positionality, subjectivity and categories.

For example, a focus on mobility and the fluidity of identity and social categories can easily translate into a "view from nowhere" where the ungrounded, unattached gaze fails to recognize its own position. This highlighting of fluidity and destabilisation of identities can also obscure from view hard political questions and conflicts of interest amongst different classes, ethnicities, nationalities and sexualities. The rhetoric of movement privileges detachment from place, a matter of some worry for those concerned about the protection, caring for and creation of places. Meanwhile, the insistence of a vision of location as 'outside' or at the margins, while effectively problematising positionality, can also direct attention away from considering one's effect in and reliance on place. Hence, Pratt directs her audience to recognize the limits of metaphors and not be seduced by turns of phrase which are ultimately aspatial and insensitive to place. In her words:

> We need ways to envision places and situations in which people are forced into dialogues that admit conflict and real differences *and* the social construction and permeability of these differences. We need to hold change (mobility, deconstruction) and limited stasis (dwelling, placement, normative ideals) in tension.[46]

The importance of these theoretical discussions of metaphors to this thesis is that it directs attention to how metaphors structure our expectations of the world. Examining metaphors provides a means for understanding experiential and conceptual systems, of gaining access to how people conceive of their place in the world and the spaces they move through and care about. As I began searching through my primary and secondary data for spatial metaphors, I kept in mind Foucault's discussion of power/knowledge, and searched for indications of the broader discursive context through which they were constructed and deployed. An analysis of metaphors provides a way of using the direct resources of discourse to understand more fully indirect meanings. As Lakoff and Johnson explain, "most of our indirect understanding involves understanding *one kind* of

entity or experience in terms of *another kind* - that is understanding via metaphor."[47]

By focusing on spatial metaphors, I explore some of the ways in which these spatial terms conceal, support, subvert, enable and constrain particular understandings of place. In my analysis of spatial metaphors, I use definitions of place drawn from the *Oxford English Dictionary*[48] (OED) as a tool for exploring the multiplicity of representations of space and place within the data. My analysis is directed not so much at trying to compile a list of spatial metaphors or even understand how these metaphors operate, but rather it is focused on answering the question: what are the meanings of place produced by these spatial metaphors?

I selected the OED because it is a respected mainstream source. Comparing the OED entries with the passages from my data allowed me to draw out some of the meanings embedded in the discourses, to extract and play with traces of plausible spatial interpretations. There were many more OED definitions of place and spatial metaphors in the data than I discussed. Time and space constraints forced me to choose amongst the plethora of possibilities, and I made that choice based largely on whether I felt the metaphor would assist me answering my research questions. The OED definitions I selected acted as the springboard for my analysis of place, space and community and appear at the beginning of each of the three sections that comprise chapter six.

As well, in examining the data I found that the stories told by various individuals often were not only about the interconnection between place and community but also between identity/subjectivity, community and place. How people defined themselves and others fed their understanding of the community and their position in it, as well as their understandings and connections to a place called the Upper Oldman River basin. Therefore, if I was really to understand the representations of place, I needed to expand the focus of my research to consider the complex relationship between place, community and identity/subjectivity.

Insider/outsider

As an interpretive act, qualitative research is spoken of as a process that is not external to the researcher but intimately connected to him or her. A researcher's personal history, gender, sexual orientation, race, class and ethnicity all shape the research act and findings. Hence, this thesis is necessarily a result of my own images, understandings and interpretations of the world, as I connect certain parts to the whole and highlight some relationships as more meaningful than others. Like a photograph, the bricolage is an image created and limited by my choices of the time, frame and focus of the shot. Hence, at some level the story this thesis tells cannot help but be as revealing of me, the author, as it is of the place where the story is set and the people whose lives are depicted.

For employment/financial reasons, throughout the research process, I was not a resident of the geographic community I was studying, but rather a frequent visitor. Aside from coming to the community to interview people and collect and read through secondary data, I attended community events, hiked, camped and shopped there, but largely became familiar with the community because of my

job. Initially I became acquainted with the community as an environmental activist with Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) participating in the Whaleback camp and a community asset workshop. Shortly after my involvement in the community asset workshop, I assumed a job as a researcher with the Centre for Health Promotion and Community Studies, located at the University of Lethbridge. In this role I oversaw a rural health research project focused on the town and municipality of Pincher Creek. Working with two individuals hired from the community, I co-ordinated and assisted with the collection of data. As a part of this process we conducted 21 individual and ten focus group interviews with persons living in the Pincher Creek area. These residents were asked questions about their community – what is unique about it? what are the things that bring people together? what are the things that divide the community? – and about health practices and services – what are examples of good health services? how could the health services be improved? how should the health services be designed and delivered to become more appropriate for a rural community. Finally, as a Community Health Council Coordinator for the Chinook Health Region, I worked with community representatives on the local community health council.

My many roles in the community were both an asset and source of confusion, if not a hindrance. While I could not use the data I collected from the rural health study for my own purposes, the field notes I recorded about the about the interviews, committee discussions, and research process, provided me with considerable information about the community, as well as some important contacts. My role as an environmentalist likewise opened doors. As a colleague of most of the environmentalists in the area and province, I had no trouble finding people to talk to who care about protecting the Upper Oldman River basin's wilderness. However, I perceived my activities in the environmental community also to be a barrier to speaking with folks outside of that community. Hence, unless directly questioned about my alliances or opinions about environmental issues, I never disclosed this information to anyone.

However, my greatest hindrance in collecting data was a result of simply being a researcher and not a long-term member of the community. To most people in the Upper Oldman River region I was just one of many researchers conducting another study on the region, who would gather the information she needed to complete her project and then never be heard from again. Over the years, there have been numerous studies completed about this community, some commissioned by people who reside in the area, others not. At the time I was conducting my research, I knew of two other studies being conducted on the community and was contacted by a third individual who was interested in focusing her master's thesis on the proposed Westcastle development. The plethora of research about this area was helpful in providing me archival data, but it also meant that some residents exhibited a certain amount of response fatigue. Hence, in some cases I had difficulty finding people from particular social and occupational groups who would talk to me (e.g., ranchers or farmers), who were

not cynical about research, or who had not been interviewed so often that they had constructed well rehearsed answers.

As my research involved human subjects, I not only tried to be aware of my own position as a researcher but struggled with how to locate both the people who live in and care about the Upper Oldman River basin within the text I constructed and to treat them respectfully and ethically. With this in mind, I attempted throughout the research process to ensure the anonymity of those I spoke to, and to pay attention to ways in which I could make negligible the adverse effects this research had upon them. For example, in the chapters that follow I have assigned fictitious names to those I interviewed and deleted any details that might identify them from excerpts I have quoted. However, in the instances in which I used public documents (e.g., hearing transcripts and letters to the local paper) because they are public property, I did not alter the documents to hide the identity of those I quoted.

I also recognize that the account I produce may be offensive to some. In trying to explore the concepts of community, place and identity, I very strategically sought out material that would illustrate not only points of agreement but also dissension. For example, I was interested in the environmental conflicts that have occurred over the past 60 years in the Upper Oldman River basin, conflicts that for some people remain open wounds. For others, drawing attention to these conflicts is seen as highlighting chapters in the community's history that serve no purpose and is simply better left in the museum archives. I quickly became aware of the sensitivity of inquiring about people's views on the community's environmental conflicts when I realised that when I raised this topic, often the person I was speaking to would suddenly offer very short replies to my questions and sometimes display physical discomfort by fidgeting or redirecting their gaze. In one extreme case, two men were quite upset upon coming to an interview because they perceived they were invited as environmentalists and they challenged this label, even though they both were and continue to be involved extensively in protecting the wilderness.

Also, outside my role as a researcher, some of the people I am writing about are my friends, previous co-workers and current colleagues. I know, from a prior experience of having published an article critical of the strategic positions taken by some wilderness activists in Alberta, that such reflections are not always well received. I accept that my analysis and conclusions may not represent those of everyone with whom I have spoken, and expect and applaud that we will have differences of opinion. It has never been my intention to offend anyone, but if I have, my sincerest apologies.

Limitations of the study

As a study inspired by the poststructural analysis of culture, this research might be seen by some as having some obvious practical limitations. As a researcher working within a largely poststructural framework, this thesis has not been concerned with external validity and generalisability. From a poststructural or constructionist perspective, the aim is to produce a richly detailed analysis of the subject researched. In this regard, the study is limited by the number and diversity of interviews conducted, the amount of time spent in the community, and supplementary information gathered and analyzed. Time, financial and personnel constraints required that practical choices be made in all these matters in order that the study was completed. Further, theoretically the research was guided by a poststructural epistemology that rejects the notion of universal truths, focusing instead upon reflexivity, difference and the particular. Although I would argue that this does not negate connections being drawn by readers between the material presented here and other studies and other places, my attempt has not been to present the Upper Oldman River basin as an example of any kind. For practical reasons, I treated my research as a case study, and used categories as tools for analysis, but I was always aware that the borders were constructions of convenience and that the categories leaked.

This thesis also does not try to draw conclusions about how to create the best environmental strategy. Rather, it is an attempt to apply contributions from the humanities and social sciences to an examination of place, space and community and to consider what this might suggest about the social construction of nature. My intention is to foreground instances of exclusion and possibility, as they relate to a specific geographical place that has been repeatedly the focus of environmental contestation. I am interested in how the places/spaces people construct are experienced in a simultaneous multiplicity of ways, sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting and sometimes just differently. I think work of this nature *can* result in new strategies and policies, but that would depend on the specific issues and circumstances. As Chris Weedon points out, poststructuralism reminds us that the details of progressive political strategies "cannot be specified in advance since the precise configuration of power relations in any situation will determine how best we can act."[49]

Chapter Three
Theoretical Musings

In the end, it is my belief, words are the only things that can construct a world that makes sense.
- Kate Atkinson, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*

Time and space are central to the constitution of all social interaction and therefore, to the constitution of social theory. This does not just mean that social theory must be historically and geographically specific. More importantly, social theory must be about the time-space constitution of social structure right from the start.
- Nigel Thrift, "On the Determination of Social Action in Space and Time"

Every natural fact is trivial until it becomes symbolical or moral.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, letter to Margaret Fuller, 1840

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to some of the theoretical ideas that will be later applied in a reading of the representations of place and space, particularly as they are linked to notions of community, identity, rurality, the West and nature. My interest is not in comprehensively reviewing the theoretical contributions of each of the thinkers I will introduce, but rather in selectively applying some of the insights of social, cultural and spatial theorists like Michel Foucault, Derek Gregory and Stuart Hall. Further, the chapter is not intended as my final foray into the theoretical. Rather, it is meant to situate my theoretical interests in place and nature, and provide some background to many of the theoretical positions and ideas that will be used later, within a more in-depth examination of representations of space and place as observed through a case study of the Upper Oldman River basin.

The chapter begins with discussion of representation and meaning, specifically focusing on the development of several social constructionist theories of language. Within this context, I examine Foucault's approach to representation through discourse, and in particular his interest in the intersection of power and knowledge. I then turn my attention to the recent cultural turn in geography, particularly as it concerns issues of place and rurality, and how these spatial forms are impacted by economic and cultural transformations commonly associated with

globalisation. A brief discussion of community follows. The chapter finishes off with a discussion of new social movements and their potential as catalysts or avenues to radical political, social and cultural change.

Questions of representation

For the last several centuries within Western societies, questions of how we should represent the world have largely been taken for granted. The dominant system of modern representation has been based on the assumption that a trained, detached observer, unencumbered by abstract theorising and human values, can produce an accurate, neutral account of the world. Largely based on positivist philosophy, questions central to this practice have concerned mimesis, or how to produce as honest a reflection as possible of the material qualities of the entity under scrutiny. The broader goal of this 'Enlightenment dream' has been to bring together into a unified, coherent body of knowledge, the empirical findings accumulated by skilled, rational observers. This schema of knowledge can then be utilised to predict future behaviours, determine proper courses of action and establish reality and truth.

In the aftermath of World War II, challenges to the legitimacy of this system of representation materialised amongst intellectuals, feminists and others. Disillusioned by the promises and ideals of Enlightenment and Western modernity, they began questioning the ways in which we think about, organise, cluster and classify concepts, as well as establish complex relationships between them as a means of understanding and analysing the world. In academe some of this inquiry was directed at the active, productive role of language and representation. The 'immutable' categories of positivist science, as well as the role of the subject (author, artist, scientist, etc.) who created them, became a focus of analysis, contestation and reformulation across disciplines, particularly by scholars housed in the social sciences and humanities.

The work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure offered a view of language as a system consisting of chains of signs (sounds, images, marks or electronic impulses) whose meaning derives from its difference from all other signs in the language chain.[1] He contended that meaning does not depend only on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function. As Hall explains, "It is because a particular sound or word *stands for*, *symbolises* or *represents* a concept that it can function in language as a sign and convey meaning – or as the constructionists say, signify (sign-i-fy)."[2] In other words, all signs are arbitrary and there is no natural relationship between a sign and the meaning it conveys. The meaning of a sign is determined by a symbol (signifier) and a concept (signified) which is fixed by a code that is a constituent element of a larger system of social conventions specific to each society and historical period.

Stuart Hall explains that Saussure's achievement was in showing how language is a social fact or social phenomenon. As a form of representation, language is a social practice and as such, its rules are not a matter of individual choice but arise out of a shared cultural code. The work of cultural critics and academics like Roland Barthes and Claude Levi-Strauss helped to illustrate how

representation and meaning were more open-ended than suggested by Saussure's largely scientific analysis of language. Barthes posited that there are two separate but linked levels of signification. In the first, the signifiers (the elements of an image) and the signified (the concepts and sensory data) unite to form a sign which produces a simple message (i.e., the pop of a gun telling athletes to begin racing).[3] At the second level of signification, this completed message or sign is linked to broader, ideological themes (as an Olympic event, the race symbolises peace, fair play and national competition) and 'naturalises' the event by changing something which is essentially cultural into natural (transhistorical, innocent and factual). Barthes called the second level of signification, *myth*. Barthes demonstrated how the reading of a sign as myth could be accomplished by linking its completed message with a cultural theme or concept and insisted that with myth there was always some motivation underlying its use. As Henrietta Lidchi explains, "Myth's duplicity is therefore located in its ability to 'naturalise' and make 'innocent what is profoundly motivated."[4]

The value attributed to an object or event involves a process of 'en-coding', a practice of selection and creativity which allows certain meanings to surface, but meaning also must be actively read or interpreted (de-coded). While the speaker, writer or author may imagine a specific audience or reader and intend for one interpretation only, the meaning taken up is never exactly that which is transmitted or produced. There is an inevitable imprecision to language/ communication and there is no means by which one can 'clean up' this cultural practice. The manner in which new layers of meaning are appended over time can never completely eclipse previous understandings. It is in this context that Barthes spoke of "the palimpsest of meaning," or what others refer to as "structures of textuality".[5]

Hence, one can think of meaning construction or representation as a circular transaction, or a 'circuit of culture.' Meaning is continually and concurrently produced and taken up at many different sites and circulated through several different processes, practices and media. As Stuart Hall describes, "Meaning is constantly being produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction."[6] In this sense, one can envision representation as involving one interpretation as followed by another and another in an overlapping spiral. As such, we can view representation as entailing a process of constant 'play' or slippage of meaning involving the continuous re-production of new meanings and new interpretations across spatial and temporal dimensions. Meaning in this sense is always emerging.

French philosopher Jacques Derrida helped to draw attention to the politics of language and knowledge in speaking of the meaning of the signifier as in a state of continuous flux and contestation. He held that whenever a social or linguistic order pronounces a meaning to be fixed, unambiguous or stable, this practice should be understood less as a disclosure of truth than as an act of power.[7] Derrida opposed efforts at social, linguistic and political closure, reacting against what he termed the 'logocentricism' of Western culture, or the quest for an authoritative language which would disclose truth, moral rightness and beauty.

He contended that a set of unequal, binary oppositions (meaning/form, mind/body, masculine/ feminine, culture/nature, and so forth) reappear time and again in Western discourse and have been pivotal in efforts to establish truth and reality. Derrida focused not on the central ideas or arguments of these theories, but on the marginal metaphors and other rhetorical devices that most interpreters gloss over. He subverted, disrupted and displaced hierarchical discursive oppositions like mind/body as a means of questioning their authority.

Similarly, Jean-Francois Lyotard spoke of the need to challenge metanarratives – overarching synthesising stories and practices. Totalising and universalistic theories such as the emancipation of the working class, science and rationality as the road to knowledge and freedom, or the Enlightenment dream of progress through increased knowledge and wealth have been seriously challenged by many radical intellectuals. Lyotard expressed incredulity towards such metanarratives and their encompassing, absolute standards, universal categories and grand theories, insisting instead that knowledge is always tentative, incomplete and perspectival.[8] Lyotard sketched the role of the postmodern perspective as one wherein people are made more aware and tolerant of differences, ambiguity, uncertainty and conflict.[9] In place of metanarratives, he proposed a social criticism that is more ad hoc, contextual, plural and limited.

The work of Derrida and Lyotard brings to the surface the idea that representational systems or meaning construction are necessarily implicated in relations of power. As Peter Berger contends, ideas "do not succeed in society by virtue of their truth but by virtue of their relationships to specific social processes."[10] While those who ascribe to an Enlightenment view of the world envision knowledge and power as being overcome by reason, social constructionists call into question "the belief (or hope) that there is some form of innocent knowledge to be had."[11] As Jane Flax states, "We cannot understand knowledge without tracing the effects of power relations which simultaneously enable and limit the possibilities of discourse."[12]

Power/knowledge

Foucault likewise urged people to abandon the Enlightenment vision of human liberation emerging through the uncovering of the 'laws' of social order. He did not believe that society had a central logic but instead, saw it as composed of heterogeneous social dynamics. Rather than meaning construction, he was concerned with the production of knowledge and circulating relations of power. He therefore posited a broader definition of representation than that articulated by Saussure. Further, unlike thinkers such as Derrida and Lyotard, Foucault studied discourse, not language and in particular was concerned with questions of power/knowledge.

For Foucault the persuasive force of words is a function of the discursive regime in which they operate. Foucault understood discourse not simply as a linguistic concept but as encompassing both language and practice, or what Ernesto Laclau describes as "a systematic set of relations."[13] Discourse, argued Foucault, defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. Discourse governs

how a topic can be meaningfully communicated and reasoned about, influences how ideas are put into action and the thoughts and feelings we have about the matter at hand, and is used to regulate the conduct of others. As a group of statements, discourse provides "a language for talking about - a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment. But...since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect."[14] Discourse never consists of one statement, action or source but appears across a range of texts, forms of conduct and institutional sites. When these discursive events share the same logic (episteme) and style, refer to the same object and support the same strategy, Foucault referred to them as discursive formations.

In claiming that nothing exists outside of discourse, Foucault was not denying that things could have a material existence outside of language. Rather, he argued that "nothing has meaning outside of discourse;"[15] it is discourse, not the things-in-themselves, that constitute knowledge. It is only within a definite discursive formation that things and actions can appear meaningful, although the ways in which discursive articulations constitute those meanings and govern actions is always part of a wider network of power relations. According to Foucault, knowledge is not grounded in the individual, but is a product of social intercourse, and likewise power exists only in action. It is in discourse that knowledge and power are joined together, not as an ever-dominant force, but rather as both an instrument and effect of power. Discourses do not exist in bi-polar power relations of the powerful and the powerless, but rather, Foucault envisioned them as tactical elements that operate within 'fields of force relations' that take specific forms within particular societies and are organised through institutions and social relations like class, race, sexuality, gender and so on. Not all discourses have social power and authority, nor are there any discourses whose authority is permanently secure, even those with a firm institutional basis. Dominant discourses governing the organisation and practice of social institutions are constantly challenged. Foucault explains:

> We must not imagine a world of discourses divided between the accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in various strategies...Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power...We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it...Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy.[16]

Questions of the application and effectiveness of power/knowledge were more important to Foucault than questions of truth, for he contended that knowledge linked to power assumes the authority of truth. Once applied, all knowledge has real effects and in this sense becomes reality. It is in this context that Foucault spoke of discursive formations sustaining 'regimes of truth':

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned...the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.[17]

Because Foucault understood discourse to operate within particular historical moments, he believed that the meaning attributed to things, their intelligibility or truth, occurred only within a specific historical and cultural context. As Chris Weedon points out, from this historical and cultural perspective we can see the presence of competing discourses, discourses that present alternative ways of giving meaning to the world, and implied by this are differences in the social organisation of power.[18] Language, thus, becomes an important site of political change.

Foucault also reformulated the concept of power from an understanding of it as a form of economic exploitation or physical coercion into broader cultural and symbolic terms. Like the Italian theorist, Antonio Gramsci,[19] Foucault did not believe that any one body monopolises power nor that it only radiates in one direction – from the top down – but rather comes from many sources and circulates. "The argument is that everyone – the powerful and the powerless – is caught up, *though not on equal terms* – in power's circulation."[20] Power is deployed and exercised through a net-like structure and permeates all aspects of social life, and is both repressive and productive. In Foucault's words, power "doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but...it transverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be thought of as a productive network which runs through the whole social body."[21] Foucault and Gramsci draw our attention away from a conceptualisation of power as solely arising from grand strategies to include a more localised view of power as circulating at the micro-level.

Foucault was particularly interested in the application of techniques of regulation to the body and the role of the body in formations of power/knowledge. For example, in *Discipline and Punish*,[22] he analysed the different ways in which the criminal body was produced, regulated and punished. He explored how through the use of techniques of regulation, such as the panopticon (a structural and regulating form that allows for constant, permanent axial visibility by an unverifiable observer),[23] punishment was individualised and power administered effectively. However, for Foucault, the body he discussed was not limited to the material form we each know as our selves. Foucault was also interested in how bodies are produced within discourse according to different discursive formations and regimes of truth. He posited a radically historicised conception of the body as

a "surface in which different regimes of power/knowledge write their meanings and effects."[24]

Foucault's radically historicised view of the body displaced the privileged role of the subject in relation to knowledge and meaning. In Foucault's understanding of society, it is discourses, not subjects, that produce knowledge and further, it is within discourses that subjects are produced. People are posited as "figures who personify the particular forms of knowledge the discourse produces."[25] The subject must submit to the technologies and apparatuses of the discursive regime, and as such, becomes a bearer of the knowledge the discourse produces. Further, it is the discourse that creates 'subject-positions' – positions identified by a discourse individuals must subject themselves to, identify with and become its subjects. Laclau and Mouffe's discussion of football illustrates Foucault's conceptualisation of both how objects acquire meaning depending upon the specific discursive context in which they are located, and also how in this context, discourse constitutes the role of the human subject:

> ...every social configuration is meaningful. If I kick a spherical object in the street or if I kick a ball in a football match, the *physical* fact is the same, but *its meaning* is different. The object is a football only to the extent that it establishes a system of relations with other objects, and these relations are not given by the mere referential materiality of the objects, but are, rather, socially constructed. This systematic set of relations is what we call discourse. The reader will no doubt see that...the discursive character of an object does not, by any means, imply putting its *existence* into question. The fact that a football is only a football as long as it is integrated within a system of socially constructed rules does not mean that it thereby ceases to be a physical object. A stone exists independently of any system of social relations, but it is, for instance, either a projectile or an object of aesthetic contemplation only within a specific discursive configuration. A diamond in the market or at the bottom of a mine is the same physical object; but again, it is only a commodity within a determinate system of social relations. For that same reason it is the discourse which constitutes the subject position of the social agent, and not, therefore, the social agent which is the origin of the discourse – the same system of rules that makes a spherical object into a football, makes me a player.[26]

Discourses systematically form the subjects (or objects) of which they speak in accordance with newly emerging relations of power/knowledge that allow for control and regulation.

Yet, to claim that the subject is constituted is not to claim that it is fully determined. Identities are the product of the cultural meanings attached to certain attributes, capacities, dispositions and forms of conduct at a particular historical moment. They are invented categories. There is no guarantee of an essential form of identity outside of discourse nor within it. As Foucault reminds us:

> ...it is not enough to say that the subject is constituted in a symbolic system. It is not just in the play of symbols that the subject is constituted. It is constituted in real practices – historically analyzable practices. There is a technology of the constitution of the self which cuts across symbolic systems while using them.[27]

Hence, the critique of the subject, the posting of the subject as a product of discourse, is not a negation of the subject, but as Judith Butler points out "rather, a way of interrogating its construction as a pregiven or foundationalist premise...it is a call to rework the notion outside of the terms of an epistemological given...to call a presupposition into question is not the same as doing away with it; rather, it is to free it up from its metaphysical lodgings in order to occupy and serve very different political aims."[28] It is in this context that Butler asks her readers to consider where the possibilities are for reworking the matrix of power by which subjectivities are constituted, of reconstituting the legacy of that constitution, or reworking the processes of regulation so as to destabilise existing power regimes.

A question of the meaning of place

According to Baldwin, Longhurst, McCracken, Ogborn and Smith, a consideration of place is a means of accounting for the ways in which particular spaces become important in our larger social and cultural world.[29] Barnes and Gregory explain that in geography, place and landscape are commonly treated as a complementary pair and set in opposition to space and location. The differences between the pairs, succinctly put, is that "[w]e analyse space and location, but we experience place and landscape." [30] Place and landscape are terms commonly seen as indicating comfort and the familiar.

The study of place has a long history dating back to 20 BC – 8 AD when Strabo conducted chronological studies of specific locations in order to catalogue their peculiar and singular characteristics.[31] While never exclusively, by the end of the 19th century as geography became a formal discipline in Europe and North America it claimed place as one of its principal subjects of examination and debate. As a topic of interest to geographers, the study of place has experienced many of the same trends in its representation as the discipline as a whole, and more recently been influenced by questions and reformulations of language, meaning and representation occurring within other disciplines, particularly the arts and humanities.

Particularly after the Second World War, a form of geography emerged across Europe and North America based on a certainty about the power and objectivity of empirical observations and related forms of analysis and the cumulative nature of this knowledge. Based on a positivist philosophy, a remarkable degree of consensus emerged within the discipline in terms of a common methodology (the 'scientific method') directed toward exploring a common object (spatial organization). This 'spatial science' was focused on the systematic search for hidden order underlying the differences of the world, an investigation of coherence formulated as either pattern (spatial forms) or a

generative mechanism (spatial process).[32] However, in the late 20th century challenges to this consensus emerged through a series of 'post-positivist geographies' – Marxist and post-Marxist, feminist, poststructural, postmodern, queer and postcolonial. There are substantial tensions between and within the various post-positivist geographies, but what they have in common is a critique of the dominant constellation of objectivity and truth heralded by positivist geography and its failure to account for social, economic and political processes. For my purposes, I will touch on two of these responses to positivist geography - the humanistic and what is broadly referred to as the new cultural geography.[33]

Humanistic responses to space

The humanistic response to the dominance of spatial science in geography arose in part out of consideration of the Marxist geographer David Harvey's critique of positivist analyses of space. In his rigorous abstract economic analysis *Social Justice and the City*,[34] published in 1973, Harvey makes the case for a radical re-orientation of thought and vision within spatial analysis. He argues that the production of mainstream geography was complicit in the production and reproduction of capitalist society. Positivist geography was not scientific at all he asserted, but rather ideological. In Harvey's vision of structural Marxism, capitalist accumulation is the centrepiece in which changes in all other social relations are connected to it.[35] While Harvey remains committed in this book to a recognisably scientific geography, he nonetheless pushed for spatial analyses that were capable of disclosing the objective socio-spatial structures framing and limiting 'man'.[36]

Humanistic geographers such as David Ley and Marwyn Samuels concurred with Harvey that there was a need for a radical shift within geography.[37] They critiqued spatial science for its exclusive reliance on scientific rationality, which they felt could not explain the causes of the patterns it described because it was uninterested in the social and political processes within which these spatial practices emerged. As well, they articulated a deep distrust in the neutrality and objectivity claimed by the practitioners of spatial science. Ley and Samuels not only felt value-free science was impossible but that the scientists were ignoring the ethical dimensions of their research. In the context of famine, war and global pollution, geographers were failing to acknowledge the ways in which the neutral science of space was complicit in global inequality and exploitation. Rather than just describing patterns of spatial inequality and injustice, geographers should attempt to change these spatial orderings.

Yet while humanistic geographers were in agreement with Harvey that a conceptual shift was required in their discipline, Ley and many other humanistic geographers sought to uncover the essence of the experience of place. Their response to Harvey's text was that while it developed a rigorous economic analysis, it was nonetheless abstract and deterministic, and further, he had failed to acknowledge the sources of his claims to know the world.[38] Alternatively, they sought to bring people's perceptions and feelings about place back into focus. Rather than dividing and fragmenting the world, humanistic geography would

highlight wholistic experiences of place by attempting to overcome some of the divisions central to a positivist spatial science: subject/object, analysis/emotion and mind/body. According to humanistic geographers, places are subjective phenomena full of human interpretation and significance, intensely subjective and personal entities, and it is crucial for geography to capture this experience.

For example, in his book *Place and Placelessness,*[39] Edward Relph speaks of place as a basic element in the ordering of our experiences of the world. He asserts that for virtually everyone there is a deep association with and consciousness of the places where we were born and grew up, where we live now or have lived, or where we have had particular moving experiences. These associations, argues Relph, seem to constitute a vital source of both individual and cultural identity and security - a point of departure from which we orient ourselves in the world.[40] Hence, the basic meaning of the place, its essence, does not derive from its geographical location, nor from the trivial functions that place serves, nor from superficial or mundane experiences most people have in the place - though these are all common and perhaps necessary aspects of a place. The essence of a place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines that place as a profound centre of human existence. Hence, place is not a simple undifferentiated phenomenon of experience that is constant in all situations, but instead has a range of subtleties and significance as great as the range of human experiences and intentions.

Humanistic geographers brought the sensibilities of everyday, place-bound life into academic discourse. They stressed the dynamic life-world experience of place and the commonalities between the perceptions of geographers and their subjects. Sometimes by assertion and sometimes through fieldwork, they tried to overcome the transparency and obviousness of everyday by illuminating the ordinary and extra-ordinary experiences of place. Human geographers thus insisted on the inseparability of humans from their environment.[41]

In stressing the idea of place identification, humanistic geographers made popular the term "sense of place". Sense of place is more limited in its application than place but concurrently an integral element of the meaning often attributed to place. Sense of place refers to the development of feelings of connection to a geographically bounded site that acts as a centre of meaning or identity and a source of motivation.[42] One of the more well known writers on the topic of human responses to physical settings, Yi-Fu Tuan, calls the specific manifestations of human love for places topophilia.[43] Tuan maintains that finding meaning in the spatial dimension is a reflection of one's belief system and dependent upon getting to know a space and endowing it with value.[44]

Likewise, for many humanistic geographers home is a particularly significant place full of deeply felt experiences and meanings. Relph asserts that home is an irreplaceable centre of significance. Similarly, Tuan claims that "hearth, shelter, home or home base are intimate places to human beings everywhere."[45] Encapsulated within Tuan's discussion of home is the idea that gaining a sense of place requires a home base. Home is a field of care from which one withdraws and ventures forth.

Often there are strong links between place writing focused on home and Heidegger's concept of *Dasein.* Translated into English, the word 'Dasein' means 'dwelling' but it also has connotations of oneness with the environment, an ability to inhabit a place rather than simply being in it. For Tuan, the state of being at home becomes so deep that it often transcends from cultural to biological adaptation.[46] As David Harvey points out, the concept of *Dasein* implies appropriateness and appropriation in implying a "capacity to achieve a spiritual unity between humans and things."[47]

The body also has been of importance to many humanistic geographers. "Body implicates space: space co-exists with their sentient body,"[48] writes Tuan, and topophilia is felt in part corporeally. David Seamon discusses what he called 'place-ballet' in which he describes instances of individuals feeling a heightened sensitivity to place as they routinely move through physical spaces, the boundary between self and environment momentarily dissolved.[49] Although their analysis has never extended as far as incorporating a discussion of gender, physical ability or sexuality, the focus on the body pointed toward the need to discuss embodied subjectivities differently.

For humanistic geographers self-reflexivity plays an essential role in the geographer's understanding of place. In adopting a phenomenological orientation, these geographers attempt to remove all a priori assumptions before undertaking research in order that the experiences of place could be fully and accurately recorded. Not all humanistic geographers have thought this 'cleansing' possible but they nonetheless refuse a position that good spatial analysis is only the result of a disembodied researcher. Yet, as Gillian Rose points out, this self-reflection has not functioned to contextualise this knowledge, but instead allows these researchers to universalise their claims.[50] Many insist that to be sensitive to place is an essential human characteristic. According to Tuan, to know the world is to know one's place. By implication those not interested in place are less alive, healthy and human.

With the focus on exploring the "essence" of people's connection to place, the attempt in humanistic geography is on delineating general patterns and universal structures of place attachment. As illustrations, one can look to the academic research of Daniel Williams' explorations of the fostering of "place-identity," [51] Serge Viau's characterisation of authentic places[52] and Tuan's commentary on homelands. In Tuan's words:

> This profound attachment to the homeland appears to be a world-wide phenomenon. It is not limited to any particular culture and economy. It is known to literate and nonliterate peoples, hunter-gatherers, and sedentary farmers, as well as city dwellers. The city or land is viewed as mother, and it nourishes; place is an archive of fond memories and splendid achievements that inspire the present; place is permanent and hence reassuring to man (*sic*), who sees frailty in himself and chance and flux everywhere.[53]

Self-reflection is a means for understanding the truth of place, or at least knowing the distortions of that truth. While certainly some humanistic geographers recognize the variability of interpretations of place, in general, their own analysis is intended to transcend or make sense of such diversity of perspectives. Accordingly, the accounts produced by humanistic geographers about place often find form as taxonomies of sense of place, historical overviews or global geographies of the development of this essential human sensitivity.

New cultural geography

In reaction to the monolithic explanatory principles of grand theories, geographers influenced by poststructuralism avoid universal principles and abstract schemes that are intended to mirror the world. Ruptures and incongruities are highlighted rather than smoothed over. They reflect on the situatedness of their research and spatial accounts, a situatedness that is often white, masculine and Western. They practise a much more open-ended form of spatial research where their development is seen as an active social process rather than a completed final product. Theory is an explanation "that is pieced together, contingent and unfinished and reflecting the context of its manufacture."[54] Finally, they borrow from poststructuralism the idea that facts are not free floating, independent phenomena waiting to be found, but rather, are socially produced. In this sense, facts have complex social histories enmeshed in webs of power and vested interests.

Not all new cultural geographers[55] would be comfortable with a poststructuralist label, indeed many would align themselves more easily with a Marxist, political economy or feminist theoretical orientation. But certainly, whatever label they adopt, most would agree that geography is a contested domain in which different social groups try to define and impose their ways of understanding the world (spatial and otherwise) onto others. New cultural geography is a broad identifier, which as Barnes and Gregory explain emerged in North America and Britain in the 1980s. It includes geographers who make explicit use of cultural, social and, increasingly for some, psychoanalytic theory to discuss spaces, place and landscapes. In particular, these spatial theorists have an interest in the relations between power, identity and spatial representation. Further, like those involved in the rise of cultural studies, many of those who contribute to the new cultural geography engage with postcolonial, postmodern and poststructural theory.

To speak of spatial knowledge as a series of representations suggests recognition of the multiplicity of forms in which the world is portrayed and draws attention to a series of questions such as: What is included in this spatial form? What is left out? What is the aim? And, what is the influence? These questions and more focus attention on what some cultural theorists refer to as 'poetics and politics.' According to Barnes and Gregory, poetics is a cultural practice that must account for the "force, exactness and power of words themselves."[56] There is nothing mere about words. Words not only represent the world, they create it, they offer possibilities and they produce actions. This is a position adopted by

James Clifford, in a book he co-edited called *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, in which he asserts that all anthropological accounts are rhetorical constructions, cultural artefacts that seek to persuade.[57] These exposés are not just texts, but involve the wider context of power, resistance, institutional constraints and innovation.

With respect to place, the poetics of inquiry directs attention to how different people's relationships to place vary considerably. The way to capture this diversity is through studies that do not end at discovering that places are meaningful, but that explore what these meanings are and show how they vary for different social groups. At a more fundamental level, it also means raising questions about the very meaning of place, the role of place in ordering the world, its constitution as a social formation, and its apparent affiliation with landscape. As James Duncan and David Ley discussed with reference to topography, while maps are most often viewed as objective, geographical representations of a particular place, city, town or tract of land, it is also a practice and a knowledge put to use in the service of power.[58] The poetics of inquiry would entail asking questions about the discourse this text is embedded in and how this spatial knowledge allows certain groups to exercise power through its ordering and highlighting of certain facets of the topography.

A key concept in such analyses is intersubjectivity, which Pamela Shurmer-Smith and Kevin Hannam explain allows individuals to reach a tenuous understanding of one another, to experience each other jointly.[59] When discussed in new cultural geography, discourse about intersubjectivity frequently points to the idea that meanings about space and place are created between people in specific spatial, social and historical contexts. People make places meaningful through social interactions. As Doreen Massey argues, "[t]here are no such things as spatial processes without a social context."[60] Further, Massey insists on recognition of the reverse, that is that "[t]he spatial organization of society, in other words, is integral to the production of the social, and not merely its result."[61] Statements like this are not intended to suggest that the landscape, or space more broadly, be seen as a social actor, but rather to encourage recognition of space as influencing to varying degrees our experiences and understandings of the world. As a good example of this, one can look to Foucault's discussion of the spatial form of the panopticon that influences very overtly, but does not determine, the behaviours of the individuals contained within it.

Further Massey insists that in conceptualising the spatial, we recognise within the lived world the existence of "a simultaneous multiplicity of spaces: cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism."[62] Space is a configuration, a multiplicity of trajectories and a "co-constitutive product with relations/interactions."[63] You are in the constant process of making and breaking links to locations, those spaces you find yourself in as you go through your day. So you are not moving across space any more than you are simply moving through time, rather, "you are altering it a little, moving it on, producing it."[64] Concurrently, those social relations that constitute

space are being reproduced within those spaces, but always in a slightly altered form.

Turning to the Oldman basin we might try to capture a glimpse of some of these trajectories as we consider residents who spend their days in that location, and others who leave that area when they go to work, shop, visit, etc. When those residents who left return to the Basin they are not going back to the same place they left, for things have been happening in that place while they were gone. As Massey notes, "[p]laces change; they go on without you."[65] Nonetheless, their spatial and social trajectories intersect at some level over time so that together they create the social and spatial world they share.

We all experience and interpret the social relations of places and spaces differently depending in part on the social positions we hold in relation to it. "[P]eople are everywhere conceptualizing and acting on different spatialities."[66] So for example, unequal power relations between the genders influences how men and women experience, access and move through the same places. This is one of the underlying premises of the annual Take Back the Night marches, an aim of which is to raise awareness of many women's lack of safety on the public streets of today's communities.

The sense of place and lifeworlds humanistic geographers discuss is expanded by new cultural geographers to account for the power relations between social groups and how places are implicated in the transformation of power relations. The practices that create places are forged within social relations of class, race, gender, sexuality and occupation, relations that extend far beyond the boundaries of any particular place. However, the specific relations between men and women, Whites and Natives, rich and poor, occur within defined spaces, the places in which those lived realities are played out. Finally, the relationships of power also structure the languages spoken or the discourses that dominate as social groups compete for ways of giving meaning to places.

For example, a study conducted by Allan Pred of late nineteenth century Stockholm explored how place names were used as 'weapons' in a class war in a rapidly modernising city.[67] As Stockholm grew and changed the lower classes adopted names for streets and locations throughout the urban area as a means of assisting people in getting around. These names were largely 'practice-oriented' based on what went on in the location, but some were simply rude and anti-authoritarian displaying ironic humour. In contrast, the official names enforced and used by middle class Swedes to clean up and regulate the city were laden with middle-class values and ideas of progress, names not adopted by many within the lower-class. In this analysis of 'place-name wars', Pred's discussion of Stockholm demonstrates how the transformation of space and nature are inseparable from the reproduction and transformations of society.

The meanings of places are always multiple, contested and open-ended. There is no single essence of place. Rather as Pred points out, "places continually become."[68] All attempts to construct boundaries and to secure the identity of a place are attempts to stabilise spatial meanings. The meaning of a place reflects the differential experiences of the people living in a location, and the myriad

external relations within which that locale is embedded. As well, every place, every horizontal surface, is marked by a history of trajectories, however well hidden by the current dominant notion of landscape. As Massey states it, "the presentness of the horizontality of space is in fact a product of a multitude of histories whose resonances are still there, if we would but see them..."[69]

New cultural geographers, particularly those influenced by poststructuralism, postcolonialism and postmoderism, not only discuss the identity of places but also explore the identities of those living, working and playing in specific locales. The co-ordinates of subjectivity are constituted by the spaces in which they become embodied, the spaces in which they are embedded. The residents of the Upper Oldman basin, for instance, contribute to the meaning of that place and in turn their identities are constructed from geographically anchored discourses that are themselves forged from spatially diffuse systems of power. While places are no longer the clear supports of our identity (not that they ever were, but many perceive that there was a closer connection between the two in the past) space plays an important role in the forging of identities – even if it is an identity constructed around a feeling of placelessness.

A number of new cultural geographers' interest in identity has been directed at exploring the ways in which cultural and social identity is inscribed in and constituted through systems of spatial difference. Marking difference allows for symbolic boundaries to be erected so that anything defined as impure or abnormal can be stigmatised and expelled. Paradoxically, this also makes difference powerful and strangely attractive precisely because it then becomes threatening and forbidden. Edward Said's critique of the discourse of Orientalism is instructive in detailing some of the complex relations between difference, identity, discourse and space. Said explains Orientalism as an institutionalised, corporate system of knowledge/power by which the European-Atlantic dealt with the East – "dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient."[70] As Baldwin and her colleagues explain, Orientalism as Said describes, is a romanticised view of what the West saw themselves as lacking – spirituality, spontaneity, exoticism – as well as a construction of the East as irrational, unchanging and feminine.[71]

Spatially, Said calls into question geographic essentialism – "the absolute fixing of a singular set of meanings to a portion of the globe and its people."[72] As Said argues, "that notion that there are geographical spaces with indigenous, radically 'different' inhabitants who can be defined on the basis of some religion, culture, or racial essence proper to that geographical space is...a highly debatable idea."[73] Nonetheless, these imaginative geographies are crucial in forming identities, and for the West, in exercising power and domination over the East. This process of making distinctions between places, of drawing boundaries and naming places and associating a particular group to each of these places is crucial in delimiting 'them' and 'us'. As Said states, "there is no doubt that the imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of

itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away."[74] This projection of bipolar identities in which the West rules, defines and assigns as 'other' the East, not only allowed the West to imaginatively possess the East but also to secure global dominance economically, politically and socially. Further, this interplay of identity, discourse and power demonstrates well how identities are not innate and essential but derive from a play of difference.[75] In chapter five I will take up this idea of imaginary identities and geographies as it relates to the Upper Oldman River basin, specifically in terms of ranchers.

The process of the production of imaginative geographies, the partitioning of space and the creation of boundaries between social groups takes place not only between cultures, but also within them. Work by spatial theorists such as David Sibley, Gill Valentine, Steve Pile, Michael Keith and David Brown illustrate the spatialisation of segregation and discrimination in specific locales such that places become racialised, sexualised and gendered. In turn they examine the implications of these processes in the constitution of identity. For example, Sibley's work, *Margins of Exclusion* exposes some of the ways in which variations in the control and manipulation of spatial contexts reflect different forms of power relations.[76] He argues that critiques of hegemonic culture should pay more attention to the assumptions about inclusion and exclusion that are implicit in the design of spatial forms. Sibley examines the attitudes toward discrepant others that inform exclusionary practices and then shows how processes of control are manifest as exclusion through the creation of spatial boundaries. However, he is careful to note that not always are these systems of control obvious, nor is it equally possible for all individuals to alter or reform these spaces as a means of changing existing social relations. As Sibley explains:

> We can envision the built environment as an integral element in the production of social life, conditioning activities and creating opportunities according to the distribution of power in the socio-spatial system. For some, the built environment is to be maintained and reproduced in its existing form if it embodies social values which individuals and groups have both the power and the capacity to retain. For others, the built environment constitutes a landscape of domination. It is alienating and action on the past of the relatively powerless will register in the dominant vocabulary as deviance, threat or subversion. This contrast suggests that power relations are transparent, however, when they are not. In the routines of daily life, most people are not conscious of domination and the socio-spatial system is reproduced with little challenge. There are some groups for whom exclusion is a part of their daily experience, who will be highly sensitive to alien environments, but their spaces of control are too small to interrupt the reproduction of socio-spatial relations in the interest of the hegemonic power.[77]

Rural places/rurality

Regardless of the signifier of identity, it is the marked/marginalised group that experiences the distinction most intimately. This is not only the case in terms of gender, class, race or sexuality, but as Barbara Ching and Gerald Creed point out, also a matter of significance in terms of rurality. Rural residents experience their marginality often as invisibility. Be it politically, economically, or theoretically, urban sensibilities and lifestyles overshadow the continuing significance of rural based identities and rural places. According to Ching and Creed postmodern, poststructural, postcolonial research has not only conflated, but also almost entirely neglected discussion of the rural. Postmodern social theory's stable reference point has been the city and as such, "it unquestioningly posits an urbanized subject without ever considering the extent to which such a subject is constructed by its conceptual opposition to the rustic."[78] Yet, as Raymond Williams wrote in the *Country and the City,* the rural is ever more in need of understanding and protecting:

> If we are to survive at all, we shall have to develop and extend our working agricultures. The common idea of a lost rural world is then not only an abstraction of this or that stage in a continuing history (and many of the stages we can be glad have gone or are going). It is in direct contradiction to any effective shape of our future, in which work on the land will have to become more rather than less important and central. It is one of the most striking deformations of industrial capitalism that one of our most central and urgent and necessary activities should have been so displaced, in space or in time or in both, that it can be plausibly associated with the past or with distant lands.[79]

Moreover, as Paul Cloke, Jo Little and Andy Pratt argue,[80] even when rural life is seen as significant, it is too often presented as a view from a white, middle-class, male experience of the countryside, and in this sense hides the diversity of experiences of many rural residents and of understandings of the rural. It seems clear that in the subversion of dominant modern discourses, the rural in all its diversity must be considered. But what is this 'rural' authors like Williams wish to preserve?

In journals like *Rural Studies* an array of authors have spent considerable ink over the years trying to arrive at the definitive definition of the rural or critiquing these definitions for their gaps and erasures. According to Cloke and Nigel Thrift, the history of rural studies reveals that the definition of rural has evolved through four phases.[81] In the first phase, the rural was equated with particular spaces and functions and considered to fit the following three criteria: it was dominated by extensive land use or large open, undeveloped spaces; it had small settlements which served the surrounding residents and could be contrasted with urban areas; and, it engendered a particular way of life characterised by a cohesion based on a respect for the environmental and behavioural qualities associated with living on an extensive landscape. In the second phase, rural areas were largely defined by political–economic processes and their links within the

national and international economy. In the third phase, the changing relationships between society and space in relation to the countryside suggested to some rural researchers that it was no longer possible to conceive of a singular rural space. Rural communities had undergone rapid change over the years. Environmental policy, technological developments, commodification of the countryside, agricultural restructuring and the incursion of new middle class residents have pushed the boundaries of what was considered rural, in a physical, metaphorical, imaginary and material sense. Cognisant of these changes, rural researchers spoke of a number of different social spaces overlapping the same locale, such that rurality should now be understood as a social construct reflecting social, cultural and moral values. In the current phase, discussions and debates within the social sciences and humanities about representation, discourse and power, and research on lay discourse of rurality have influenced conceptualisations of rural places. There is not only a multiplicity of meanings of the rural but these are context dependent.

Each of these representations has important implications for the ways rural space is represented, experienced and treated. As Pratt states, "competing versions of the world will have a different effect if resources are mobilised in their favour."[82] While a historical overview such as that provided by Cloke and Thrift suggests how relative the term rural is, at the same time they and others including Creed and Ching, and Chris Philo[83] make the case that this admission should not be read as denying the importance of the rural. They recognise that functional ideas of rural space are still useful and have much currency in society. Moreover, the spatial context in which rural residents live their lives differs in significant ways from that of most urban dwellers therefore requiring that public policies, social program and legislation are designed with this factor in mind. Likewise, for wilderness activists places are also of great significance for it is in these spatial zones that wildlife corridors, biological diversity and wildlife habitat for many animals are to be found.[84] In addition, it is in rural places - particularly those roadless, largely 'undisturbed' areas - where not only wilderness activists but many others believe humans can recapture a sense of connection to the natural world, where they can nurture a sense of place. The increased production of the rural as a meditative resource through the media, literature and museums, and indeed by many environmentalists, have canonised the rural in this manner.

Nonetheless, like all spaces, the rural has not remained a static place. Michael Troughton details the transformation of many rural landscapes in Canada as a move from primarily agricultural or productive landscapes into various other types of land uses – residential, recreational and industrialised. Troughton's model posits historical rural landscapes, communities and lifestyles as being distinct, self-contained and remarkably homogeneous. However, according to Troughton, the absolute and relative decline in Canada's rural system has brought about a spatial fragmentation of rural Canada into three broad regions: the rural margins or peripheral areas; the rural-agricultural hinterlands; and, the rural-urban fringe. He concludes that this chaotic, heterogeneous system has translated into a lack of common goals that can be the focus of policy and legislation, and feeds

the severe weakening of the positive values that contributed to the identity and cohesion of the rural system.

The 'rural margins' include remote coastal and northern regions, many of the First Nations reserves and areas which, because of their physical marginality, have become economically and socially disadvantaged regions. Troughton contends that a primary cause of this marginalisation has been the shift from labour intensive to capital intensive activity in farming, forestry and fishing.[85] The intensification and industrialisation of agriculture, for example, has meant increased mechanisation and capital inputs (fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides, fuel, etc.) requiring a commensurate return in output and income. In many localities, particularly throughout the Maritimes, Canadian Shield and a narrow belt across the northern Prairies, the physical conditions simply made this transition impossible. The result is often devastating for the community: rural poverty; high unemployment; major reductions and overall disadvantage in the provision of social services; reduced availability and an increased cost in goods and services; increased dependence on the public sector; poor health; low levels of educational attainment; and, an out-migration of the population, especially the youth.

The industrialisation of agriculture across the Prairies, encompassing huge increases in farm size and an over 50% reduction in the number of farms, coupled with change in the transportation technology have resulted in massive economic restructuring and a consequent reduction in the demographic and community structure in some regions. Troughton calls these areas the rural 'agricultural hinterlands'. Across the Prairies, lower population densities and the restructuring of grain production and handling, particularly the elimination of elevators, has led to a reduction in the number of rural centres and the provision of services within these communities. In addition, the transition of Canada as a whole to an urban-dominated socio-economic structure has been reflected in the loss of political power for many rural areas at a federal and sometimes even provincial level. Such agricultural communities consequently face the problems of a narrow range of employment, especially in the non-farm sector and for women, as well as a stagnant and/or ageing population. For such rural hinterland communities, this has translated into on-going efforts toward and difficulties in keeping the communities viable. Symbolically these transformations have brought about a loss of a traditional rural ideal.

Finally, the 'rural-urban fringe' includes zones around every town and city in Canada. The extent of the zone is determined largely by the size of the urban agglomeration of which it is a part. Unlike the other two rural categories, Canada's rural-urban fringes are experiencing population growth composed of residents whose average age is younger than both that of the urban and other rural populations. With the population growth has arisen demands for new residential and related developments including pressure for education, health and other social services. Some of the land in the rural-urban fringes may still be in rural or quasi-rural production and use, but the ownership or occupants are largely urban-oriented. Many of these rural residents are commuters who while seeking rural amenities (symbolic or material) also seek access to their urban jobs or urban-type

services. Others are people searching for a lifestyle alternative to city-life and correspondingly, seek out the rural idyll. Be they in search of place as playground or place as sanctuary/Eden, these two groups of newcomers are significantly altering the socio-economic and political dynamic of the former "traditional" rural community, being both creators and consumers of a new rurality, of new places.

Processes of globalisation

For many geographers, the transformations currently affecting rural areas can be largely attributed to processes of globalisation. The presumed effect of global interconnections and movements on place is a decline in the significance of the local – in the amount of time spent in intimate locales; in the number of friends and family in the immediate area; and, in the amount of control that might be exercised at the local level. There is much debate as to the extent of the these processes, but as Sharon Zukin observes, "[t]he language of modernism expresses a universal experience of movement away from place, and aspires to submerge or incorporate it into a 'larger' whole."[86] As a part of this process people are thought to lose their attachment to place.

In economic terms globalisation is frequently discussed as being about the emergence of a post-Fordist regime. Fordism was a distinctive feature of capitalist societies after World War II, which encompassed what Joachim Hirsh characterises as:

> a peculiar mode of surplus value production (Taylorism, extended mass production of durable consumer goods, and the division of labor at the level of the world market) but also a distinct form of the state (Keynesian, social-democratic, and corporatist welfare state) as well as of ideology (progress, equality, bureaucracy, unlimited exploitation of nature).[87]

This political-economic arrangement is thought by some to have been superseded by a more 'flexible' regime involving significant changes in the organisation of capital and society that has created a more polarised workforce and the dismantling of the welfare state. The degree to which this transformation has occurred, or even whether or not it is a fundamentally different mode of production, is hotly debated. Yet, there is agreement that post-Fordist characteristics such as niche marketing, product diversity, decentralised production, and global sourcing are being adopted by a number of companies and corporate firms across the globe.[88] On a larger scale, economies like that in the United States and many other industrialised nations have undergone major restructuring away from traditional production industries such as steel manufacturing, automobiles, farm machinery and electronics. Further, many firms have responded to increased global competition and reduced profitability by retrenching labour, by automating, and by moving their production to regions with cheaper and often non-unionised labour forces.

In terms of agriculture, this post-Fordist regime resulted in the extensive and deep integration of family farms into an agri-industrial system of production, distribution, finance and consumption of food.[89] In Canada, the agri-food sector

currently accounts for 9% of the GDP and 24% of the total number of Canadians employed.[90] The debt and commodity-price crisis of the early 1980s shook up agricultural production and trading patterns dating back roughly to 1950, giving way to fragmented markets based on increasingly differentiated patterns of consumption, as well as corporate pressure (originally from the United States) for freer trade in agricultural products.[91] Agriculturists responded to these pressures by attempting to become more productive and efficient, while at the same time trying to remain flexible and diversify. For many this translated into a greater investment in a capital-intensive system that includes expensive machinery and industrial products like biotechnology and chemical applications, which in the long-run has meant a greater reliance on credit.[92] As well, this economic re-organisation became connected to a political movement away from social democratic principles to a more neo-conservative outlook, a political orientation certainly dominant in the Oldman basin although not a recent political evolution. As a part of the re-organisation, individuals and organisations have shifted from an emphasis on mitigating the impacts of private accumulation to ensuring the sanctity of entrepreneurship.

Frank Vanclay and Geoffrey Lawrence argue that this new post-Fordist regime is and will increasingly have a three-fold effect on agriculture.[93] First, the reduced significance of mass markets will greatly disadvantage countries like Australia and Canada that largely produce bulk, undifferentiated commodities, particularly in an era of global overproduction. Second, there will be increased reliance on new technologies such as computing and bio-technologies, as well as an increase in the application of agricultural chemicals (fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides) in order to increase production. In turn, these new expenditures will further polarise agriculture into an economic sector of 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Finally, the demise of the welfare state will translate into even further reductions in support for rural social infrastructure.

Yet, both within and beyond agriculture, globalisation has neither had a homogeneous effect, nor been equally apparent for all. For a certain segment of society – most notably affluent, white, Western males - their experiences in life have sped up and spread out, but for most people in the world, everyday life continues to take place largely within a restricted area. As Linda McDowell comments, even for the most mobile international financier, great parts of their daily lives occur within a restricted area.[94] Further, as John Agnew points out, "even in a world in which many sources of information and social cues are extra-local, especially as transmitted by the electronic media, information and social cues are meaningful only when activated in everyday routines of social action."[95]

Henri Lefebvre believed that such major transformations of production such as those brought about by the globalisation of agriculture were reflected by changes in spatialisation. Lefebvre saw modern history as propelled by a formal model or theoretical understanding of social changes (conceived space), culminating in the imposition of a commodified and bureaucratised space (abstract space), over the space everyday life and experience (concrete space). Lefebvre posited abstract space as produced in capitalism's image as a means of

continuing this mode of production but he was careful to note that its distinct feature is homogeneity and fragmentation at the same time. The image of unity of abstract space is achieved by the state "through a continued state-sponsored process of fragmentation and marginalisation that elides difference and thus attempts to prevent conflict."[96] In this context, the state produces and reinforces normative definitions of space in order to maintain the social hierarchy and its hegemony. At the same time, he saw the inherent contradictions of abstract space as providing opportunities for oppositional groups to challenge the dominant representations central to that space. At a global level, abstract space materialises as discontinuous, as cultures are constituted against each other, mingling and interacting with one another, with the global space of capital causing fragmentation and diversity under the sign of global exchangeability.[97]

According to Rob Shields, Lefebvre's discussion of the modern state with its transformation of the modes of production and of space is one of his least credible ideas in the *Production of Space*.[98] In Shields' words: "Lefebvre is controversial in first replacing Marx's history of modes of production with a history of spatialisation and second, in cutting this up into periods."[99] Nonetheless, Lefebvre's spatial categories are useful in highlighting the negotiations over the social production and bounding of space that mark historical periods, and in providing analytical categories that help make sense of some of the broad spatial (material, symbolic and metaphorical) transformations associated with globalisation. From Lefebvre's analysis it becomes apparent then that the global and local are relational and that the impact, spatially and socially, of globalisation has been uneven. At the level of the individual, the social, material and political resources they are able to access provide them with variable abilities to mediate the demands of capital accumulation and the new global culture. Further, people have differential responses to global forms of capitalism and culture, and the assumed loss of place that is associated with it. For some, global markets and culture mean opportunity, greater tolerance and a more widespread cosmopolitan sensibility. For others they become victims of globalisation as they are unable to compete in the global marketplace, or become lost in a culture of increased anonymity. Still others react to globalisation by feeling an intensified sense of attachment to the local. Signs of an intensified sense of locality can be seen in the revival of local customs, practices and languages, ethnic nationalism and outright antagonism to outsiders.

From a spatial context, while globalisation may mean the treatment of the landscape and social spaces in an increasingly homogenous fashion, these planetary processes do not alone create places. Rather, spaces in a contemporary and historical context are always constituted by a range of processes that operate on a diversity of scales. Places like the Upper Oldman River basin are made from the intersection of flows and movements of trajectories some of which occur at a local or regional level, and others that are tied closely to global configurations. Electronic media tie the residents of the Basin to distant locations like Toronto, Los Angeles and Japan but when the chinook winds send their shed's roof flying

into the side of their truck, they are reminded of the particularities of the place in which they live.

Communal associations

Part of the difficulty in trying to articulate what factors allow community to survive in a place, or conversely impede its realisation is that first one must be clear about what is meant by the concept. Although the word 'community' is widely used and often cast as a social ideal, it nonetheless remains largely elusive. In part, the ambiguity of the term can be attributed to the multiplicity of interpretations of the concept. In his examination of the occurrence of community in sociological literature, George Hillary identified ninety-four separate definitions divided into two broad categories – general and rural - and composed of sixteen different conceptual elements.[100] All but three of the definitions mentioned a group of people in social interaction. All fifteen of the definitions of rural community included social interaction and geographic area as important elements. Three of these definitions defined community exclusively in terms of ecological relationships.

The array of definitions of community may suggest to some that it is a loose and amorphous formulation and more a hopeful declaration than an actual practice or defined set of relations.[101] Community can best be perceived as a notion that is variously defined as a general idea associated with particular feelings - a belief, an opinion, an intuition or an urge usually found to be "heavy with ideological overtones."[102] As Zygmunt Bauman reminds us, meaning and feelings are not independent of each other, and so it should be of no surprise that community 'feels' good because the meanings conveyed by the word all promise pleasures: a warm, cosy and comfortable place, a roof with shelter from heavy rain, a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day, and so on.[103] Likewise Raymond Williams remarks that community is a word that is warmly persuasive and therefore invoked by nearly everyone including representatives on both the political left and right.[104] Appeals to 'community standards' of some united and unitary group have been used by the right to disqualify and silence those who offend hegemonic standards of decency and taste. Community serves the left equally well in their appeals to populist grassroots movements.

Community is hardly a new notion though having been an animating cultural principle for much of contemporary human history. Some fifty years ago, sociologist Carle S. Zimmerman observed that the notion community had been discussed either directly or incidentally by nearly everyone who had written in the social sciences since Aristotle.[105] Theoretical analyses of community often are traced back to the founding voices associated with the discipline of sociology, individuals such as Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and Robert Redfield, to name just three. Over several decades there emerged what Jessie Bernard refers to as four distinct paradigms of community studies: [106] the ecological paradigm, which describes how settlements are spatially structured in terms of the distribution of populations;[107] the social class paradigm, which explores variations in how people live according to their social status;[108] the community power

paradigm, which examines systems of social control that emerge within defined areas;[109] and, the Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft paradigms which explore the meaning of spatial elements in terms of human relationships..[110] This latter characterisation of community was created by Ferdinand Tönnies who spoke about ideal types of community. On one end of the continuum is Gemeinschaft, forms of human association characterised as being intimate, familiar, mutually interdependent and reflective of a shared moral code and social consciousness, and on the other, Gesellschaft, communities which are impersonal, transitory, heterogeneous self-interested social relations. According to Tönnies, the requirements of community are met only in the context of the human associations characterised by Gemeinschaft occurring within the confines of a limited and shared physical territory.

Building on Tönnies' typology, ideal types became relatively pervasive in discussions of community amongst sociologists and social critics for some time. One of the more well known of these is Robert Redfield's concept of a folk-urban continuum, an discussion of some of the feelings and views about community of most interest to me in this thesis.[111] Redfield was interested in the precise changes societies would experience as they underwent a transition from folk to urban communities. He postulated that the progressive loss of isolation when associated with an increase in heterogeneity produces social disorganisation, secularisation and individualisation – one end of his community typology. In contrast, he conceptualised folk societies as small, isolated, non-literate and homogeneous communities with a strong sense of group solidarity based largely on kinship structures. In this idealised community, behaviour is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical and personal.

The typology characteristic of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft has also entered the domain of environmental writing. While not all environmental writers take up the subject of community, there are a number of those concerned with wilderness who utilise typologies that mirror in many respects those developed by Tönnies and Redfield. For example, in deep ecologist, Arne Næss' *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, he clearly articulates a connection between small, intimate, self-reliant communities and environmental sustainability. In his words,

> Locality and togetherness in the sense of community are central key terms in the deep ecological movement. There is, so to say, an 'instinctive' reaction against being absorbed in something which is big but not great – something like our modern society. It is, however, not easy to make quite clear what are the essential characteristics of a desirable local community.[112]

Næss then goes on to list ten characteristic properties of green communities. His list includes: members are not so numerous that they cannot know each other; there is little direct influence from outside which interferes with the order inside; high economic self reliance; culture and entertainment which has a local flavour; and personal transport is feasible in the community. Næss, like many environmentalists, be they deep ecologists or others, embrace the idiom, 'small is

beautiful' and share in a vision of a healthy community that closely approximates Tönnies' Gemeinschaft and Redfield's folk societies. The theoretical position put forward is that western social relations underwent a radical transformation as the economic base of society changed and the community moved away from place. In a more contemporary context the contingencies discussed as threatening community include social forces such as technological innovation, mass communication and increased mobility which draw people away from their place-centred communities and ties to the natural world.

Some discussions of community within environmental writing also put forth the view that the concurrent loss of place and community have helped usher in the ecological crisis. Place and social ties are overarching contingencies of community providing a protective barrier to individuals from the onslaught of outside inimical forces. In this sense, the quest for community reflects the attempt to reverse the impersonal slide into an urban life devoid of nature and social support by developing an ideology anchored to personal ties and place.[113] Place, interaction and social ties become then the overarching contingencies for building healthy community. Place is constructed as the context in which social conflict can be negotiated and reconstructed to foster community and ecological vitality.

Challenging the traditional communal structure

Given the importance of community to so many, and specifically the importance of communities tied to place to many environmental activists, it is worth considering the criticisms of political appeals to community. Community as a protective barrier or community as providing connection is for many unquestionably desirable. Yet, as I indicated in chapter two, frequently those who use broad metaphors are unaware of all the freight attached to the concepts they utilise and as a result are led to espouse propositions with which they might not entirely agree. It therefore is helpful to critically examine the metaphors that usually accompany or that are embedded in most discussions of community for their coherence, consistency and compatibility.

According to a number of contemporary theorists, it is highly problematic to tie notions like home and belonging to one physical place, or aspire to an ideal notion of community as a political alternative to the oppression that some believe characterises capitalistic, patriarchal society. For example, Iris Marion Young argues that in their nostalgic attachment to Gemeinschaft, the celebrants of community fail to acknowledge the many ways in which these places can also be stifling and imprisoning. John Ladd and Seymour Sarason's analyses of community separately caution the reader that showering the concept of community exclusively with positive attributes obfuscates the fragmentation and tension inherent within social interaction.[114] Drucilla Cornell is likewise sceptical of appeals to community and the universality this word often implies. While the word community is ever inviting, it's an elusive concept that in spite of all its allure, in its realisation inhibits as much as it supports, and denies as much it protects. There is a price to be paid for the privilege of living in a community.

Further, in a global society the salience of community as a geographically bound entity appears to many to be of less relevance. Post-modern life is no longer anchored to place but rather is characterised by being in a perpetual state of motion, with social interaction often occurring in distant, heterogeneous contexts. Although all social interactions occur within a spatial milieu of some kind, modern communication technologies allow for social exchange to occur beyond the boundaries of one specific geographic region. As well, because of their jobs, education or a desire for more multicultural experiences, some global citizens have lives that are not rooted in one place, but rather, connected to many. There is concern that place and the local are undermined by the spreading out and speeding up of social processes.[115]

In response to expressions of the above concern (for example, consider Næss' understanding of community), Young criticises models of community built around face-to-face interaction as a primary goal. In her estimation, political visions based on constructing small, face-to-face decentralised communities provide an unrealistic vision for transformative politics in mass urban societies. As well, there is no conceptual ground for considering face-to-face relations as more authentic social relations than those mediated across time and space. Any relation between two people is mediated whether they are in the same room or half way across the globe, and that in both of the aforementioned circumstances, there is as much possibility for violence and separation as there is for communication and consensus.

Young further challenges, on both philosophical and practical grounds, the notion that communities are places offering mutual identification, physical closeness and comfort. She argues that the political ideal of community generally privileges unity over diversity, immediacy over mediation, sympathy or identification over the recognition of the limits of one's understanding of others from their point of view.[116] One cannot realise both community and freedom at the same time, or at least both in equal quantities. Bauman concurs declaring that the price of being in community is a loss of individuality – freedom, autonomy and self-assertion.[117] Community and individuality are opposite sides of the same coin and as such, gaining the security of community means losing freedom. As well, the unity of community found in the ideals of Tönnies' Gemeinschaft, or Redfield's folk society produces, and even requires homogeneity or universality. As Cornell indicates, universality implies an absence of diversity:

> This skepticism ... is based on the deep suspicion that lurking behind the ideal of community is a nostalgia for an integrated "organic wholeness" that inevitably excludes those who do not seem to fit into the community.
>
> Philosophically and politically, twentieth century experience has preumably taught us that the appeal to community ineluctably slides into an appeal to totality, closure and exclusion.[118]

Bauman proposes that the collective moral code and social consciousness essential to most people's understandings of community rests not on a consensus, but on an understanding that is shared by all its members.[119] This is a matter-of-

fact understanding, an understanding that is there without words and hence never requires its members to ask 'what do you mean?' It is an understanding that helps to create the intimacy, familiarity and mutual interdependence found in Gemeinschaft and the strong sense of group solidarity that characterises folk societies. Yet, the logic of the folk society and Gemeinschaft set up a polarity in which community is cast against individualism thereby denying difference between and within subjects.

Like Cornell and Bauman, Young argues that the attempt to achieve communal unity necessarily requires suppression of differences amongst individuals, or alternatively, the exclusion of persons. She challenges the desires for wholeness and identification so often inextricably linked to the search for and celebration of community as a move to exclude others and separate the pure from the impure. Young explains that the ideal to generate unity rests upon a logic of hierarchical opposition, a creation of 'inside/outside', such that something must always be excluded in order to achieve a unity of consciousness. In Young's estimation such an identity is simply unattainable because the totality of unity necessarily expels some entities. In other words, as Hope Olson argues, many conceptualisations of community establish a unity that excludes those who are different, those who do not fit.[120]

The criticisms offered by Young, Bauman, Cornell and others are instructive in pointing out that many popular discussions of community are little more than nostalgic renderings of a life that never was, failing to acknowledge the oppression, exploitation and devaluing that often accompany the embracing of communal ties. Inhabiting a place over one's lifetime does not itself ensure security, justice, or knowledge and respect of others, including the nonhuman. Rather, the mutual identification, intimacy and shared understandings associated with communal bonds may in fact validate impulses that reproduce racism, sexism, homophobia, and anthropomorphism. Communities privilege some over others, denying many individuals opportunities for self-fulfilment and contravening, denying or suppressing the differences amongst members. While appeals to the ideal of community are often not racist or anthropomorphic in themselves, communal impulses often hamper the emergence of heterogeneity, be that in the form of ideas, the practice of racial or religious traditions, or sexual preference.

Yet, whether a celebrant or critic of community, it is worth noting that those who engage in discussion of the topic frequently construct an opposition. Community and individualism are commonly positioned in an 'either/or' proposition. Indeed, as the interviews associated with a case study of the Upper Oldman River basin will show, there seems a strong tendency amongst people to try to arrest the ambivalence and contradictions that surround the thinking and practice of community by speaking of it as either nurturing or limited. Yet, there is nothing that requires that we accept this dichotomy any more than one has to accept that humans and nature are mutually exclusive, or that good motherhood and paid employment are in sharp contrast. As Penny Weiss points out, such dichotomous thinking is oppressive, distorted and unimaginative.[121] Our

discussions of community tend to be caught in a categorical vice that reproduces, even necessitates, a polarised representation of social relations. Weiss' criticisms open up for discussion and analysis questions regarding the discursive practices that allow for the emergence of new meanings, social actors, political spaces, and forms of viable community.

New social movements

Intellectuals have not been alone in challenging representational forms of Enlightenment and western modernity. The shadow of World War II and the Vietnam War ignited opposition to the bureaucratisation of society, technocracy, corporate capitalism, mass consumerism and the commercialisation of national culture throughout the industrialisation nations. A diversity of social collectivities often referred to as new social movements organised around challenging and resisting new types of oppression in capitalist industrial societies. As such, the emergence of new social movements marks another in a chain of voices that have contested, disrupted, and searched for alternatives to western hegemonic systems of power and representation.[122]

According to sociologist William Carroll, new social movements are forms of "cultural and political praxis through which new identities are formed, new ways of life are tested and new forms of community are prefigured."[123] German social and political scientist Claus Offe offers a more detailed inventory of the features of new social movements.[124] In Offe's estimation, new social movements have four critical characteristics. First, these movements are neither dependent upon the resources of established political parties nor their electoral politics. Second, these movements do not distil down into literary, artistic, religious or other forms of collective expression, but maintain an active role in the generation and utilisation of political power. Third, these movements are not reactionary forms of social protest. Instead they present a non-reactionary, universalistic critique of modernity and modernisation by challenging institutionalised patterns of economic, technological, political, economic and cultural rationality. Finally, Offe believes that unlike utopian experiments, these movements envision a stable and just political order emerging through revolutionary or reformist change.

While there is considerable debate over the specific features that constitute new social movements and which social-political phenomena do in fact qualify as new social movements, generally theorists agree that these alternative political formations have as their roots a reaction against the contradictions created by the internationalisation and a maturing of Fordism, and that they mark a significant departure from state-centred and instrumental political practices.[125] New social movements are evidence of what Offe calls a "new political paradigm"[126] in which social conflicts are defined in broader and deeper terms than was achieved or even possible in earlier social and theoretical frameworks. For example, the labour movement contested the terms of capitalist industrialisation but has never denounced its legitimacy as a model of social development. In contrast, movements including feminism, anti-nuclear and peace have broadly challenged

the neutrality, authority and rationality of bureaucratic and technocratic decision-making. New social movements reflect cultural and political resistance to the penetration of commodity production into every facet of life and to the homogenisation and conformity of experience. As such, these social movements are reshaping "the discursive terrain of politics in distinctive and potentially radical ways, through personal and cultural transformations that refuse accommodation with existing institutions."[127] It is in this respect that Offe conceptualises these social movements as comprised of critics concerned with the contradictions of modern culture.[128]

However, as political theorist Laurie Adkin points out, it is not that new social movements compel us to bury class or Marxist theory, but they do force a more inclusive or holistic analysis of the determinants of social change.[129] It is not class concerns alone, or even most centrally, around which these social movements have formed. Gender, race, ability, age, sexuality, among other factors, impart to individuals and groups identities and values beyond class concerns. These identities/experiences are just as, if not more, important than wage labour identities/experiences in motivating these people to participate in action and the kind of social changes they seek. As Chantal Mouffe explains,

> Within every society, each social agent is inscribed in a multiplicity of social relations...All these social relations determine positionalities or subject positions and every social agent is therefore the locus of many subject positions and cannot be reduced to only one... A person's subjectivity is not constructed only on the basis of his or her position in the relations of production... each subject position, is itself the locus of multiple possible constructions, according to the different discourses which construct that position.[130]

It is significant to note, as Warren Magnusson and Rob Walker put it, that these social movements have opened up the possibility for forgetting the spaces for political action defined by the structures of modern thought, and discovering the new spaces that people are creating.[131] Like poststructural theorists, new social movements encourage a reconceptualisation of epistemological and ontological representations of identity, community and politics. Yet, as Adkin argues, many of these movements fail to fully materialise as a counter-hegemonic force, and therefore in her evaluations even qualify as new social movements, because their societal discourse fails to define a collective identity that broadly links diverse social actors through a shared interpretation of the societal-level conflict of concern.[132] One of the central lessons offered by scholars interested in new social movements is that the building of a broad societal counter-hegemonic force requires avoiding the emancipation of one collective subject via the subordination of another and instead, recognizing the multiple subjectivities and representations of individual actors.

It is beyond the concerns of this work to discuss fully new social movement theory in its various manifestations and comprehensively explore all the insights it offers with respect to a contemporary view of the "politics of

transformation". However, for the purposes of this work, in the context of thinking about social movements, I want to consider how the proposed strategies of wilderness activists', particularly their call for a return to place, fulfil and fall into some of the same problems as other social movements. I will return to an examination of this issue in the conclusions.

Where to from here?

Informed by a social constructionist orientation and the thinking of new cultural geographers such as Massey, Sibley and Gregory, my attempt in the remainder of this thesis is to attempt to analyse the 'structures of textuality' found in place discourse. I will emphasise the interaction between materiality and metaphor, showing that our representations of the world have very real repercussions for how it is we experience it, but also that the way in which they experience the space and place has implications for how we construct our representations. Unpacking these meanings and sorting through the multiplicity of representations is neither a simple nor a transparent process. As John Frow and Meaghan Morris explain, a "'text' involves practices, institutional structures and the complex forms of agency they entail, legal, political and financial conditions of existence, and particular flows of power and knowledge, as well as a particular semantic organisation; it is an ontologically mixed entity and one for which there can be no privileged or 'correct' reading."[133] Rather than emphasising the individual attribution of emotive value to a locality, I will treat place as a social construction, and explore the subjective or cultural forms that particular representations of place realise and make available. In this context, I will focus on the place as an historically contingent multiplicity of institutional and individual relations interwoven within larger structural systems and mapped within a dynamic space-time configuration,[134] while never forgetting that the spatial is imbued with emotional content, mythical meanings, community symbolism and historical significance. It is to stories about historical and contemporary representations of place and space that we now turn.

Chapter Four
Stories About a Place Called the Upper Oldman River Basin

> *Each culture used and therefore modified the environment differently. Each modification in turn helped shape the opportunities available to the dominant culture of the time and to succeeding cultures. Only with knowledge of this reciprocal relationship can we appreciate the nature and scale of the environmental change that has occurred and some of the mechanisms behind it.*
>
> - Barry Potyondi, *In Palliser's Triangle*

> *Thus on San Piedro the silent-toiling, autonomous gill-netter became the collective image of the good man. He who was too gregarious, who spoke too much and too ardently desired the company of others, their conversation and their laughter, did not have what life required. Only insofar as he struggled successfully with the sea could a man lay claim to his place in things...In short, they were lonely men and products of geography – island men who on occasion recognized that they wished to speak but couldn't.*
>
> - David Guterson, *Snow Falling on Cedars*

> *She needed wide open spaces,*
> *room to make her big mistakes...*
>
> - Chorus of *Wide Open Spaces*, lyrics written by Susie Gibson and sung by the Dixie Chicks

Introduction - stories of the West

According to American writer William Kittredge, the stories we tell about our lives and communities are important because we live in stories, we are stories and we are directed by those stories. In his words, "We do things because of what is called character, and our character is formed by the stories we learn to live in."[1] That character and the stories that inform it have much to do with how individuals perceive their place in the world and the places they call home, natural and significant. An experience of a place may well bring to us sensations we could never have imagined, but the stories we hold in the deep recesses of our mind influence the creation of those new imaginings. One's experience of a place often begins well before she sets foot within a landscape, the contours sketched by the

stories she has heard told about the place, and the people who have built and inhabited this place.

Popular stores told about the West are often summed up by a variety of slogans including phrases like - "the last best place", "a land of opportunity" and "opening up of the frontier". For many who live in the contemporary Rocky Mountain West such descriptions resonate deeply, providing a summation of what this place was and or has become. This is a land of plenty, a region of wealth and it's all there for the taking. Yet many wilderness activists have a very different interpretation of the opportunities available in the West for see these landscapes as torn up by industrial development, over-populated by tourists and acreages, and scoured by a century of inappropriate agriculture. However, the fact that these western narratives continue to have currency, that politicians use them as oratory exclamation marks to rouse deafening applause from their audiences, illustrates that in spite of all the ecological data and detailed academic analyses illustrating the West as a land besieged, desecrated and in ecological decline, people continue to view places like the Upper Oldman River basin as brimming with vastness, plenty and hope. As Donald Worster observes, "The West is characteristically a country of daydreams and fantasies, of visions and nostalgia, where people seem constantly to want to escape from the life they made for themselves and to enter one more satisfying to the imagination."[2] Whether fantastic or not, people continue to adopt these western narratives because they say something to them about the place and the kind of people who live there.

What follows are three "stories" about the Upper Oldman River basin. These three stories are not the only ones that can be told about this place, nor are they impartial stories. The first is a story about the first European settlers in the Upper Oldman River basin and the transition of the area agriculturally. The second one focuses on the experiences of the Peigan in this region. Finally, the third story offers details about industrial development throughout the area and the corresponding actions of environmentalists. I decided to tell these specific stories because as representations of the Upper Oldman River basin they each produce different ways of understanding this place, the West, community, rural life and the spatial context of our lives. Each of the stories is a snapshot in the sense that each is a representation of the Oldman basin, a representation that is an amalgamation of personal testimony, historical information and public declarations. While the stories highlight in many ways threads of commonality, in another sense the stories provide three dissonant 'maps' of this locality, offering the reader different ways to understand or read the Upper Oldman River basin.

Although the stories provide a historical context for material that will be later discussed in chapters five and six, the stories are not intended to offer the reader the definitive chronology of events in this region. Indeed, in some cases I provide you with three perspectives of the same events, while in other cases I talk at length in one story about an event that is never picked up in the other two stories. Any locality, the Oldman basin included, is lived and imagined in countless ways that disrupt the unity between social life and location. We are not

simply products of the places we grow up in, nor are our experiences of social processes such as globalisation experienced homogeneously across a particular location. In any location there is a constellation of heterogeneous social and spatial trajectories, and the following stories are intended to foreground some of these.

A. Closing the Frontier

> *The southern prairie provinces have a look, a sound and a "feel" that it is more American than any other region of Canada, and the reasons for it run deeper than the obvious seductions of cattle and cowboys.*
>
> - Tony Rees, *Hope's Last Home – Travels in Milk River Country*

> *"Didja hear the one about the rancher who kept his branding iron hanging from his main gate?" he demanded. He is readying me for a knockout. "Fellah asked him, 'What the hell's that there for?' 'Well,' he says, 'that there's my wind gauge. Tells me when I can go out and feed stock and when I can't. When it's stickin' out a quarter, I can still go and feed. When it's sticking straight out, I don't go outside.'" James pauses for a few seconds to set his hook. He said, "I used to hang a logging chain up there, but I don't use it no more. When the wind really gets up, it pops all the damned links off."*
>
> - James Riviere as quoted by Sid Marty in *Leaning on the Wind – Under the Spell of the Great Chinook*

> *..ranch life on the northern plains remains one of hard work, endless winter feeding and the stress of spring calving. Toss in the violent mood swings of an Alberta March, and cowboy life doesn't sound very romantic at all. Yet, the legend lives on. About mid-August, nature's gears change... It's roundup time once again, and the boys will be in the saddle for a month. If he's lucky enough to be mounted on a good'un with his 'foot in the stirrup and his hand on the horn, he'll be the best damn cowboy ever was born.*
>
> - Ian Tyson, "Cowboy Culture" *Equinox*

<u>The golden age of the cowboy</u>

Sitting in the house of Clarise Nicholls one afternoon, I could not help myself in turning away from her gaze to glance at the piles of newspaper clippings and photographs that cluttered every horizontal surface surrounding us. Tables, the floor and every chair, save the two we were sitting on, were piled precariously high with what seemed to be haphazardly created stacks of mostly yellowed and dog eared papers, the primary subject of which was the Upper Oldman River basin. Given the apparent masses of information she had about the

region, I hesitated over what I could possibly ask which would provide the appropriate opening for her to speak freely about what she knew of this place, a place that had been her home for more than 85 years. Luckily for me, she jumped in without having to be prompted and began the interview this way:

> What I figure that helped and started Pincher Creek was the RCMP, the North-West Mounted Police. They disbanded at Fort Macleod, or at least a lot of them did and took up ranches here. But also they came, the ones that were still in the police force, they started a horse ranch up here. It became their hay situation for, they had a lease farm out east where they hayed, put up hay and they had a detachment here and in fact the police gave the Anglican church its grounds. Still on it. I would say that the North-West Mounted Police were the beginning and the influence. But then so many of them have mustered out and took up ranching which was quite numerous ranches with former RCMP or North-West Mounted Police had been, took up this, and of course they were acclimatised themselves by a few years in the ups and downs of weather and situations. So I credit, I do credit the North-West Mounted Police being the big instigators of making it a ranching community. Those that mustered out and the rest were props to lean on as they tore through here looking for rustlers, beggars, and the reason they came west was to stop the devastation the bootleggers were inflicting.[3]

I asked many people, both those I interviewed and others whom I spoke with less formally, how this community came into being and, like Nicholls, most of them pinpointed the arrival of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) and ranchers as founding this community. Environmentalist, Robert Stacks, stated the origins of the community this way: "the turn of the century ranching community, their roots [are] the deepest."[4] Paul Torrington, who grew up in the area and remains close to many members of his family who still live in the region, in response to the question "...when people talk about the history of the area what do they talk about?" responded, "they talk about the old time ranchers..."[5]

Local history volumes tell a story about the beginnings of permanent European settlement in the Upper Oldman River region that parallels the story Nicholls told me.[6] As one local resident and history buff wrote, "[h]owever, it was from eighteen-eighty when some of the early police had taken their discharge from the force that the real settlement began."[7] For many, the arrival of the NWMP signalled the end of the liquor trade and the start of long-term settlement in the area.

Just north of what is now the town of Pincher Creek, in 1878 the NWMP set up a horse farm that provided food and pasture for those Mounties stationed at Fort Macleod. Although situated nearly 50 kilometres from the Fort Macleod post, the siting of the ranch was no accident. The ranch was erected just beyond the ragged edge of a band of mountain forests twenty-five kilometres east of the Rocky Mountains out on the open prairie. It was a choice site where the cattle

could winter in the shelter of tree cover once the snow fell and in the summer escape the bugs to enjoy the lush grasses of the open prairie.

Captain John Palliser and naturalist Henry Youle Hind[8] once declared lands such as these across the prairies unsuitable for habitation by Europeans. Yet, when the NWMP and American cowboys ventured into the Oldman basin they discerned it as a land of promise and opportunity. What the NWMP recruits saw, which Palliser had overlooked, were the nutritive stipas and wheatgrasses that flourished in the region - spear grass, western porcupine grass, western wheat grass, northern wheat grass, fescue grasses and oat grasses.[9] These mixed grasses provide excellent forage because when they cure they store energy in the stem and leaves where cattle can get at it rather than in the roots. When many of the first ranchers arrived in the area the grasses grew thick and long, in many places reaching up as high as the stirrups of most horsemen.

As well, the prospective settlers timed their arrival just right climatically. The winter of 1878 was unusually mild.[10] That year the best of the winters came to pass with chinook winds blowing frequently throughout the season bringing moments of spring during the heart of winter. The grasses and chinooks together made this ideal country for cattle as the warm westerly wind cleared and melted the snow crust off the grasslands allowing cattle, which will not use their hooves or noses to paw through snow, to get at food and forage all winter long.[11]

The police post/farm had a short life, yet in its first years the resident horse herd grew quickly even with the occasional raid by suspected Indians.[12] Having become acquainted with the area, upon discharge from the force many of the Mounties who established the horse farm became permanent residents in the area. In addition to a group of Mounties, most of the first ranchers in the Upper Oldman River basin were Americans. The influence of Americans was and would reveal itself, even a century later, to be extensive throughout the Oldman watershed.

The initial familiarity of many Americans with the region was largely a result of their use of trade and travel routes that cut through the region following the edge of the mountains and stretching from the Liard River of the Yukon down through the North West to the Marias River in Montana[13] The corridor had been established by Native peoples who ventured across North America centuries before the British and Americans divided the plains into two separate nations. As Barry Potyondi explains, "Even though the 49th parallel had been adopted by the British and American governments as the boundary between their territories west of the Lake of the Woods in 1846, this invisible cordon made absolutely no difference to the intercourse of people and goods on the great plains."[14] The stretch from the Oldman River basin into Montana remained a favoured trade route for many in the region until the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1883. Prior to that point, the Chinook country was in many ways an extension of the upper Missouri basin with Fort Peigan and then eventually Fort Benton used as the centre of trade and communication. Hence, those looking to put down roots in the Oldman basin soon discovered that the trade of goods in

their region was largely done on American soil with the American Fur Trading Company which had established posts along the upper Missouri River.

In part, ties with the States were maintained so long in this region because unlike many parts of the Canadian prairies, the Hudson's Bay Company had never secured dominance in the Upper Oldman River basin. Although the Hudson's Bay Company had rights to most of what is now western Canada, the Blackfoot kept them from having a real presence in the region until the arrival of the NWMP. As people who followed the cyclical migration of the buffalo, in spring or summer the Blackfoot travelled down to the Missouri River basin, a large portion of which was then territory they claimed as their own.[15] The steamboats on the Missouri allowed for the efficient transportation of heavy hides such as bison and elk. Each weighing about 25 pounds, bison hides were simply too heavy a load for transport east by traders who travelled primarily by canoe, such as those who worked with the Hudson's Bay Company. Hence, the Blackfoot felt more comfortable heading south in the spring and fall to trade buffalo hides than north to exchange furs at Hudson's Bay Company posts. However, it is likely that the Peigan also travelled north to Rocky Mountain House to trade with the British pelts and horses they stole from Americans.

Other early European immigrants arrived in the region because of trade, in search of great fortune or as an escape from events south of the 49th parallel. The Stony Trail, the west branch of the corridor that linked Alaska and New Mexico, was a route for some immigrants into the south-west corner of what is now Alberta. Crow war parties travelling north on horse-stealing raids, white trappers and prospectors in search of their fortune, and Americans seeking quick prosperity by discovering a gold deposit all travelled through the area enroute to the banks of the North Saskatchewan and Fraser Rivers. Others settled in the Oldman region after sampling the treasures they discovered or never found during the Montana gold rush in 1862. As well, events including the end of the Civil War, the death of more than 2500 Blackfoot in 1869 due to small pox, and the efforts of the Deputy of the United States, Marshall Charles D. Hard, to stamp out whiskey trade in Montana Territory made regions like the Oldman basin very attractive.[16] Situated just north of the American border and with no government authority whatsoever, the Oldman basin appeared to be a land of endless opportunity.

Initially, the tide of Americans into what was then Rupert's Land went largely unnoticed by the newly established Dominion government. One of the first events to bring the area to the attention of then Prime Minister John A. Macdonald was the Cypress Hills Massacre in 1873. The massacre included the death of an unknown number of Assiniboines (different accounts put the number at thirteen to sixty) including women and children, the rape of two women, and decapitation of an Indian Chief, Little Soldier.[17] Most accounts of the event blame a number of Americans for the slayings citing as proof the illegal hoisting of the Stars and Stripes at the site of the killing. Whether Americans were guilty or not, news of the massacre in eastern Canada spurned a wave of anti-American nationalism. Concern grew over the growing influence of Americans in the region and their long-standing belief that it was Manifest Destiny that the

Dominion lands would one day fall into their hands. However, by the time the Dominion government took a part in helping settle this part of the West, 1200 American settlers and 25,000 head of cattle had settled here.[18]

Additionally, with the signing of Treaty Seven in 1877 and the near disappearance of the bison, the Dominion government became increasingly anxious to populate the region. They were not only interested in keeping the area protected from falling into the hands of the Americans, but also looking for opportunities for expansion of consumer markets for eastern manufacturers and for places that could provide real estate investments for wealthy British. Measures were put in place to allow eastern Canadian and British investors opportunities to acquire huge leases of prairie land at relatively little cost. By an Order-in-Council in 1881, a person or company could lease up to 100,000 acres of grazing land for twenty-one years at the rate of one cent per acre per year. The one requirement was that there had to be one cow for every ten acres leased.[19]

The government's offer, the mild climate and the seeming limitless expanse of grass quickly encouraged investors from afar to lease large tracts of land in the area and import thousands of cattle from the States. By 1883 the ranges of the Montana Territory were overstocked with cattle causing British-owned American ranches to look northward for free grass. The Oldman basin provided the kind of land they coveted. In turn, the Dominion government waived the tariff on American cattle to encourage stocking of the plains. Each herd was accompanied by a number of veteran American cowboys, many of whom stayed in what was then the North West Territories.

The first cattle drive in the area came from Washington through the Crowsnest Pass in 1870.[20] However, many of the first ranches in the southern North West were in foothill country like the Upper Oldman River basin, which offered excellent winter grazing as a result of the frequent chinooks. During the summer of 1878 there were more than one thousand head of cattle in the Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek areas.[21] By the time the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed in 1885, there were seventy-five thousand cattle between the International Boundary and Pincher Creek.[22]

W.L. Morton speaks of these American immigrants as often being seen by Canadians as the ideal new settler because they never openly challenged any of the Canadian institutions of the West and as a rule they were tough, hardy and fiercely loyal.[23] While generally itinerants, prepared to leave behind their roots if they had any, they also never completely assimilated, retaining a latent republicanism within their families, as well as business ties with the States. This was not a radical form of republicanism but a form of republican simplicity that had at its roots a deep doubt of the utility of politics and the state. According to Morton, "This scepticism, when combined with their quiet refusal to accept the whole spirit of Canadian politics, including Canadian political parties, helped prepare the way for the later independence of national political parties, and the final apolitical outlook of many prairie people."[24]

Despite the prevalence of Americans in the region, immigrants to the West experienced a much different life than settlers on the American plains,

largely because of the presence of the Mounties. According to local writer Andy Russell, "It was thus that law and order came to the western Canadian prairies largely ahead of settlement, for apart from a few cattlemen and traders, there was still nobody but Indians."[25] Hence, while the cowboys who settled in the Oldman watershed had been either related to or largely influenced by their American cousins in Texas and Montana, wearing the same clothes, and often speaking the same lingo (complete with Texas drawl), by the time the ranches were established in the region, the rule of the law had been well established and they adapted to these new conditions. As Hugh Dempsey explains, "As a result, the Canadian frontier tended to be more orderly and law-abiding, so that the lynching of horse thieves was unknown, gunfights were exceedingly rare, and serious range wars never occurred."[26]

Aside from Americans who wandered north in search of land, many of the early land owners included wealthy individuals from Ontario, Quebec and the British Isles. Many of these men were well educated and some even brought with them sizeable personal means with which to build the finest homes and secure large leases. One of the largest ranches in the upper Oldman River basin established during the early 1880s was the Walrond Ranche. Capital for the ranch came largely from England, in particular from Sir John Walrond Walrond. 260,000 acres of land situated along the north fork of the Oldman River facing the Livingstone Range and stretching east into the Porcupine Hills was secured for Walrond. Similarly, in 1881, John Stewart, a former Mountie and member of a prominent Ottawa family who had made their fortune in the lumber industry, joined with other investors to negotiate the take-over of the NWMP post and ranch. At its heyday, the Stewart Ranche included 50,000 acres that pastured about 200 horses and 2500 head of cattle.[27]

Besides these huge ranching companies, a number of smaller operators also secured leases. Upon arriving in the Oldman region, these newcomers drifted from job to job, but many eventually settled down to establish their own modest ranches. "It was a way of life that allowed them the freedom they had always sought and treasured, together with the prospect of an assured and moderately rewarding livelihood on the land."[28] They held property rights to parcels of land and often called themselves ranchers, but most of the smaller operators spent much more time in the saddle doing the work of cowboys and basically performing the work of the crew hands they could not afford to hire. Among this group were many French who came up from Oregon and settled five miles northwest of Pincher Creek in an area that soon became known as Frenchman's Flats and today is the village of Cowley. A number of individuals of German heritage also settled in the foothills in area today known as the Dutch (Deutsche) Flats.

According to Barry Potyondi, many of these first settlers were enticed by stories of the region's natural bounty and the commercial opportunities they believed awaited them, others by a quest for independence and still others by the chance to begin again.[29] This 'frontier of dreams', like many other parts of western Canada and America, attracted all sorts of people, some who had known

ridicule and ostracism in their lives because of the different way they chose to live, others who simply felt more at home on the unsettled plains than in towns or cities of the urbanized east or in established farming communities of Ontario and Quebec, and others in search of the new Promised Land.

While the new ranchers and cowboys that worked for them were heterogeneous in some ways, in other ways they formed a quite homogenous group who shared a western European heritage. The 1891 census for the area illustrates that British and Irish heritages were most common in the area. It was little surprise therefore, that for a time, polo became a popular leisure activity. While many of Canada's cowboys broke up the monotony of tending cattle by competing against each other in the testing of their professional skills through racing horses and bronc busting, in the Upper Oldman River basin these activities were complemented by polo. Resident Barry Watson, recalling those early days, remarked, "It was very much a British town, we played polo and had bands. They were the champions for many years." Similarly, on several occasions Ruth Melindy recounted to me stories of her grandfather and his polo team travelling around not only Alberta but the northern United States to participate in matches, and of him being a member of the champion polo team. Polo largely went the way of the passenger pigeon as it was eventually replaced by the rodeo.

The popularity of the rodeo amongst cowboys from the Oldman region was probably in large part due to the overriding influence of Texas and Montana. As Frederick William Ings who came west from Charlottetown wrote in 1882, "Most of our riders come from the States and they taught us all we knew of cattle lore. Over there cattle and roundups were an old story; to us they were a new game."[30] The first recorded rodeo in Canada occurred in 1891 at Fort Macleod.[31] Soon after, most communities in what is now southern Alberta held such events. Today testing of these skills of the open-range west remains a popular community activity.

The abundance of work on the large ranches in the Oldman basin also attracted to the region men who were from visible minorities. For example, John Ware, a black cowboy who hailed from Texas, was one of Canada's most celebrated cowboys known for his ability to handle any horse. There were also frequently a number of Mexican cowboys and Chinese men who worked as cooks on the ranches or for the roundup crews. And of course, in the early years of ranching, Métis and Native cowboys were not uncommon. Long before the days of ranching, Natives had learned the skills of experienced horsemen and they passed these down through the generations. During the 1880s, as promised, the government established a number of band herds and hired Indians to look after them and a few of these individuals even managed to establish their own ranches. While some of these 'coloured' men earned the respect of their fellow cowboys, as Hugh Dempsey points out, "On the frontier, anyone who was not racially of European origin was considered inferior".[32] Racism was commonplace across the western ranges and only a few non-Europeans ever surmounted this prejudice.

Even more uncommon than black or Mexican cowboys, were female cowboys. While the wives and daughters of ranch owners were often

accomplished riders and helped with the corrals and at branding time, rarely did women participate in the roundups or the breaking of horses. One exception was Mary Inderwick, a woman who resided in the upper Oldman River region and grew tired of her husband's 'snobby' English friends. She preferred instead the company of cowboys. So rather than adhering to the social norms of the day and confining herself to household chores, Mary took every opportunity to accompany her husband on the open range.[33]

Initial settlement in the Upper Oldman River basin had few apparent impacts on the landscape. The cattle that speckled the hillsides were negligibly different from the bison that had once roamed across the plains, and until just about the turn of the century, there were no fences to break up the seemingly endless expanse of tall grasses. A few houses, barns and corrals had been built but aside from Pincher Creek, a decade before the end of the 19th century settlement in the region was scanty.

The very hands-off approach to livestock raising was reconsidered when many ranchers took a loss of between 25% and 60% of their herds because the cattle were unable to reach beyond the heavy snowpack to the grass below.[34] The harsh winter of 1886-87 convinced many that the chinooks could not to be counted on and that summer haying was a necessity.

The Dominion government promoted the southern North West Territories as an agricultural paradise as a part of their attempts to populate the region quickly with farmers. They wanted to create markets for eastern goods and railroad traffic in order to help pay down the huge debt incurred because of the building of the CPR. Yet, the eastern half of the region is semi-arid land that most years does not get enough rainfall to support annual grain production. Initially the massive root systems of the indigenous mixed grasses retained enough moisture to allow for several years of ploughed crops of wheat and other grains to flourish, in the years following, the farmers and ranchers were dependent upon both the very unreliable opening up of the skies and calm summers in which the chinook winds would not dry out everything including the soil. Repeatedly experiencing the hot, dry and windy summers likely encouraged Oldman basin resident Frederick Godsal to apply to the Water Resources Branch for application forms to divert water in 1895.[35] The interest in irrigation amongst residents in the Upper Oldman River Basin would periodically wane, but never completely disappear. Decades later it not only would become a community issue again but also be the focus of extensive local and provincial conflict.

The period between 1880 and the disastrous winter of 1906-07 was the golden era of the cowboy in Oldman River basin. By 1883, 18 ranches had been established in the region with 12,000 cattle and 1400 horses. Signs of change were evident two year previous to this when the Dominion government passed its grazing lease legislation requesting ranches to register their leased land or chance losing it to other ranchers or farmers. In spite of the Dominion government's desire to have the Canadian west settled they never fully supported long-term ranching in the area. As Potyondi explains, "When the Government thought about

ranching at all, it was merely as an interim measure of reserving western lands for Canada in the absence of significant farm settlement."[36]

In the early years of European settlement in the Upper Oldman River basin, the leasehold laws supported the ranchers. The federal government felt obliged to protect the large capital investments made by individuals and corporations in the cattle industry, in spite of increased pressure by existing and prospective farmers. But in 1892, through an Order-in-Council, John A. Macdonald gave notice to ranchers across the prairies that any leases that did not provide for voluntary surrender of lands for homestead purposes would be terminated by 1896.[37] His concession to the ranchers was the opportunity to purchase 1/10th of their lease at the price of $2.00/acre. According to William Irvine, this move was a central part of the National Policy of the Conservatives under Macdonald, and later extended and broadened by Laurier, which was to incorporate the western prairies into the national economy as a producer of agricultural exports to gain foreign exchange from international markets for the Dominion government.[38] At the same time the Dominion government put tariffs in place to protect eastern industry by making American goods simply unaffordable.[39] These were changes in policy that opened up new territory for farming and new markets for goods from Ontario and Quebec but would lay the ground work for feelings amongst many westerners that they had become 'the milch cow for confederation'.

In response to the Dominion government's policies, the Canadian Northwest Territories Stock Association, initially a local Pincher Creek organization created for rounding up cattle, was revived, primarily to fight these new developments. The Association had some limited successes. They managed to reduce the price for leased land that a rancher could purchase from the federal government from $2.00/acre to $1.25/acre. Yet, the Association never achieved their ultimate goal, which was to protect the ability of livestock to graze freely in south-western Alberta. As a result several large ranches in the area scaled down their operations, dispensed with their crews and restricted themselves to their deeded land. F. W. Godsal was a typical example of the response of many ranchers to the changing times:

> My lease was about the first to be invaded by settlers, and I saw that it would be impossible to keep them off...I therefore accepted the inevitable and told Ottawa that I would throw open about nine-tenths of my lease (keeping what I had under fence) provided they would reserve from settlement certain springs and watering places on the river.[40]

The defeat of the Conservative government in 1896 marked the end of sympathetic support for the ranching community. Even the Liberal Member of Parliament in the area, Frank Oliver, was more interested in promoting farming and homesteading than in supporting ranching. Another severe winter in 1906-07 in which area ranchers on average lost 25% of their stock[41], completion of the CPR line through Pincher Station in 1897, which allowed for the easy transport of grain, falling cattle prices in 1903 and the shift in federal government policy,

combined to mark the death of large-scale ranching in the southern North West Territories.

As ranches were reduced in size or went out of business, there was less need for cowboys. For the ranches that remained, many of the rancher's children were now old enough to take on much of the work of the cowhands. As Hugh Dempsey explains, "Perhaps the influx of immigrants had already ended the cowboy era, but the winter had made it a dramatic certainty. Even the secretary of the Western Stock Growers Association admitted in 1908 that "no one at all familiar with the ranching industry will hesitate that it is in a condition of rapid decline; dying as decently and as quickly as its financial obligations will permit."[42] The closure of the open range and many large-scale ranching operations meant the place of the itinerant cowboy in the Oldman River basin had changed.

The arrival of the sod-busters

In the mid-1890s, Canada's economy took a dramatic turn for the better rising out of a global depression into new heights of prosperity. In an attempt to fortify the national economy, Prime Minister Laurier undertook a massive advertising campaign to entice individuals from Great Britain, continental Europe and the United States to settle in the Canadian North West. The Homestead Act allowed individuals to apply for a quarter section of land that they had to 'prove up'. Within three years farmers were required to clear 30 acres of land and establish a home.[43] If successful, the farmer was given title to the property for the $10 price of the application fee.

In terms of Laurier's vision, these homesteading policies were largely successful in the Basin. Within just ten years nearly every available section of land had been applied for.[44] By 1890 much of the land surrounding the small hamlet of Pincher Creek, which had been established eight years previous, was part of ranching or farming homesteads.

The influx of farmers into the region not only resulted in a quick increase in homesteads but also transformed the landscape. In order to satisfy the Dominion government's requirement's farmers and ranchers tilled areas completely unsuitable for crop production. Along the montane hills of what is today almost exclusively grazing land, till marks from the ploughs of a century past can still be seen.[45] Vast stretches of grasslands were also divided into quarter sections of farm and ranch land that were discernible by fence lines or roads and dotted by houses, barns and granaries. In the words of one of the first ranchers in the area:

> ...1900 saw the curtain beginning to lower, and the old, wide-open prairie changing into a vast checker-board of rectangular, wire-fenced patches of cultivated land. The cowboy with his horse and lasso and branding iron was supplanted by teams of ploughs and binders and threshing machines. And it seemed not without a touch of pathos, that the old pioneer spirit was also fenced in, as was the land.[46]

The farmers quickly provided a symmetrical 'order' to the landscape: after their arrival clear lines were produced across the landscape delineating the ownership of land and cattle (see Figure 2). The land had been smoothly transformed from open prairie into real estate. Houses on the farm became situated close to the roads with the barns, sheds, and granaries to the side or back of the houses. In spite of the laments of many ranchers in the area about their arrival, farmers in many ways were only putting into physical form the lines and borders that has been conceived earlier by the Geological Survey crews on maps. By extension, they had a role in dividing the Oldman basin into what were considered by most white people to be the right way to go about things, by parcelling the land up into manageable units of property. There was one appropriate way to treat the land - divide it, distribute it and register it.

The sense of community and place held by residents of the Upper Oldman River basin also changed significantly over the course of the first decade of the 20th century. Prior to the arrival of the railroad and influx of farmers into the region, the local people had a broad sense of their place in the world and were proudly self-reliant. Until the arrival of the railroad, Fort Benton was still the centre of trade, transport and communication for most in the region. Separated from each other and the markets by considerable distances, the ranchers' network of relations was limited but vast. Many of today's local residents tell stories of their grandparents or parents riding a good part of a day to go to a dance, or herding their cattle up to a market in Cayley or Calgary. In short, the early white residents had little or no sense of connection to the district of Pincher Creek, as this was but an abstract notion that had for many people no practical realities connected to it.

In contrast, the arrival of settlers who took up farming strengthened the boundaries of the Municipal District (M.D.) of Pincher Creek. The new immigrants were often young families who settled less than a kilometre from each other. Their needs spurred the development of schools, churches and community halls within the hamlet of Pincher Creek and across the region. As a result, the sense of community changed significantly. "The settlers' society was a society of neighbours, united by their livelihood, their youth and their common causes."[47] The farmers in the Pincher Creek district rapidly became leaders in illustrating the viability of growing wheat, barley and oats in southern Alberta.[48] By 1907, a harvest of two million bushels of wheat was predicted.[49] Several farmers in the region also took up the cause of developing a farming co-operative that would years later become a part of the United Farmers movement, while others formed local recreational clubs and political organisations. Finally, the arrival of the railroad in 1897-98 resulted in more efficient and easier contact with the outside world that translated into an increased influx of immigrants to the area and a transition of trade corridors from the upper Missouri to eastern Canada.

The contemporary agricultural community

Unlike many rural communities throughout Canada and the Rocky Mountain West, the Upper Oldman River basin has never really experienced a

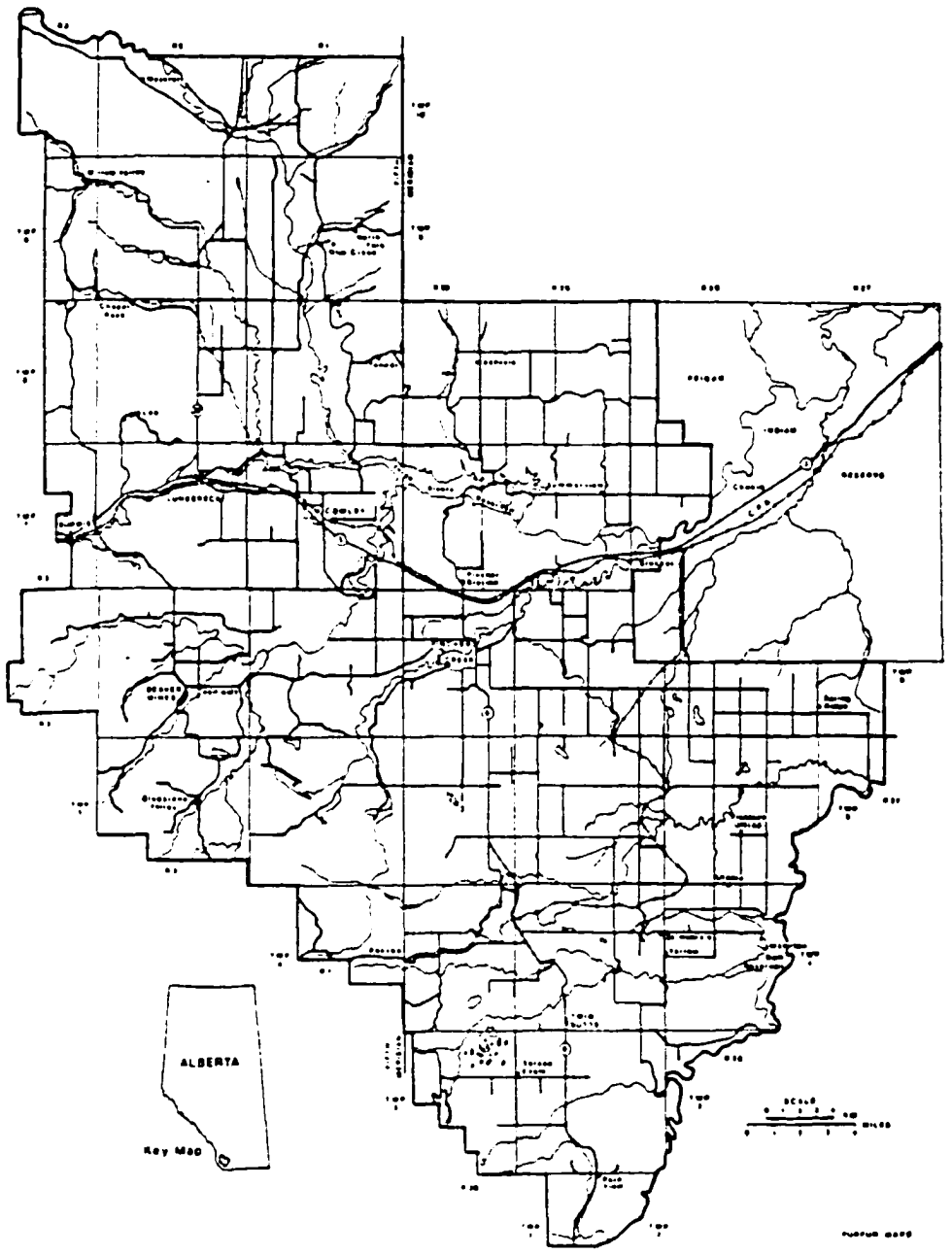

Figure 2: The Symmetrical Ordering of the Upper Oldman River Basin

Source: Barry Potyondi, *Where the Rivers Meet – A History of the Upper Oldman River Basin to 1939* (Lethbridge, AB: Robins Southern Printing, 1990) iii.

period of mass migration of people off the farms and from the town and hamlets to the city. While residents were not completely unaffected by economically difficult times such as the Depression and the recession of the 1980s, in many cases they themselves did not experience the personal hardship felt by many other rural citizens. Rather, their experience is of a relatively stable agricultural community that has experienced some economic up and down swings as a result of the emergence and disappearance of certain industries and industrial projects. Barry Watson summarises the impact on the community of the Depression and the recession of the 1980s:

> Barry Watson: And then of course in the Thirties there was an economic depression and there was no economic expansion going on at that point. It was a pretty stabilising economy.
>
> Lori Hanson: What did that do to this area?
>
> Barry Watson: Well fortunately Pincher Creek was already established as their regional business centre in south-western Alberta, so it was well established in that aspect and so could sorta hold on to its ground, fortunately speaking, versus other communities. But the economy was a lot slower and the, it was dry down here during that time period as far as the climate was concerned so that had been, that didn't help the farming community very much. It was very much a slow time. The advantage that they had in addition to the regional centre was the fact that a lot of people already owned their own ranches and farms at that time period so those old industries keep on going for purely domestic purposes, local purposes even if things are going bad economically. I can remember one of the old timers in the Pincher Creek area...they said when the Depression of the 1930s hit, Pincher Creek was just barely out of the frontier frame of mind anyway and the technology that we used back in the 1890s had not progressed that much to the 1930s so it wasn't that much of a set back when you still could rely upon that same self-reliance to make it through these tough times in the 1930s.
>
> Lori Hanson: And that's what they did?
>
> Barry Watson: That's what they did. It made them that much more self-reliant. She said they were so barely out of the frontier mode by the 1930's that it was no big set back. A few hard times came during that time period.
>
> Lori Hanson: So not a lot of people left to try to get jobs...?
>
> Barry Watson: No there was no decrease in population in that time period. In fact I think if you look at statistics, there may have been a slight increase. The 1920s did offer a little bit of reprieve during that time period but not much. So a slight population increase. But essentially no

new industries came in of any significance at that point. So it was sort of a time period when things were consolidated and sort of the systems that had flourished that started in the earlier...time periods, sort became entrenched in the society, and the ethnic background or the economic background sort of continued on an entrenched way...

From 1982 to present. And it's another era of economic stabilisation. This time with that desire to promote that economic diversification. ....[50]

Yet, like many rural communities in the Rocky Mountain West, there has been significant change over the past half century in the type of people, animals and plants that live in this place and how it is the land is used. Following World War Two, the region underwent a significant transition in their economy. As Barry Watson recounted, the discovery and development of major natural gas fields in the region diversified the economy and altered the role of agriculturists in the community:

Barry Watson: After the Second World War ...two gas plants were established...And that brought a different composure to the town even though agriculture, both ranching and farming has remained the fundamental economic component of the town. In fact you have a slightly more diversified economy base now, it's also a little more industrial because you do have these two gas plants... it brought in a lot more people with families, young families and a lot more money came in the town. And people would say a lot more disposable money came in ...the residential areas [grew] during that time period and the commercial areas grew as well. Especially during the 60s and the 70s...So a lot of long term families who had been here historically sought work on the plants or the wells, but also a lot of new people who were actually trades people, trades in mechanics or steam engineering which is very essential to the operation of gas plants. And of course with the expansion of it came new residences, so there'd be carpenters and the business people who would be new to town...[51]

In many respects, the changes Watson described in the Upper Oldman River basin mirror the changes seen in rural areas across Canada as well as other industrialised nations around the world. Recall, as Michael Troughton explained, that economic restructuring in Canada over the past half century resulted in a radical shift for rural areas from a position of relative dominance to one of residual status and dependency.[52] After the Second World War Canada underwent a major shift in population and economic activity from being largely rural-based to becoming a dominant urban-industrial and urban-centred society. Correspondingly, rural resource dependent economies based on farming, fishing and agriculture each underwent drastic restructuring which impacted rural community functions (number and type of services) and viability. The industrialisation of agriculture, huge increases in farm size, an over 50%

reduction in the number of farms, and changes in transportation technology resulted in massive economic restructuring and a consequent reduction in the demographic and community structure of many communities. Underlying physical and economic differences between regions, including problems of climate and isolation and the inherent variable capability of land and soils, resulted in varying abilities to adapt to these changing economic and technological circumstances. As Barry Watson explained, in the Oldman basin these socio-economic changes fuelled new tensions:

> Lori Hanson: In terms of this time period, how did the farmers and ranchers feel about the influx of the oil and gas. Were they welcoming?
>
> Barry Watson: There was some friction between the two groups...I think there were a number of factors. It was mainly the agricultural community and the gas industry. There was friction over, I think there was a natural resentment amongst the established families over a new industry coming into town. It was "interrupting their town" so to speak...It was more of a cosmopolitan town afterwards...it added a new element... There was new comers coming in, there was suddenly a much larger base, things like that. It meant that the economic agenda, or the economic control wasn't in the hands so much of the ranching and farming. Throughout all these time periods the ranching and the farming sectors have always established the foundation of the community and they always will. But it's something, this gas industry added a whole new dimension...it added a completely new element which certain portions of the long term population base certainly found a little different. There was also sorta new versus the old aspect and sorta the ramifications that come around control issues and all of that. There was also disagreements over the environmental issues, especially with the gas industry...There were some concerns in certain portions of the agricultural community that their cattle could die if they got, that the fumes, the leftover fumes out of the gas plant were not handled properly sort of thing. Especially if you lived down wind from there, from the gas plants...So that added quite a bit of new element into it, especially since the gas industry came to play after 1945, and especially after the construction of the plants in the late 1950s, 1960s came to be a major component in the town, about a third's of the town's wealth and population probably owed itself directly to the gas industry in the 60s, 70s and 80s. And where as before it had almost been exclusively agriculturally based.
>
> Lori Hanson: That would have really would have changed people's thinking wouldn't it?
>
> Barry Watson: It certainly did. It certainly took it away from the idea that agriculture was the only industry and made people realise that the local

economy could be a lot more diversified than it was. And that's the mentality that's still prevalent today...

For Lana Sturby, these changes and tensions materialised as diversified interests and goals in the community:

> Like I said, they have certainly changed through the years, but it used to be, you know quite friendly and supportive to each other. And there again shared interests and common goals and what not. But that has changed with new people moving in. [53]

Agriculturists in the Oldman district are not only competing against each other and their international counterparts, but more recently have had to compete for land with those in other industries to expand their operations. Like many rural communities throughout the U.S. and Canadian Rockies, the Oldman basin has recently become a tourist destination and coveted location for acreage developments. People in search of a better quality of life are seeking out recreational experiences, and locations for second and retirement homes. As Ruth Melindy elaborates, for many of those ranchers living along the western edge of the region, these tourism interests have meant escalating land prices in the region:

> ...a lot of the [new residents] are acreage owners who are buying quarter sections for recreational purposes or for retirement or whatever. And they are coming from the cities and far away and they don't, since they aren't making a living off the land they are buying it for recreational prices. So it's really hard for people trying to make a living here to, well you can't expand any more because you can't compete with the retired lawyer from Calgary who is paying $2000 an acre to buy his retirement home or his weekend home. A ranch that hardly makes any money anyways, can't pay $2000 an acre... [54]

While many in the region contend that this is and will forever be an agricultural community, Alan Timms believes that the changes that have beset the Oldman basin over the past half century, and occurring now, will radically transform the agricultural base of the community. In Timms' words:

> [they have b]linders. When you look at this community as a whole I would say ...this community may have a strong basis in agriculture but when you look at it the tourism base has certainly got a big sector. I just look at it from just a health perspective as well. I look at the number of restaurants in Pincher Creek. I mean Pincher Creek has got 2700 people and it has more restaurants than the Crowsnest Pass which has almost 7500 people living in its corporate boundaries. So in my viewpoint a lot of the businesses depend upon tourism dollars, not agriculturally based dollars. And if you look at the way high use tourism areas have actually started being developed is a result of the fact that people go there to visit. As soon as they start to see the community and start to enjoy the assets it has literally they come here to retire, they come here to live, they come here to

work, they live here because they want to live here. And that's just because there's fresh water, there's good air, there's fewer people and like you say, it's a friendly community, and there's relatively low levels of crime. With those sort of factors involved and you're raising a family, and the schools are good, the services are good, you have a hospital in your town, you have a golf course, ski area, hiking trails, fishing, boating, what else can you ask for raising a family? So people who tell you that this is going to stay an agricultural place forever, no way. I see Pincher Creek as having the same status as Canmore in the near future.[55]

B. A Conquest of Place and People

> *It is through our land that we learn about ourselves.*
> - Annie Fraser Henry

> *Last year I had a traditional Thanksgiving. The guy next door came to my door and said he'd discovered my apartment - and now he's living in it. But he kept a little spot as a reserve for me. It's near the cat's litter box.*
> - Don Kelly, Canadian comedian

Napi's people

The first written recorded presence of human habitation in the Rocky Mountains dates back to about 11,000 year ago, traces of which have been found in the Crowsnest Pass, an area just west of the Upper Oldman River basin.[56] However, in a dig near Taber, Alberta, about 150 kilometres due east Pincher Creek, parts of a girl's skeleton dating back to 40,000 years ago were found.[57] According to local writer, Andy Russell, this girl was a member of the Clovis Culture that had hunted and camped in the Upper Oldman River basin in a time well before the waters of the Oldman ever ran.[58] Since that period, human habitation in the area by various Native people is believed to have been more or less constant.[59]

If a claim can be made on human antiquity in the Upper Oldman River basin, the true ancestors of this land are certainly of native origin. Even though they are rarely acknowledged as the first residents of this place by the now dominant white European culture,[60] if the recognition of a place is linked to the beginnings of a human community in that place, then it seems that a story of place about the Upper Oldman River basin must somehow take into account the Native peoples who have lived and continue to live in this area. In particular it must account for the Peigans,[61] for as Peigan Band member Henry Plains Hawk explains, his people have been in this place since the beginning:

> My people have always told me, in the beginning, all people were Peigan...and they lived in this territory, along the mountains through north around Rocky Mountain House, what's the river called, the Red Deer River runs through there. The Red Deer River is an important marker...[62]

According to Blackfoot origin myths, the first people to make their homes in the Oldman basin were put there by Napi, the creator, who made the world in all its detail. When Napi finished his creation, he focused his attentions on teaching the people how to hunt and live and then withdrew to the high mountains to the headwaters of the river that bears his name, the Oldman.[63]

European and white North American historical works tell how various cultures resided in the area since the earliest inhabitants wandered across the plains and foothills of the Oldman basin. The Kootenai, Blackfoot and Shoshoni Nations use of the area dates back to about 2000 years ago.[64] Eventually, as a result of either sickness or war, the Shoshoni people were weakened and migrated south leaving the territory to the Blackfoot. Traditional tribal stories tell of the Peigan Nation (who are members of the Blackfoot Confederacy) and Kootenai Nation having joined together in the Upper Oldman River basin for fall hunts and sometimes wintering together on the eastern slopes of the Rockies.[65] However, local historians speak of a feud developing between the two groups that resulted in them no longer associating after around AD 1000.[66] After the feud, the Kootenai were restricted to the western side of the mountains but still took occasional forays into the eastern slopes. The Kootenai peoples were mountain hunters who took not only bison, but mountain sheep, deer and elk as well.

According to a number of native and fur trading historians, the relationship between First Nations peoples was much more dynamic and complex than local historians often depict. While some popular historical works have portrayed Native peoples as 'struggling to survive' prior to European settlement, if the Peigan's history can be generalised, such depictions might be more aptly applied to the conditions they experienced after the arrival of European settlement in the area. As Henry Plains Hawk explained, before most of the white men came, these Native peoples were members of complex societies that actively engaged in trade amongst bands of their own tribes as well as with other Aboriginal, and in time, non-Aboriginal peoples:

> ...if they could come and hunt, or gather roots or they would be invited to come up and be part of it. And sometimes, you would have these clans maybe tribes they would intermarry for leadership or to create a pact so that they become stronger or have a bigger area that they are ruling. ...It was not just that these people lived a loose life, what's commonly referred to in history as savages and they don't know what they are doing. They had a very democratic, complex system.[67]

Generally, diplomacy marked trade for Native peoples and, as such, they did not trade with their enemies. Trade was an extension of familial relationships and hence, extended kinship ties traditionally were often formed between what

today many believe to be quite distinct aboriginal groups. As well, conflicts and disputes arose and distrust developed between the various Native tribes that had varying impacts on the relationships between these people.

Whether this was always the case or simply a result of events that occurred in the last several centuries, the Blackfoot became a real power on the plains of the Upper Oldman River basin. The Peigans and other members of the Blackfoot Confederacy were primarily bison hunters living mostly on the grasslands and only occasionally venturing into the main mountain river valleys of the region such as the Castle and Carbondale Rivers. Peigan use of the area consisted primarily of hunting, seasonal berry picking and the collection of other plants for medicinal and religious purposes, but likely they ventured into these valleys for cultural reasons too, as well as for recreation and warfare. The Stoney and Nez Perces nations also used the Upper Oldman River basin from time to time.

All of these peoples were nomadic and as such, prior to European settlement, there is little evidence of their engaging in agriculture or other forms of large-scale transformation of land in the Upper Oldman River basin. However, this is not to say that these people were entirely non-interventionists. To begin with there is evidence of the Blackfoot growing tobacco for ceremonial purposes,[68] as well as digging small pits that they rimmed with stones and used for vision quests which they called dream beds. Typically, these latter formations were located near the top of a high hill.[69] Like all peoples, aboriginal or otherwise, they also created trails that dissected the prairies, foothills and mountains (see Figure 3). For example, a corridor was created that follows the edge of the mountains down from the Liard River in the Yukon through Alberta to the Marias River in Montana. Further, they deliberately set fires to burn off old grass to encourage the growth of green shoots that would attract bison and other foraging species.[70] According to Plains Hawk, this is how the Blackfoot people received their name:

> Because the Blackfoot people, they were called 'Six-so-kwhat', means 'black foot'. Mostly this resulted from their travelling through the prairies. Often there were grass fires and what not and so they always had black, sooty kind of moccasins... and their legs would also be exposed and their legs would also be blackened.[71]

While the Blackfoot, and to a lesser extent the Kootenai, Stoney, Nez Perces and Shoshoni depended on the flora and fauna of the land for food, and claimed specific territories, the idea of ownership of the land was a foreign concept to them. They lived in certain geographic locations, but there were no specific boundaries to their territories. Further while people of European heritage often viewed these lands as the frontier or unsettled wilderness, the Aboriginal people saw their homelands not as edges of the world, but rather the centre.[72] According to Henry Plains Hawk,

> ...they didn't all live in one place, everybody had an area. Everybody lived in an area as a caretaker and they learned how to survive...they say they moved from here to there and all that. To me they didn't move

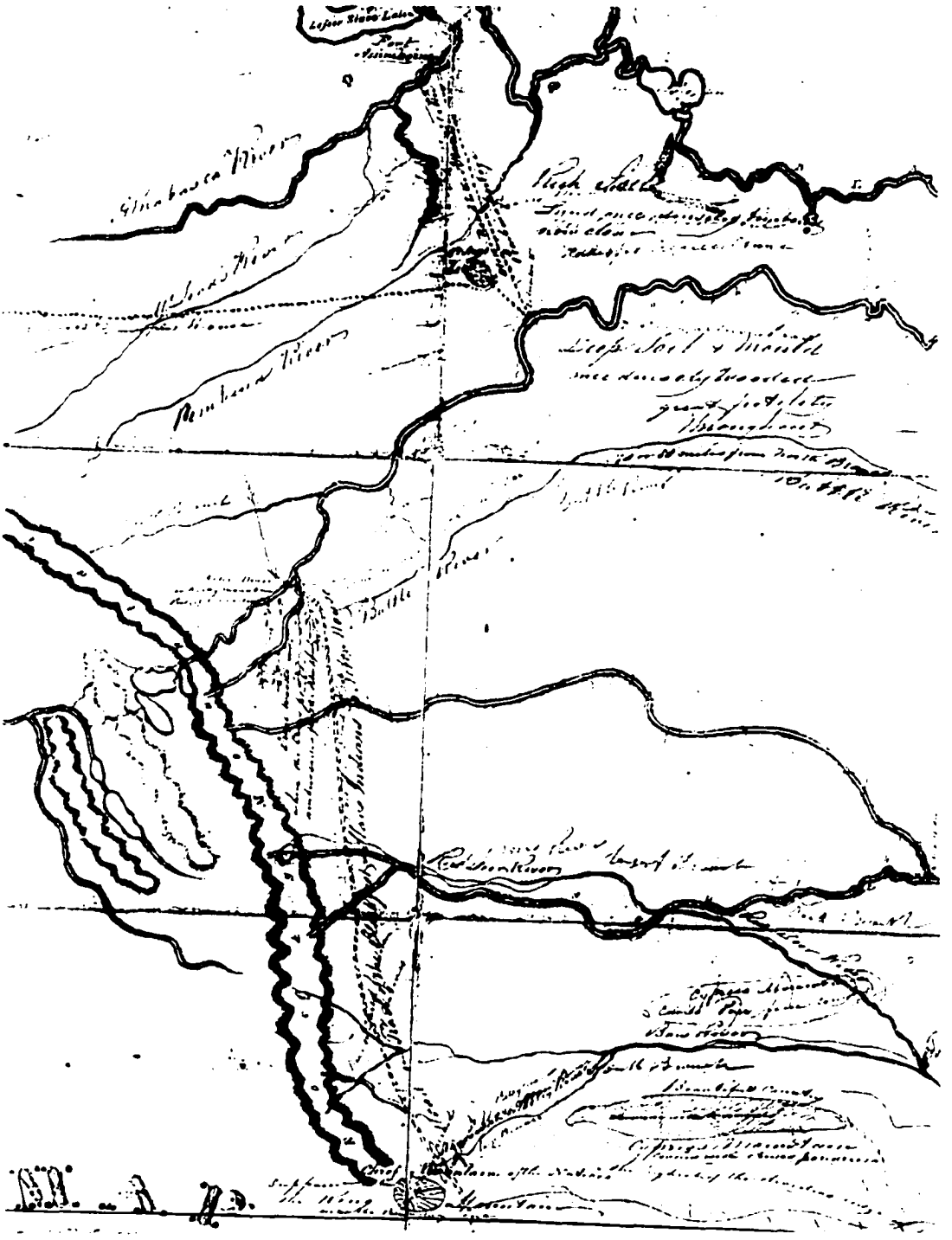

Figure 3: Aboriginal Corridor from Montana into Rupert's Land
(Along the right side of the mountains is marked a trail established by the Blackfoot that follows through northern Montana into what is now central Alberta). Source: Public Archives of Canada. Western Canada: Map Laid Down from the Sketches and Observations of Mr. Peter Fidler for J. G. McTavish Esquire G. Taylor Junior. W. C. Wonders Map Collection, University of Alberta, C-50, Arch Sheet 3, 1827?

> because they had to move and the buffalo was moving. To me they were moving to reinforce that they look after certain townships within the country and it was always understood that certain people, or clans or families lived in certain areas...[73]

When they occasionally strayed into territories claimed by other tribes, either a conflict ensued or a temporary amnesty was struck. While they claimed the right to use the land to survive, the Native peoples within the area did not own it in the sense of a European understanding of property, but rather believed they had been instructed by great spirits to guard it. Rather than adapting the land to meet their needs as European people have, the Native peoples who lived in the Oldman Region largely adapted themselves to the land and the waters upon which they depended.

The Blackfoot roamed across the grasslands from the Bow River to Missouri. In discussing his people's early years in the region, Plains Hawk spoke of the Peigan people living in the whole area from the Red Deer River south into Montana, and of knowing it as their home territory. Throughout the region they would store food in case of bad weather or need of food. "[It] had land marks and that had ways of travelling through the territory. People lived in certain areas for a certain reason"[74] (see Figure 4). The Upper Oldman River basin, particularly within the poplar and willow groves along the coulee bottoms, provided many a favoured winter haunt that offered an abundance of game, fuel, an accessible water supply and protection from inclement weather.[75]
Coulees are river valleys that snake through the foothills and across the plains. They are drainage ways formed and enlarged as a consequence of torrents of glacier melt water flowing eastward and carving deeply into the bedrock.[76] The broad walls of these undulating, short-grass hills and sedimentary rock outcrops have been modified by slumping and wind erosion producing dramatic tawny sculptures bisected by veins of burnt orange. Most often coulees are V-shaped and nearly treeless, containing intermittent streams that flow in the wet season.[77] The exceptions to this are the wide coulees of the Oldman, Red Deer, Milk and South Saskatchewan Rivers which in the intense heat of the summer or freezing cold and wind of the winter provide protection and food.

Bison were a staple food source for many early Oldman watershed residents, as well as having many other uses. In Blackfoot language bison means "real food"[78]. Henry Plains Hawk elaborates:

> So the [Peigan] depended largely, as society now depends largely on money, they depended largely on the buffalo. So, from the buffalo they could make everything. They had meat, clothing, a place to sleep, blankets, you name it they had it. Every part of the buffalo was used up. The tail was used for ceremonial, in the sun dance. They would have, you can have a buffalo and you cut it out and you use it to wrap stuff. So everything that you have was part of the, the buffalo was part of the whole culture, part of the whole life of existence.[79]

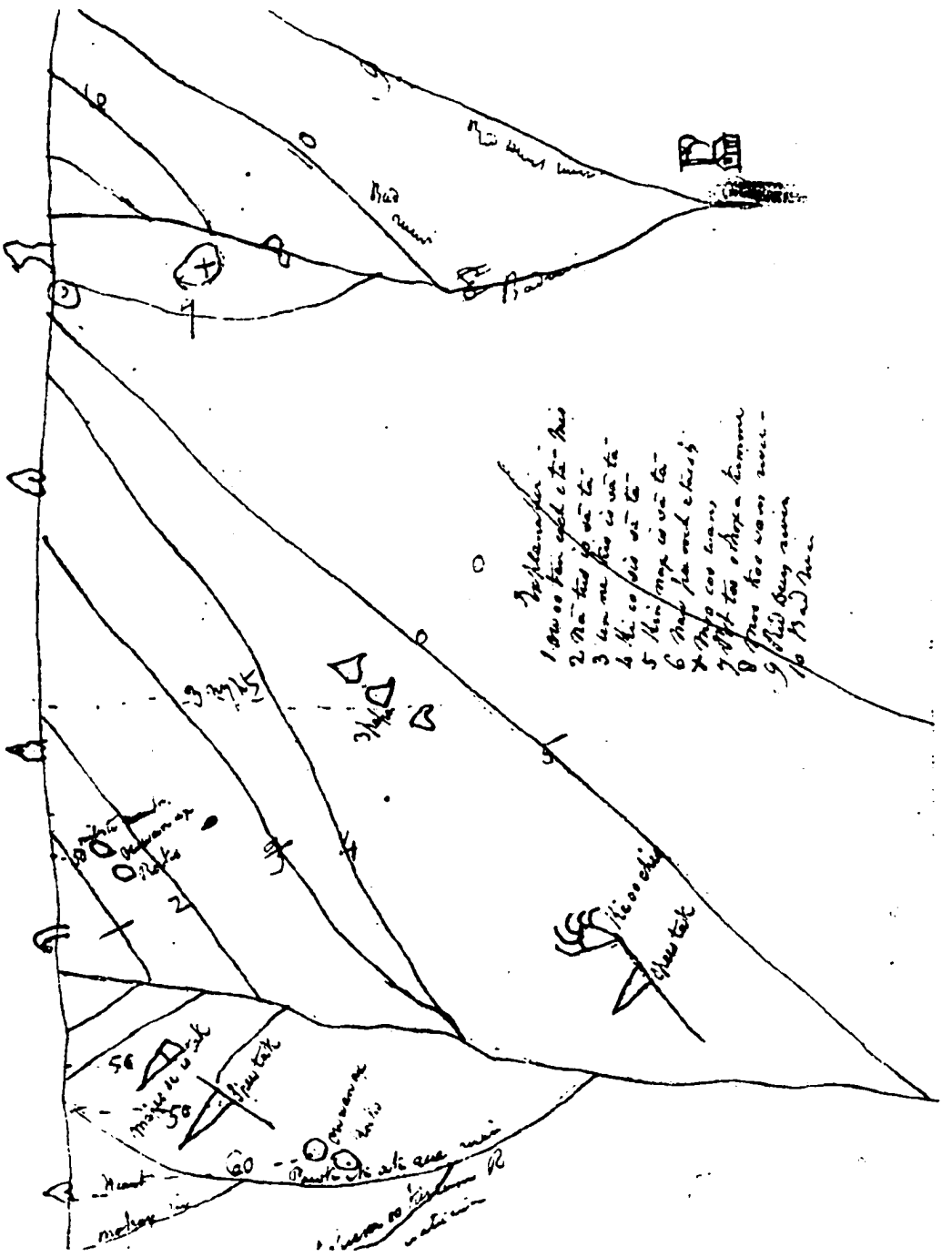

Figure 4: Aboriginal Knowledge and Use of their Territory
(The map is a European trader's version of Aboriginal knowledge of what is now south-western Alberta down into Montana. The circles are camps and the lines in most cases indicate distance in days between significant sites. The Bow and Red Deer Rivers are identified in the top third of the map). Source: W. C. Wonders Map Collection, University of Alberta, *North America, C-161.*

Deer, elk, moose and bighorn sheep, which typically followed the course of the rivers out onto the plains, were also important food sources. In addition, the great plains grizzly and wolf, as well as fish like cutthroat, bull and Dolly Varden trout[80] were in abundance and likely eaten occasionally.

For thousands of years the Blackfoot hunted the bison by driving herds of these massive mammals over steep bluffs. This practice was discontinued between 1700 and 1725 when the Blackfoot acquired horses that they also used for travelling.[81] The adoption of the horse into their culture extended both the range and speed of the movement of the Blackfoot. For example, the horse enabled a Peigan hunter to kill a dozen bison where once he killed one. As well, many of the Blackfoot warriors became highly skilled equestrians and developed embodied bonds with these animals. Local writer Sid Marty tells of individuals who could tell a horse's age and health by their whinny, and others who possessed a hundred head of horses and yet knew each one individually by its markings or the feel of its body in the dark.[82]

It was also during this period that the Blackfoot acquired rifles from the Cree. The combined adoption of the horse and muskets brought the Blackfoot people abundance. With plenty, members of the Blackfoot had time to indulge in the rituals of their warrior society – gambling, horse racing and counting coups around the fire.[83] A warrior's wealth became measured by the number of horses they possessed and hence, stealing horses became an honourable profession as well as a blood sport. The Blackfoot raided as far to the south as Mexico, with their reputation as the "Ishmaels of the prairie" extending just as far.[84] In Russell's estimation, this was the golden era of the Blackfoot people, "their position unchallenged as among the most attractive and free of all Stone Age cultures."[85]

The Blackfoot's first recorded contact with white Europeans was in 1754 when Anthony Henday set off across the Great Plains in search of Indians[86] he was hoping to persuade to come east to Fort York to trade their furs. By the late 1700s a number of European explorers and fur traders had made inroads into the West. Peter Fidler, an explorer hired by the Hudson's Bay Company, was the first recorded European to venture into what is now south-western Alberta. However, the first recorded exploration by a European into the far south-west reaches of the Upper Oldman River basin was completed by Captain Peter Blakiston of the Palliser Expedition in 1858.[87] Upon nearing the mountains west of what is now Calgary, the Palliser Expedition split up. Blakiston and his party travelled south to explore the southern mountains and look for a passageway for the railroad through the Rockies. The group travelled into what is now British Columbia (BC), but upon their return, Blakiston crossed over the South Kootenai Pass to the Kootenai Lakes which he renamed Waterton after an English naturalist.

Marty describes the attitude of the Blackfoot to most white men to have ranged from hospitable to indifference. Some suggest that Captain Lewis Meriwether and the killings of Blackfoot on the Marias are in part to blame for the general disdain the Blackfoot held for the white men. Others suggest that it was a strategical manoeuvre on the part of the Blackfoot to limit relations with all

white men, as the Blackfoot were trying to control the spread of muskets to their enemies.[88] Try as they might to limit the flow of armaments, in time other Native peoples acquired rifles and horses.

In 1810, a dispute between the Kootenai and the Blackfoot led to closure of all the mountain passes in the North West by the Blackfoot. The closure of these passes was enforced until 1850 when, due to smallpox and other diseases, the numbers and power of the Blackfoot waned. The Blackfoot, including the Peigans and the Bloods all suffered heavy losses from smallpox that they first contracted from trading with Europeans along the Missouri. An early epidemic in 1730 wiped out the Kootenai's Michel Prairie Band followed by another epidemic in 1781 that further reduced their numbers.[89] According to historian Barry Potyondi, "It was the mobility of the tribes that spread the disease far and wide so quickly."[90] By the 1840s, "the devastation of smallpox, the moral lassitude brought on by heavy trade in liquor, the sharp escalation of warfare (both between different native tribes and between Europeans and natives) and the growing dependence of the natives on a handful of European traders had irrevocably altered the character of the Indians."[91] By the mid-1800s, the Blackfoot had lost 6000 people, one of the worst smallpox outbreaks occurring during 1779-83. Fur traders' records report that by 1883 three-quarters of the populations of the Bloods, Sarcee, Peigan, Blackfoot and Assiniboine had died.[92]

The survival of their people was further threatened, transformed and reconfigured when the Americans made a deal with the powers that be in England to draw a line through Peigan territory and deem it a national border. As Henry Plains Hawk recounted, this line, called the Medicine Line, separated the Peigan people into two groupings. On the north side of the line people retained their status as Peigans. On the south side of the border the American government legislated that they were to be known as Blackfeet. In time, the line became reinforced and more difficult to cross, and as a result the connections between the south and north Peigan people were severed to a great extent. Today, there is a revival of interest in periodic contact and in reconnecting people,[93] but the mark left by the creation of the Medicine Line remains imprinted on the soil and lives of many Peigans.

During the early and mid 1800s, the Blackfoot primarily traded at Fort Mackenzie and Fort Benton both situated on the banks of the upper Missouri. Because the Blackfoot preferred the American posts over those of the Hudson Bay Company,[94] the Montana traders quickly built up a potent and profitable business in dry and wet goods, primarily trading for buffalo robes. The area north of the 49th parallel, then a part of Rupert's Land, was under the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company until 1870 at which time it was transferred to the Dominion of Canada. However, prior to the mid-1870s, neither the Hudson's Bay Company nor the Canadian government were able to sustain a firm presence in the Upper Oldman River region, let alone enforce the law. The American traders were a constant source of irritation to the Hudson's Bay Company who saw them as operating with impunity and imprudence, as well as presenting the company with stiff and unwelcome competition.[95] The more widespread effect of this brisk

commerce was the devastation it brought to both the buffalo population and Native society with the influx of whisky into these societies.

Increased trade and the arrival of miners and traders contributed greatly to the instability across the southern plains of the North West in the mid-1800s. To the south, more and more immigrants from the east were arriving. The 1858 Cariboo Gold Rush along the Columbia River and the Montana gold rush in 1862 brought a flood of whites through Fort Benton which only increased with the end of the American Civil War in 1865. In 1869 when the American government began enforcing the law to stop whisky trading with the Indians,[96] established traders attempting to extend their good fortune moved north and established trade posts where yet there was no police presence. Two of the most prosperous traders were John Healy and Alfred Hamilton who established a fort on the banks of the St. Mary's River and in six months collected $50,000 worth of buffalo robes.[97] Their first post was burnt down, but, not long after, they commissioned William Gladstone to build them a second fort not far from the site of the first. This post became known as Fort Whoop-Up and it and other posts north of the Highwood River including Stand-Off, Kipp and Spitzee, provided whisky traders from the south a lucrative, yet short-lived, business.

Violence accompanied the whisky trade across the southern plains. Conflict between the Blackfoot and the ever increasing number of white men culminated in the Blackfoot War of 1863-70.[98] While it is clear that much of the violence between the Indians and white men occurred south of the 49th parallel, brutal slayings also took place north of the border. While a number of Europeans experienced violence from the hand of Indians, in terms of the ratio of each population, it was the Native peoples who were most severely impacted by brutal warfare at the hand of the American military, and later, white settlers and traders. Two violent incidents which had direct impact on the upper Oldman River basin are worth noting.

The first was the massacre that occurred in 1867 in the Porcupine Hills. The Porcupine Hills lie at the north-east corner of the upper Oldman River basin, rising abruptly from the plains to an elevation of over 1600 meters[99] (see Figure 5, page 105). This unglaciated plateau extends north from Cowley to High River. The plateau is composed of thick cross-bedded sandstones of the Tertiary Porcupine Hills Formation and does not have the extensive folding of the foothills that lie next to the Rocky Mountains.[100] A small promontory near a sandstone outcropping in the Porcupines marks the spot of Massacre Butte where of 12 men, women and children, led by German John Hoise, were killed. Blood Indians, led by Medicine Calf, came upon the party that was camped for the night out on the open plains metres from the banks of the Oldman River. Likely believing them to be Americans and fully equipped with horses, guns and other supplies, they were all slain and their provisions stolen.[101] The death of these 12 travellers garnered little notice amongst those in power in eastern Canada likely because most eyes were focused on Ottawa at the time and the creation of a new nation.

In contrast, the Cypress Hills Massacre, the more famous of the two incidents by far, would shape Canadian destiny. The Cypress Hills had for a long

time been a refuge of sorts to many peoples. Located along what is now the southern border of Alberta and Saskatchewan, this western Canadian steppe contains forested hills that divide the South Saskatchewan and Missouri drainage basins. The hills provided many refuge from the harsh prairie weather and were considered neutral ground by many tribes including the Plains Cree, Blackfoot and Assiniboine who called them "Sweet Pine Hills".[102] The current name was given to them by French-speaking travellers who mistook the lodgepole pines for eastern jack pines or cypress trees.

In 1873 a party of wolfers, fresh from the North West plains and loaded with strychnine-killed wolves, had their horses stolen while camped on the Teton River near Fort Benton. After having little luck in their appeals to the American authorities, the wolfers formed a vigilante posse and tracked the thieves north into the Cypress Hills. To these and many other frontiersmen of the 1870s, horse stealing was a hanging offence, but to many of the Indians it was the mere equivalent of "stealing home base."[103] In a sense, this conflict of values posited the white men's strong sense of personal property against the aboriginal view of a commonly owned resource. The result was devastating for a camp of Assiniboine, many of whom were hopelessly drunk and the unlucky neighbours of the horse stealers who camped nearby.

The Native warriors stopped when they came upon 300 Assiniboines who after trading at the nearby Farewell post were enjoying a little too much whiskey. Following not far behind, the American traders stopped at the post for information and ended up also engaging in some heavy drinking. The next day after more horse stealing and confused communications, each side fired up by too much alcohol, a battle broke out. The white posse killed a number of Natives (anywhere from 13 to 60 depending on the account) and impaled an old man upon a pole and raped at least two women. Also, Ed Grace, a Canadian was shot to death while attempting to help two other white men. Grace and a number of other white victims were later buried to protect their bodies from mutilation. Once their pelts and other goods loaded, the white traders raised the Stars and Stripes in victory, torched the posts and headed their teams back to Fort Benton.

This bloody incident fuelled a wave of nationalism and anti-Americanism across the Dominion of Canada. Many Canadians were enraged by what they perceived as an extension of American frontier mentality on Canadian soil. In response, the Prime Minister at the time, John A. Macdonald, hastened the formation of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP). He dispatched 300 recruits to establish law and order across the southern plains and lessen the American influence in the region.[104] By 1874, the NWMP arrived in the southern North West, and that same year, built Fort Macleod, which served as the headquarters for the force, in what was then the North West Territories.

Within no time at all, these rather inexperienced recruits established a presence across the plains. They exorcised the whisky trade from the Blackfoot land and in the process earned the respect of not only the white settlers but the native peoples as well. Henry Plains Hawk explained his understanding of the course of events that occurred at that time:

> When the NWMP came out here and Colonel Macleod searches out the Peigans and said, "Can I winter here?" And it was only with the approval of the Peigans that he wintered in Fort Macleod. And from then on [the Peigan] were getting their supplies, and a lot of people are beginning to...break down, now the people are beginning to starve. Now they are beginning to learn about dependence, forced dependence, never mind dependency. They became Fort Indians because a lot of them stayed near the fort, mainly in the hopes of sharing food and protection because they no longer had the energies and the will to exist.[105]

The NWMP arrived in time to see the last of the huge buffalo herds roaming the plains. In 1858 John Palliser reported standing on a promontory and in every direction he could see the land black with buffalo. He wrote, they "were in such large numbers that their peculiar grunt sounded like the roar of a distant rapids in a large river and [caused] a vibration also something like a trembling in the ground."[106] The herd would have been accompanied by numerous packs of wolves ready to pick off the weak, infirm and old. Eventually both the plains buffalo and wolf would face a quick demise.

In the 1880s professional hunters shot buffalo for their hides, which they converted into furniture leather and machinery belts for eastern markets. In 1880, the U.S. Army reported 5000 such hide hunters, and in 1882 the *Fort Macleod Gazette* noted between three and four hundred buffalo hunters between the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. In 1869, 15,000 hides went down the Missouri, in 1872 that number had jumped to 40,000 and by 1878, the number had risen to a record 75,000 hides.[107] Most of the bison carcasses were left to rot on the plains, sometimes riddled with strychnine which not only killed the plains wolf, but most other carnivores including raptors, foxes, and occasionally, starving Natives. In one season alone, 40,000 wolf pelts were shipped out of Fort Benton.[108] It is important to note that the Native peoples too contributed to this slaughter. Somewhere along the way many lost respect for the game that had once sustained them.

In addition to their role as law enforcers, the NWMP were also entrusted with the task of developing Native settlements. By the early 1880s it was readily apparent that the large herds of bison were nearly gone from the plains and the people who depended upon them were experiencing the first phases of starvation. Many of the Peigan people had ceased being the caretakers of the plains and instead had taken up residence beside the white men's forts. Caught in the grip of hunger and besieged by disease, the Peigan were without alternatives but to hope for handouts from the white men.

The Canadian government's way to deal with the problems associated with the 'Indians' was to establish reserves – tracts of land set aside from private ownership and development where the Native peoples could live and secure a livelihood. The reserve concept was rooted in centuries-old British Imperial doctrines, based on "principles of protecting natives from the unscrupulous, 'civilising' them by introducing Christian precepts into their daily lives, and

assimilating them into the larger society that was rapidly engulfing them."[109] The timing of the event also can be traced to a request by the Blackfoot chiefs that the Canadian government settle claims to their land. As well, the Canadian government had a need to resolve the "Indian problem" in order that they could build the transcontinental railway through the southern plains of the North West and thereby fulfil their vision of transforming the Canadian wilderness into farmland, and idle men into productive citizens.

The signing of Treaty 7, which included members of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Blood, Peigan and Blackfoot) and the Sarcee and Stoneys, as well as representatives of the Canadian government, occurred at the Blackfoot Crossing on the Bow River in September of 1877. In signing the Treaty, the Indians unknowingly relinquished their hunting grounds to the Canadian government in exchange for the reserve lands, annual cash payments, cattle, farm tools and farming instruction, and the right to hunt outside of their reserves as long as it did not interfere with the rights of others. According to many Native people, as well as some white historians like Hugh Dempsey, the 'Indians' had no idea that they had ceded all the rights to their homeland. Rather, they thought that the signing of the Treaties was a way to solve the problems they were encountering with the Crees and Métis hunting on their lands and their difficulties with settlers and traders depleting their wood supply. Henry Plains Hawk helped me to understand some of his people's understandings of what occurred in September 1877:

> ...at the time of the signing of the Treaty, there was, I would say there was mass confusion. There was confusion on our part. We didn't know what English was and the people, the Europeans that came up didn't know what Blackfoot language was. So there was...a communication problem. And they used people that understood very little about the language, they could maybe tokenly talk. And when you really look at what happened in this territory, what was brought out and what was suggested were two different things. My people indicated they wanted to make a friendship, a peace treaty. Whereas, by the government it was to give up, a kind of sore statement. So when you really look...they were talking about two different languages. [In English, they were] talking about realty, they had all these realty terms that they were using. And my people were still talking territory - ownership to certain boundaries certain identifiable boundaries within the territory. So there's the gap...And throughout this time [Sitting Eagle Tail] refused to have a reserve set up. And I'm just talking the Peigans, not anybody else. He refused to have anything to do with a reserve set up and eventually he dies...until, old Sitting Eagle Tailfeathers and somebody else came in and this person had two sons and one lived within the Peigan. The other son was trapped in the United States and one day he wanted to go and see his son and the superintendent at that time said, "No you can't unless you sign, give your permission to have this reserve. We marked out the reserve now we want you to give your okay that it can be fenced." And he understood it to be meant only temporarily, only so that these large cattle owners who were in this area

> could restrict their cattle from mingling all over the place, and crossing each other and getting mixed up and not, so it could be a boundary sort of deal and to keep peace. This is one of the things he understood to happen. So a reserve was set up.[110]

Within a few years the Blackfoot people not only found themselves diseased and starving but deprived of the freedom to travel across what they considered their homeland.

To make matters worse, the land originally negotiated by Sitting Eagle Tail mysteriously shrunk. According to many Peigan, Sitting Eagle Tail claimed as Peigan territory all the land south of the Oldman River to Crow's Creek (a name which is not used today but is thought to refer to the Belly River), and west of Pincher Creek into the mountains and encompassed the full extent of the Porcupine Hills from Brocket to High River as well as the Oldman River. What they ended up with was a parcel of land measuring 12 by 15 miles just south of the Porcupine Hills and west of Pincher Creek. Their territory was further truncated when an area south of the current reserve measuring 10 miles long by 4 miles wide, which was used by Peigans as a place to pick grasses, somehow changed hands. As well, there is an area in the mountains, traditionally identified as a place to gather medicinal and religious plants that they lost rights to. According to Henry Plains Hawk, in spite of the current ownership, early documents exchanged between the Dominion government and the Peigan people recognized this as Peigan land. However, the most well known land dispute involves an 11,000 acre parcel in the north west corner of the Reserve which the Dominion government sold to settlers in order to appease requests for new land and secure cash to buy the Peigans agricultural implements. A government map of the Peigan Reserve from 1882 shows the area between the south-west corner of the present reserve and the fork of the Castle River as the Peigan Grazing reservation. A year or two later on a subsequent map, the Peigan Grazing Reservation had disappeared, replaced by the Alberta Ranch Company whose principal, DeWinton, was a close friend of Sir John A. Macdonald.[111]

The restrictions that were placed on the Peigans not only limited their movement across the broad expanse of the plains but also the kinds of activities in which they could partake both on and off the Reserve. According to Henry Plains Hawk, the creation of the Reserve cut his people off both from their families to the south and also the rest of the country because the Indian Agents, Dominion government officials, regulated the Peigan people's every move:

> [The Peigan people] were being created into dependants and now that dependence was transferred and now they were enclosed into that, into what they were...and there was no way they were going to get out of it any more. And now that dependency was all in one person, the superintendent had lots of power. He could send anybody to jail. So he was very feared. Same with the minister, same with the priest. They could recommend that someone go to jail ...[112]

The government also believed it was crucial that the Peigan learn to farm.[113] In Treaty 7, the government guaranteed that they would provide the Peigans with agricultural machinery and help them become agriculturally self-sufficient. In part, the idea of turning the 'savage Indians' into farmers was an extension of the belief that the Peigan, like all Indians, needed civilising and that the land needed to be used "properly". According to many Euro-Canadians, relying on hunting and gathering wasted the land and showed neglect of the land's true potential, as well as feeding the savage spirit of these wayward souls. As Patricia Limerick Nelson explains, "In the mission to civilise the Indians, benevolence and acquisitiveness merged; the interests of missionaries who wanted to acquire the soul of Indians and the interests of settlers who wanted to acquire their lands found a paradoxical harmony."[114] In spite of all the barriers they encountered, a number of the Peigan people demonstrated some success at farming. The Dominion government had not anticipated such agricultural proficiency and the threat the Peigan's success would pose to struggling white ranchers and farmers. As Henry Plains Hawk described, this meant a new shift in government strategy:

> ...back in 1888, '84, I think it was, some of the people that had began to take on agriculture and horticulture, animal raising and so on, ranching and farming. These became successful really quick, they had potato farms and grain farms and they used to ship everything east. And the settlers that overtook this area were unable to compete with them and they had large orders to ship east. So eventually the Indian agent, well eventually the settlers got their complaint listened to by the government and the government said well you can't buy Peigan products any more. So that's the east. In one year, all the crops that were grown were stored, all the potatoes, I don't know how many tons of potatoes were stored out in the open, they got frozen...And then cattle and horses. People had actually starved because you had to get permission from the Indian Agent to kill say a cow or to sell a horse you had to ask an Indian Agent. And if they did say yes, I give you a permit to sell, that money had to be brought to him, it had to be sent to Ottawa and a Canadian agent, maybe three months down the road you can get the money that you actually need to survive on.[115]

By the end of the century, the Reserve had become a 'panopticon' of sorts with the Peigans under constant surveillance and their actions disciplined and regimented as deemed fit by the Dominion government and Christian Brotherhood. In the name of God, children were taken from their homes and placed in residential schools. White European teachers taught the children that their traditional religion, the structure of their society and their culture itself were evil and they insisted that they destroy all traditional artefacts. The Indian Agent "outlawed any social gatherings, any dances, any Sun dances or any ceremonies"[116] because he was afraid people would rebel. Those who maintained a belief in their Peigan's traditional religion became clandestine spiritualists,

secretively holding ceremonies at night. The Peigans were prisoners on their own land.

Contemporary connections

Today, the reserve the Peigan people live on surrounds and includes the town of Brocket which is located east of the Municipal District of Pincher Creek. In addition to living on the Reserve and using the facilities within Pincher Creek fairly regularly, some of the Peigan people still occasionally venture west into the mountains to collect ceremonial paint from a location near the forks of the Castle River and special plants from the upper forks of the Castle River. As far as is locally known, the Kootenai no longer use the Upper Oldman River basin.

The ownership of the Peigan Grazing reservation and at least one other area in the Porcupine Hills remain in dispute between the Peigan band and several levels of government. The Federal government acknowledged the Peigan's claim and agreed to compensate the Band six million dollars to buy replacement land but they were required to make their purchase within 25 years. As Henry Plains Hawk recounted though, the Peigan people have encountered many barriers in trying to purchase back a piece of their homeland:

> ...every time when the band goes out to purchase [land] there's a lot of red tape that takes place. And these things are like, the provincial government has said no, we are not selling any taxed base land because if you don't honour [the existing commitments then we have trouble]...now...I think they are taking the federal government to court...The government of Alberta is refusing to sell us any land. [So we figure the federal government, y]ou either step in or we want land where national parks are. And so they are looking at this sort of alternative. In the mean time, 25 years is coming up pretty quick. And what happens is we [thought of] buying land back, we are thinking of buying another property, but the people who are occupying this land jacked the price way up, and there's no way that we can ...And so now I think what is happening is finally [we've decided to turn to the federal government and say] here's the money back, we want you to buy it for us. We'll find the land, you buy it for us. And so I think, I don't know, what they are telling me is even though it's our money, the provincial government is interfering with the Indianness to the land. Because even though it's not land, it's sitting as land in money. And as long as your interfering, you're interfering with our priority and right...All of sudden things start to happen and you start to have provincial laws that were administered [and so on]. I call it a large insulation surrounding the reserve right now. [117]

As expected, the conquest of their land and culture brought with it devastation to the Peigan people. From a material standpoint, the Peigan people were pushed into poverty. While the Dominion government led the Natives to believe that their material needs would be cared for, the reality for most of those

who lived on the Reserve was an entirely different scenario. Where once they were a self-sufficient culture, the Peigans had become captives with few opportunities and few resources. As Henry Plains Hawk explained, "...Because you can't borrow any money and you can't do anything with the land, you're pretty well stuck with being a person that had hardly any means."[118]

In 1996, the unemployment rate for residents of the Peigan Reserve was reported to be 21.9. However, according to many Peigan, close to 85% of the population on the Reserve are dependent upon the government for income assistance. Henry Plains Hawk described the current employment situation as he understands it:

> When you look at it as people who are actually working? I think there's a hundred some odd jobs. 200 jobs of a population of 2100. And on the reservation there's a population of maybe 2000, there's maybe 1100 people who can take on work. And I suppose they are looking at people who are going to school. But people on welfare, I'd say is quite high, about 85 I'd say.[119]

Other visible signs of the lack of economic prosperity on the reserve include buildings in various states of disrepair, some boarded up and others abandoned. Peigan Band member Sarah Wounded Knee provides an intimate portrayal of how the poverty translated into the conditions of daily life she experienced as a child:

> ...I lived in a small house with a lot of people. It was a two bedroom house. There was my grandfather, grandmother, my auntie and she had three daughters and my two cousins would come and go every now and then and then there was me and my brother and then I had three older, older cousins that would kind of come and go, come and go. So we always had a full house...as I got older I found out that the people that I lived with that were around my world, the people I hung around with, we all had the same experiences. And then the people in the town site where my cousin's lived and uncle and aunt and their in-laws, they kinda had the same experiences.[120]

In spite of the narrow range of employment and economic poverty, the human population is not decreasing on the reserve, but rather on a steady incline. To some extent this growth in population can be explained by the rate of teenage pregnancy, yet it also seems the out-migration of youth adults is not as high as some might expect for a community with so few jobs.

Compounding the deficiencies of money and goods was a spiral of emotional and spiritual losses that together impacted relations between individuals, both on and off the Reserve:

> Henry Plains Hawk: You not only had the bordering school of how parenting, and how family relationship, then you started having people who were able to work and go off and come back and they would drink and what not and they would be picked up and be sentenced. For quite a lengthy time, depending upon the number of times you get picked up. I

was counting this one guy went to jail 93 times in 5 years...Over the years, this relationship with the alcohol created between the police and the non-native community, and the Peigan people was sort of, I wouldn't say sort of, it was a real impact into how families, into how relationships were structured. Because what would happen is the men would get picked up and...in Pincher Creek after the liquor [violation], he'd get sentenced to jail to keep him off the street, you know it was a criminal offence, made it a criminal offence to be drunk. He would be sentenced to maybe 30 days, maybe sometimes even longer, and what happens is the woman would marry, live with someone else. And then they no longer look after the other kids. So the kids are more or less fostered into the extended families or are taken by social services. So there's the continual destruction of family. People never really got strong in the sense of knowing who they are, where they come from, how they fit into the whole social structure. And this has continued to happen. Even now, but it's not as bad.[121]

Lana Sturby echoed many of Plains Hawk's observations, remarking on the how property has become difficult to protect and justice hard to get:

> ...life on the reserve is tough, there's sort of no sense of justice out there. There isn't. Like I been there, we've been to the RCMP, we went to the Band Council, you talk to individual counsellors and nothing gets down, you know short of murder and even then. Where do you go when people walk in and steal your property, rip your fences down and take your cows? Like rustling is very, very common there, but there's what do you do? You call the RCMP. There's so much of it they don't want to get involved. They know how hostile some of the people out there can get. You know I guess there's certain people, you know like kids that have learnt that if you throw things and threaten to shoot people, you get a bit of a reaction.[122]

Sarah Wounded Knee described how the breakdown of her community impacted her as a young woman growing up on the Reserve in the late '60s, early '70s, and what this meant in terms of her senses of place in the world:

> Like we'd all squeeze on one bed because it was so small and it was, we lived in a really, really messy house. But back then it didn't bother me. Somehow it didn't bother me when I was a little kid but then when I started to get socialised this shame came over me and that's when I knew, hey we don't live like other people. We don't have like twenty people living in their house and so that's when the shame started to set in. But before that when I was a little kid. We could run and play and do anything in our house and nobody told us not to. You're going to break things, there was nothing to break.[123]

In spite of generations of shame, abuse, poverty and the fraying of relationships, both Henry Plains Hawk and Sarah Wounded Knee spoke of the

strong bonds to the land many individuals still retain. Plains Hawk spoke of the people feeling a "deep rootedness" and Wounded Knee explained how the Reserve is still home, even for those who need to leave the Reserve to heal and have been away for decades. Further from her perspective, to speak of healing or development is to speak not only about the human community but also the land. In her words:

> ...whenever Chief and Council or anybody talk about community development, community, they don't say land but you just know that that's what they mean. They mean the community and the people and they mean the land and they mean everything that's on it and culture and language and everything so. That one word carries a whole, a lot of weight. Because I think there's more ties to the land and there's more. I guess let's say in Lethbridge people move here for different reasons, for the economy, for jobs whatever and if that's come to the point where we're really not satisfied with the job or go elsewhere it doesn't take much to get up and move. Whereas on the Reserve there are no jobs, there's a lot of unemployment and there's not a whole lot of things but yet people stay there. I moved, we moved because we wanted to go to University and we didn't want to drive back and forth. Plus we knew we needed to get away from our families if we wanted to do any kind of healing. But always in the back of our minds, always is that we will go home one day and to go home is Brocket.[124]

C. The Wilderness Gridlock

> *Reincorporating the knowing body, the creative cosmos, and the complex sense of place into the ways in which we think about life would reconstitute our sense of nearly every public debate and crisis. That process is already well underway because a deep sadness and haunting intimation of loss have now surpassed faith in the modern ideologies of denial. Although our inner lives have been relentlessly diminished by ecosocial isolation, the antidote lies in recovering awareness of our context. We are embodied and embedded in a dynamic sphere of physical relationships and processes that create* real *commonalities, which have been denied by ideologies of both the rugged individual and the fragmenting "politics of identity".*
>
> - Charlene Spretnak, *The Resurgence of the Real – Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World*

> *To some, the Heart of the Rockies is the centre of the world... If this place is so special, then surely people treasure it? Many do – more each year. Wilderness has become rare in our generation, and wilderness as special as the Castle and Flathead valleys is virtually extinct... we should plan for*

the needs of the land itself, while protecting the interests of future generations who will share an increasingly crowded world. The Heart of the Rockies deserves better than what we've given it so far. But it isn't too late to heal it. In doing so, we can restore the original beauty of one of the most important places in North America – and maybe begin to heal ourselves too. We could prove ourselves worthy of this place. We could prove we belong here.

- *Heart of the Rockies* map

Introduction

To a large extent the history of wilderness activism in the Upper Oldman River basin parallels the history of industrial development in the region. It is the dance of paradox – the growth of industrialisation and wilderness activism inextricably intertwined. The natural features of the basin which attract the environmentalist - the golden bald-headed hills, timbered whalebacks, prairie oceanic and limestone ridges - likewise signal to the prospective developer opportunity and fortune.

The region's existing rich natural beauty and natural resources are borne from the same geological events. Fifty to seventy million years ago, near the western edge of North America, the earth's crust ruptured, gradually thrusting upward through the marine sediments of the Cretaceous layer to form the Rocky Mountains. Geologists call this event the Laramide Revolution.[125] In spite of its dramatic effects, most of the Upper Oldman River basin has been shaped geologically more recently by glaciation in one way or another. Indeed, large portions of this region are geologically as they were some 10,000 to 15,000 years ago when the most recent great continental and mountain glaciers disappeared.[126]

At least three or four glacial advances and retreats took place in the southern Alberta Rockies over the last 400,000 years. The Rocky Mountains and parts of the foothills supported integrated systems of alpine glaciers that extended several kilometres onto the plains. Of these glacial episodes, the earliest was the most extensive, with mountain glaciers from the combined Livingstone-Oldman-Crowsnest-Castle-Waterton drainages advancing as far east as the Brocket-Fort Macleod area. This glacial advance was eventually overtaken by the Great Laurentide Ice Sheet. As a result, in the Upper Oldman River basin much of the Rocky Mountains date back to the Paleozoic period of 225 to 570 million years ago and consist mostly of limestone, dolomites, sandstones and siltstones.[127] Straight, U-shaped valleys, hanging valleys, cirques and moraines are recognizable features of these events. However, the Rockies in this region also contain much older sedimentary deposits (570 to 2400 million years old) from the Precambrian period, layers of the remains of vanished oceans, immense brackish swamps or freshwater lakes.[128] These buried swamps were cooked by the earth's inner heat and squeezed by its immense presses to produce coal and in its wake oil and natural gas. Ginkgoes, ferns and early conifer trees pickled in humic acid lay the foundation for hopes and devastation of many centuries later.

Development dreams

Coal mining had its start in the Upper Oldman River basin in the late 1880s.[129] According to a local historian, most of the coal was directed at domestic markets within the community. "People would find a seam of coal nearby and harvest it for their own heating purposes..."[130] Jim Gilruth, one of the first recognized settlers in the region, found coal on his land and opened up a mine which operated almost continuously until the late 1920's.[131] With the influx of farmers into the region a decade later, coal mining in the Lundbreck area really took off. Around 1905, iron ore was discovered in the area which one settler, W.R. Dobie, was able to profit from as he opened a mine on the north bank of Pine Creek and sold the ore in Pincher Creek.[132]

In and around the same time period, the first identifications by prospectors and settlers of natural gas and oil were reported. Native peoples were well aware of oil seepage on Pine Creek prior to the turn of the century and imparted information about this greasy substance to the famous naturalist Kootenai Brown who made note of the oil in his journal in 1886. Being lighter than water, the petroleum and natural gas migrate up through the earth's crust to some final point where it forms a subterranean reservoir. The Upper Oldman watershed contains below its visible soils and rock outcrops rich natural gas reservoirs such as the Shell Waterton Field just south of Pincher Creek and the Savannah Field, west of the Livingstone Range. Some of these reservoirs sit remarkably near the surface, and hence their discovery was ineluctable. One of the early residents recounted a story from the 1890s of being able to put a shovel in the east side of Sand Rock and after pulling it out lighting a match to the natural gas.[133] Not far from where the present-day Twin Butte post office is located, in 1891 Murray Bellas and a man named French drilled the first well in the area in search of oil. The second test for oil took place down on Pine Creek but efforts were hampered when flowing water was discovered instead.[134] However, it would take until 1904 before the area's (and Alberta's) first oil producing well was drilled at Oil City in the south-west corner of the Upper Oldman River region, close to what is now Waterton National Park. This discovery initiated a small investment boom within the area, but did not prove to be a long-term development.

Prior to the turn of the century other entrepreneurially minded individuals bent on making their stamp on the land got involved with forestry. In 1879 John Keen developed the first sawmill in the area near the mouth of Mill Creek. Keen was sent out from Ontario by the Dominion government to establish a mill for sawing logs and grinding grain complete with a fifty mile timber limit reserved for the Indian Department. The thinking was that the availability of local timber would encourage the 'Indians' to build homes and begin farming and thereby become self-sufficient. In 1881 the Indian Department decided the mill was a failure and sold it to Senator Peter McLaren.[135]

McLaren and William Gladstone were probably the first to commercially log in the Upper Oldman River Basin, milling lumber for the Peigan Reserve, Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek. Assured work with the McLaren Lumber Company attracted west a number of the area's first citizens[136] as well as providing a winter

wage for many of the new ranchers. Yet, in comparison to operations in Ontario, Quebec or British Columbia, both McLaren's and Gladstone's timber operations remained relatively small.

In part, the size and placement of these operations was dictated by easily retrievable timber supplies in the area. The Oldman basin is characterised predominantly by grasslands, however, trees do frame the northern and western edges of the basin. The foothills of areas such as the Whaleback, the Porcupine Hills, and foothills south of the Crowsnest Pass to Waterton Lakes National Park are distinguished by the presence of Douglas fir and/or limber pine sometimes mixed with white spruce, lodgepole pine, aspen poplar and subalpine fir[137] (see Figure 5). Along the base of the mountains, near the mouths of the front range canyons of the Castle and Carbondale Rivers and within the Beaver Mines Lake area, are patches of Aspen Parkland[138] dominated by aspen poplar. Finally subalpine, an altitudinal zone of coniferous forest which runs north-south along the Rocky Mountains between the Alpine ecoregion and the Montane or Aspen Parkland ecoregions, offered prospective lumberers supplies of lodgepole pine and white spruce at lower elevations, and lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir at higher elevations.

After the turn of the century, development of the Upper Oldman River area increased rapidly. New hamlets such as Fishburn, Twin Butte and Beaver Mines sprang up across the landscape, while Pincher Creek blossomed quickly into the commercial centre for the region. In 1902 the population of Pincher Creek was 350 people but by 1912 it had grown to 1,300 residents.[139] By the turn of the century, Pincher Creek had a bank, Hudson Bay Company store, the Lebel department store, a school, four different denominational churches, and, by 1901, a hospital. Also, coal mining and the lumber industry really took off in this time period. The first mines opened in Beaver Mines in 1907. Meanwhile local lumber companies began to feed not only local mills, such as the one located at Cowley, but also mills situated in Fort Macleod and Lethbridge.

Shortly after Alberta became a province in 1905, a local council was elected for the M.D. of Pincher Creek and in 1906 Pincher Creek was incorporated as a town. Alongside the Town Council, the local Board of Trade quickly became boosters for the region. While initially they backed some agriculturally-related enterprises, the Board of Trade was not particular about the type of development it supported. Rather, it was quick to back any venture that promised to increase the growth of the community by providing new jobs and investment in the region. For example, in the 1920s it backed a proposal to construct a dam on the Bosporous Straits to supply water for irrigation purposes to arid regions downstream.[140]

Interest in irrigation in southern Alberta has a long history, paralleling the history of European settlement in the region. Small-scale irrigation ditches were first dug in 1877 near Calgary and in 1882 on the Belly River.[141] In 1889 Charles Ora Card, founder of the neighbouring settlement of Cardston built irrigation ditches sufficient to water 800 acres of farmland.[142] Around the same time that

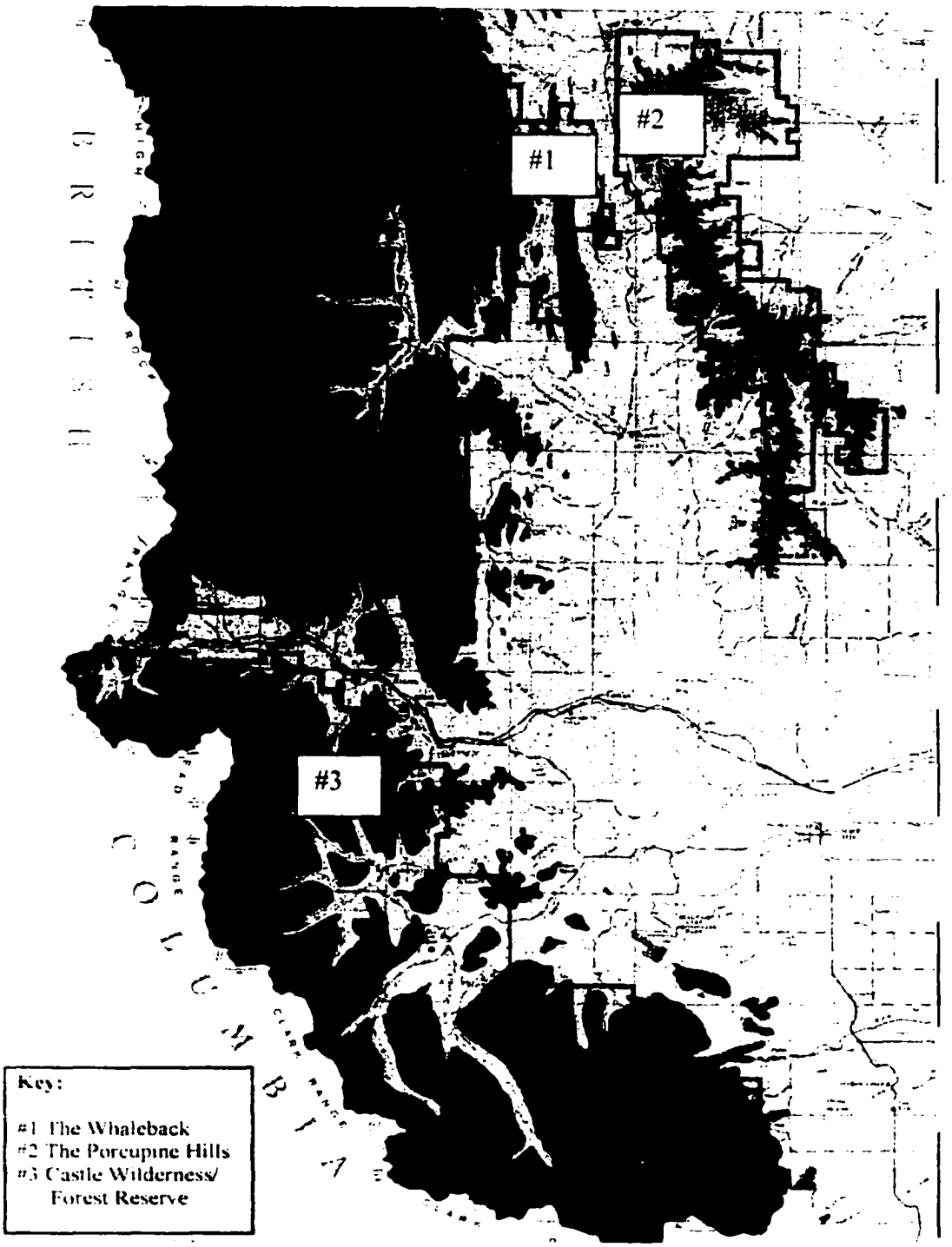

Figure 5: Prominent Natural Landscapes of Interest to Conservationists
Source: Province of Alberta, *Southeast Quarter Provincial Base Map*, 1987. W. C. Wonders Map Collection, University of Alberta.

Card was busy with his own irrigation project, the Macleod Irrigation Company became a chartered business within the region. In spite of all the local interest in irrigation the Dominion government did not support these early irrigation ventures and either ignored or tried to tone down all suggestions about the need for irrigation along the 49th parallel. "Officials were fearful that the clamor for irrigation would produce false rumors that Northwest contained only arid lands and such talk would scare away prospective settlers."[143] The severe drought that struck the southern North West in the early 1890s caused the Dominion government to reconsider their initial position.

In 1894, the Dominion government passed the Northwest Irrigation Act, which gave the crown absolute ownership and control over the development and use of all water in the basin.[144] The intent of this legislation was to facilitate the orderly development of irrigation to assist in the agricultural settlement of the western prairies – a critical aspect of the national policy of the Dominion government. Along with other legislation and policy pertaining to the acquisition of land, the Act ushered in a period of corporate development of irrigation. The CPR, the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company (eventually controlled by the CPR) and the Canada Land and Irrigation Company initiated large-scale irrigation projects and works to divert and deliver water to company-owned land in Lethbridge, Brooks and Calgary. The land was later sold to settlers, but these companies retained ownership and control of the works for the delivery of water. Under the Alberta Irrigation Act of 1915, a number of irrigation districts were established. By 1920, 72,000 hectares of land were irrigated.[145]

From the early 1920s to the mid-1940s, corporate dominance in the development of water and irrigation gave way to direct government involvement in both the development of water and the management of irrigation districts. CPR's interests were transferred to the Western and Eastern Irrigation Districts. Both provincial and federal governments supplied financial assistance to the operations of the projects undertaken by these districts during the 1930s. However, in spite of the government's general interest in and support of irrigation works, the dam on the Bosporous Straits never materialised.[146] Several dryland farmers and ranchers came forward in opposition to the plan primarily because they were against the idea of irrigated farming, but also because there would be deleterious impacts from the dam on Waterton Lakes National Park, which had been officially established in 1910.[147]

The outbreak of World War One in 1914, followed by the Depression starting in 1929 and the eruption of World War Two in 1939 had many in the region less concerned with what was occurring on the mountains and plains of Oldman watershed and more interested in what was taking place in Europe, Asia and America. Considerable support was shown in the region for both World Wars with the Pincher Creek district obtaining a fairly high enlistment rate. As well, an active population of volunteers got together to donate their time and skills. Their activities resulted in many donations and supplies for organisations like the Red Cross.[148]

Economically, these three events translated into a period of stabilisation and consolidation of existing industries and enterprises within the region.[149] The drought of 1913 and 1914 and the Depression years were difficult for some residents within the Basin, as the economy slowed down in the region, but few residents lost their property or possessions, or went hungry.[150] The one exception to the stabilising trend was in terms of logging. In July 1936, in the Middle Kootenay Pass of the Forest Reserve a great wildfire swept across the region.[151] It burned on and off until the middle of November destroying much of the old growth forest in the West and South Castle Valleys as far east as Beaver Lake. After the fire was squelched, the government tendered contracts to local mill operators in the area to salvage what they could of timber in the fire regions. Nineteen logging, milling and prop camps were established and prospered by retrieving saleable lumber from the area.[152]

In some ways the wildfire of 1936 had set the way for the opening up of the Rocky Mountain Forest reserve to increased industrial activity. In 1953 the roads were improved throughout the region and the first road built down the South Castle Valley within the Reserve as far as the Meadow Cache.[153] Initially the road was used for fire fighting purposes but it also served the logging companies well. By the 1950s a number of small and not-so-small sawmills and logging camps began operating in the Castle area. Many of the small timber operators developed into lucrative businesses, some of which remain today - a medium-sized sawmill at Cowley with several smaller, independent operators also utilising timber in the forest reserve and on private land. These sawmills, along with timber operations at Claresholme and the Crowsnest Pass, now utilise most of the region's available lumber.[154]

Oil and gas exploration and drilling similarly began in earnest following the Second World War. In 1947 Canadian Gulf Oil discovered a major wet gas field approximately 20 kilometres south-east of the town of Pincher Creek.[155] By 1957, the British American Oil Company (a subsidiary of Gulf) assumed responsibility for the wet gas field and constructed a $25,000,000 natural gas processing and sulphur plant nearby that began operation in January 1958. At the time the plant came on line it was the largest supplier of natural gas to the Trans-Canada pipeline. As the following quote from the local newspaper reveals, many within the community heralded the arrival of the B.A. Oil Company to the area:

> Let's all join in wishing every success to the B.A. Oil Company Ltd. on the official opening of its gas processing and sulphur plant at Pincher Creek and extend to the Company a sincere invitation to continue its expansion in this community and to assist in making the Pincher Creek area the gas centre of Canada.[156]

According to one of the local journalists covering the opening celebrations for the plant, the B.A. Oil Company had "finally put us on the map."[157] In 1982 the gas plant was closed down.

Shell Canada drilled its first exploratory well in the region 1954 and by 1957 had its first commercially successful well in operation in the region in an

area just outside the Castle Forest Reserve near Waterton National Park.[158] Their second well was drilled within the forest reserve near South Drywood Canyon, a well that still remains in production. Nearby, Shell also initiated construction of a gas processing plant that was completed in 1959. Later in 1963, Shell and Gulf jointly financed and built a third gas cycling plant in the Lookout Butte field. According to the Alberta Department of Industry and Tourism, the construction of this third plant created employment for 225 families in the region.[159] The Shell plant remains in production but due to automation, declining reserves and cost cutting measures, the plant has downsized their operation since 1982, laying off many workers. Nonetheless, the Shell Gas Plant remains a major industrial employer in the area, with a number of natural gas service businesses still operational.

The impact of natural gas development over the years on the Upper Oldman River region has been dramatic. People were not only employed in the construction of the plants but the two companies, combined, employed nearly 400 people at their heyday, with approximately a third of the town of Pincher Creek's population and wealth directly linked to the gas industry.[160] Increased employment opportunities attracted new residents to the community and new developments within the region and town. New schools were built to accommodate the influx of new families, stores were expanded, new businesses begun and residential construction boomed. By the early 1980s, the population of the town of Pincher Creek had risen to 3800 residents, roughly the population still today.

Gas development in the region also had a profound effect on the sense of community. Recall Barry Watson's views in this regard:

> ...this gas industry added a whole new dimension. It was a much more diversified economy than it was in the 1920s or it was in 1890. So it added a completely new element which certain portions of the long term population base certainly found a little different. There was also sorta new versus the old aspect and sorta the ramifications that come around control issues and all of that. There was also disagreements over the environmental issues, especially with the gas industry. Concern about pollution coming from the plants, safety within the plant. You know worker safety and things like that and a lot of controversy about that when the gas plants were first established and later on when they were in operation as well over whether. There were some concerns in certain portions of the agricultural community that their cattle could die if they got, that the fumes, the leftover fumes out of the gas plant were not handled properly sort of thing. Especially if you lived down wind from there, from the gas plants. Now whether or not that's true I'm not in any position to answer that. I don't have the technical background to answer that, but those were some of the issues that were raised during the construction of the plant during the late 50s and early 60s and when they were in operation during the 60s and 70s. It was a quite a, it was a fairly controversial issue. So there was a bit of friction between the established

community and the gas industry over that aspect as well. It wasn't just the influx of new dollars and new people, it was sort of an environmental slash health related issue sort of thing.[161]

While oil and gas development began to slow down, developments had begun anew in the Oldman region in another direction. Over the years, a plethora of reports and studies were completed examining the water needs and servicing options (irrigation) in the region, many of which were conducted under the direction of the Alberta government. Some of the studies were technical or feasibility studies but there were also several that included an attempt to gauge local opinion about the possibility of the construction of a dam in the area. Amongst the many studies conducted include the following:

- *Oldman River Flow Regulation Preliminary Planning Studies*, undertaken between 1974 and 1976 under direction of Alberta Environment (estimated current and future water requirements in the region and identified the Three Rivers Site as their first choice for a dam site).
- *Oldman River Basin Phase II Studies* conducted between Feb. 1977 and Aug. 1978 under the direction of the Oldman River Study Management Committee (prescribed a step-wise strategy presented largely in the form of integrated irrigation and water development plan to meet future water requirements and commitments in the Oldman basin. It recommended construction of a dam on the Oldman River should start between 1985 and 1990 but didn't identify one preferred site).
- *Management of Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin* conducted between Aug. 1978 and Aug. 1979 under the direction of the Environment Council of Alberta (The ECA were a panel of four Albertans who sat for a total of 10 days in 8 communities. Their report offered 74 recommendations including that a dam on the Oldman River was not required at that time nor in the near future).
- The Oldman River Dam Local Advisory Committee and MD of Pincher Creek No. 9 hired Monte Christensen to conduct a socio-economic study regarding the impacts of the Oldman River Dam in 1985 and later in 1994 hired Linda D. Cerney to conduct another in 1994.
- South Saskatchewan River Basin Planning Program conducted between 1984 and 1986 which included hearings held between Nov. and Dec. 1984 presided over by the Alberta Water Resources Commission, dominated by Alberta government appointees (supported the government's efforts to include mitigative measures in the design and management of the dam).

In spite of their lack of interest in 1930, active government interest in irrigation arose again in 1946 when the interests of the Alberta Railway and

Irrigation Company were transferred to a provincial crown corporation. The corporation had been established to administer the St. Mary and Milk Rivers developments. During the 1950s the federal and provincial governments collaborated in the development of the St. Mary project, including construction of the Waterton and St. Mary River reservoirs and associated canal systems. Later in 1968, Alberta passed the Irrigation Act that brought all irrigation districts under uniform legislation.[162] In 1973, the provincial and federal governments signed an agreement that saw the federal government withdraw from active involvement in the management of water irrigation in the South Saskatchewan River basin. The province, through the Department of Environment, assumed ownership and operational responsibility for all the federal irrigation systems.[163]

Alongside the development of oil and gas and irrigation in the Oldman region, over the latter half of the twentieth century a dramatic increase in interest in tourism emerged. The Upper Oldman region is currently host to a number of local tourist attractions and recreational facilities including: designated picnicking and camping facilities at the Oldman River Dam, within Pincher Creek, Beauvais Lake Provincial Park and 11 other smaller areas throughout the region; activity based recreation such as a nine hole golf course, the Westcastle Ski Area which offers 20 ski runs and a day lodge, fly-fishing on the Crowsnest and Oldman Rivers, windsurfing on the Oldman River Dam reservoir, kayaking beneath the Oldman River Dam, horseback riding, snowmobiling and ATV use in the foothills of the Forest Reserve; 20 bed and breakfast facilities; three museums; two art galleries; eight exotic animal farms; several dude ranches; and, a number of historic sites. According to the Southern Alberta Business Development Centre, tourism forms one of four major pillars of the economic base of the Upper Oldman River region with potential for increased tourist activity.[164] Indeed, in the Oldman River region regional plan it states that tourism has been identified as a possible source for economic diversification in the region.[165] To take advantage of the tourism potential offered by the Basin's natural regions, the proposed strategy is to increase the number of developments and give consideration to expanding the types of facilities available for both winter and summer activities. While I will discuss this in much greater detail in the next section, within this context the Vacation Alberta Corporation submitted an application to expand an existing ski facility in the West Castle Valley.

Ecological outline

Like many of the Peigan people, many conservationists believe that European settlement in the Upper Oldman River basin brought devastation to the area, but of a very different sort than that discussed by Henry Plains Hawk and Sarah Wounded Knee. The story conservationists tell is a narrative focused on biological diversity, ecological integrity and prime protection zones rather than the self-sufficiency and oppression of people. Sitting in a house perched on a hill overlooking the town of Pincher Creek, I asked local conservationist Wayne Hailey to sum up the significant changes that have occurred in the Upper Oldman River basin over the past century. This is what he told me:

> To me, I see these things [the country and the wild lands] are vanishing and I don't think the ranching community does so much. The fact that we build a new road into the mountains doesn't disturb them all that much you know. But I see it as a major loss of wildness and wild things and wild country, when we've already lost a whole lot in this area because of what I would say is careless development and not bothering to restore disturbed areas as well as having to have development in every square mile of land, in the mountains and foothills.[166]

For decades, the area has been a hunting, fishing and wildlife observation destination, mostly used by locals but also a coveted treasure for a few visiting from far away. Bert Rigall and Andy Russell were two of several outfitters who in the early part of this century took Canadian and American visitors through the region's "raw wilderness". Today, local outfitter Mike Judd similarly leads tourists on foot and horseback through the region's unsettled alpine, subalpine, and montane terrain. Judd's patrons, like Rigall's, often get a glance at a grizzly, cougar or Bighorn sheep, but they also are witness to some sights, sounds and smells Rigall's guests were not – straight line swaths bulldozed through the forest for seismic exploration, the loud roar of all terrain vehicles (ATVs) manoeuvring up and down the creek bottoms and the acrid smell of sour gas arising from gas wells. For many who live in the Basin, these are products of progress. To those in the environmental community, these are marks of destruction.

In measuring the extent of damage wrought by residential, recreational and industrial developments, environmentalists commonly examine the loss of indigenous habitat and species. In undertaking their assessment, they divide political jurisdictions up into ecological classification schemes based on broad vegetational, soil and landform features. Of the six broad ecological categories in Alberta, the Upper Oldman River region contains three: Rocky Mountains, Parkland and Grasslands (see Figure 6). Each of these broad ecological areas is then further divided into natural regions. The Rocky Mountains, Parkland and Grasslands all subdivided into three natural regions. While there are many species that are commonly residents of the grasslands, parkland and mountains, often the quite distinct flora (plants) of the ecoregions support quite distinct populations of fauna (animals).

The Grasslands are composed of flat to gently rolling plains with a few major hills systems. In the Oldman basin there are two Grassland natural regions: Mixed Grasslands and Foothills Grasslands. Extensive glacial till deposits cover most of this area. In Alberta, Grasslands cover a broad strip in southern Alberta from the Rocky Mountains to the Parkland Natural Regions of central Alberta. Along the eastern flanks of the mountains, lush Foothills Grasslands are found. Foothills Grasslands are dominated by fescue grasses and oat grasses and are rich in broad-leaf flowering plants that create spectacular spring floral displays. Currently, fescue grasslands cover only about 2.2% of Alberta, the majority of the remaining intact fescue grasslands located in the southeastern corner of the province.[167] The Mixedgrass subregion covers an area of approximately

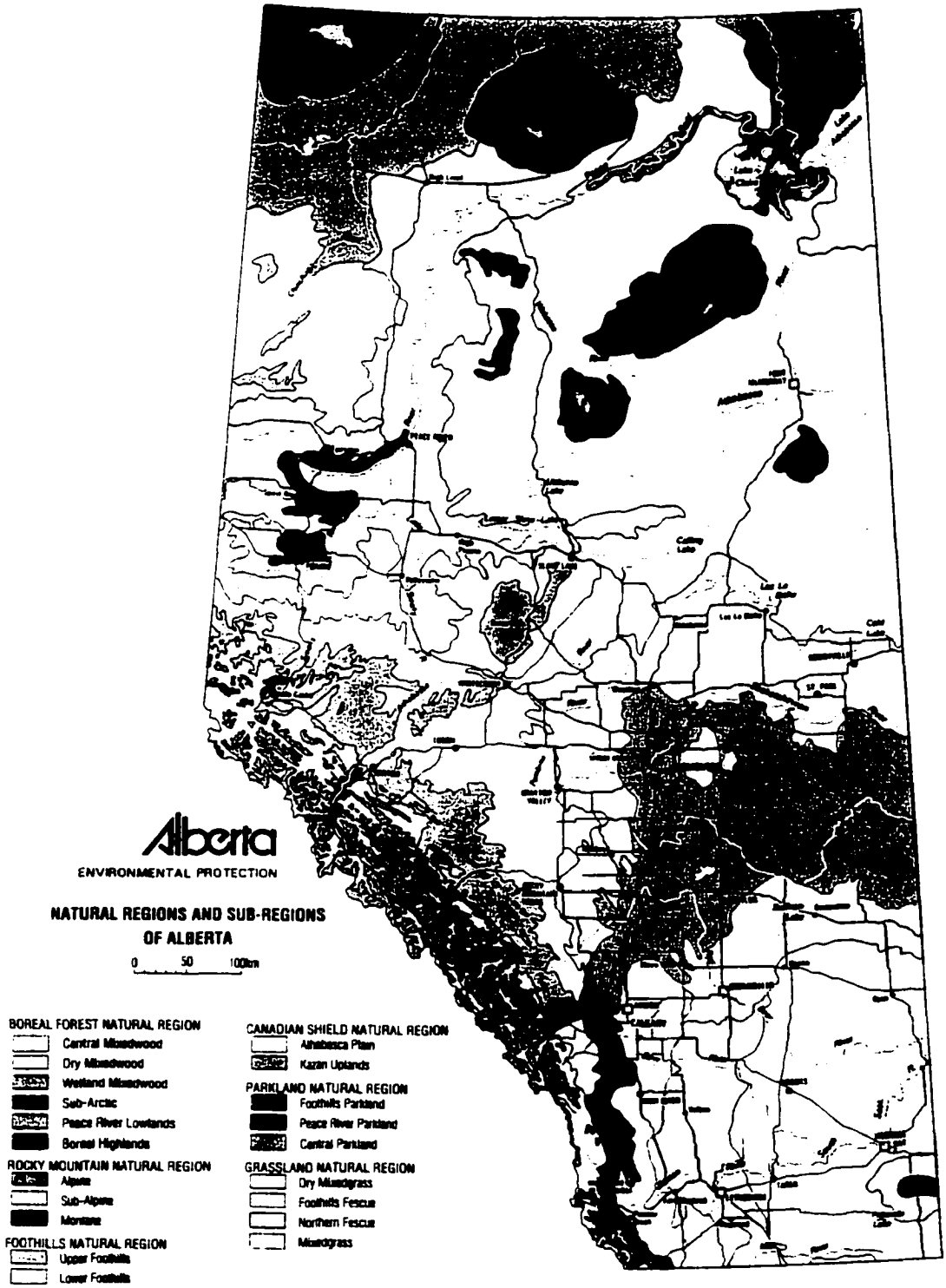

Figure 6: The Ecological Natural Regions and Subregions of Alberta
Source: Alberta Parks Services, Management Support Division, *Alberta's Natural Regions and Subregions*, 1994.

19,111km^2 or about 2.9% of Alberta.[168] The name "Mixedgrass" comes from the predominance of both short and mid-height grasses. Grasses most prevalent in the Mixedgrass subregion include spear grass, western porcupine grass, western wheat grass and northern wheat grass. Along the river shore terraces of the Oldman and Waterton narrow-leaved cottonwood are extensively found, woodlands common only to these and two other rivers in south-western Alberta.

Extensive grazing and tilling of land in the Upper Oldman River basin has nearly extinguished the fescue grasslands replacing them with a variety of introduced species and agricultural crops. Because of the extensive transformation of the land, little habitat exists for species once endemic to these areas. For example, prior to European settlement, it is estimated that the North American grasslands supported between 50 and 30 million bison living in grazing bands of 50 to 200 animals.[169] As well, huge herds of Pronghorn and elk were seen migrating across the prairies and finding refuge from winter storms in the coulees. [170] Free-ranging bison along with the swift fox, plains grizzly, black-footed ferrets and wolves are all now mostly prairie memories. Mammals commonly found on the plains today include mule and white-tailed deer, the jack and cottontail rabbit, porcupine, coyote, northern plains skunk, meadow voles, deer mice and of course the Richardson's ground squirrel, more commonly known as the gopher.[171]

The characteristic foothills of areas such as the Whaleback, which borders the Upper Oldman River basin to the north, and major valleys of the Rocky Mountains from the Bow Corridor south, are called Montane. Montane is one of three natural regions that fall under the Rocky Mountain classification, the other two being Alpine and Subalpine. The main occurrences in Alberta of Montane include the Whaleback, the Porcupine Hills, the Crowsnest Pass, and the foothills south of the Crowsnest Pass to Waterton Lakes National Park. Montane is the smallest ecoregion in Alberta covering only 0.5% of the province. More than any other ecoregion in Alberta it is under-represented within some form of protected status.

Montane is distinguished by the presence of Douglas fir and/or limber pine sometimes mixed with white spruce, lodgepole pine, aspen poplar and subalpine fir.[172] In addition to the mountain foothills, Montane areas in Alberta are associated with the major east-west mountain valleys such as the Oldman, Crowsnest and Castle. These valleys offer a milder climate than higher elevations acting as channels that direct the warm Pacific air onto the plains. Snow cover in the Montane tends to be much less than in the Subalpine. As well, Montane areas in the Upper Oldman River basin are subject to chinook caused mid-winter snow melts. The frequent high winds blow the south and west-facing slopes clear, thus providing the most important winter range for ungulates (e.g. deer, elk, mountain sheep) in the region.

Subalpine is an altitudinal zone of coniferous forest which runs north-south along the Rocky Mountains between the Alpine ecoregion and the Montane or Aspen Parkland ecoregions. In the Upper Oldman River basin, Subalpine is dominated by coniferous forests of lodgepole pine and white spruce at lower

elevations, and lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir at higher elevations.[173] Deciduous trees also occur on warmer sites, but are not common. Unique to Subalpine in south-western Alberta is the presence of whitebark pine at higher elevations as well as Alpine larch. The Subalpine ecoregion provides important summer range in south-western Alberta for bears and ungulates, as well as at lower levels, moose winter range. Ecologically intact Subalpine is also of major importance for watershed protection.

The Alpine ecoregion occurs above the climatic tree line where the contiguous forest becomes isolated islands of shrubby Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir, whitebark pine and alpine larch and low-growing alpine plants.[174] It is characterised by low, thinly distributed vegetation, strong winds, long, cold winters and cool summers. Like the Subalpine, the Alpine is important for watershed protection. As well, this ecoregion provides summer habitat for bighorn sheep and year around habitat for mountain goats and other specialised alpine wildlife. From an ecological standpoint, Alpine is considered a very diverse region and probably one of the more fragile ecosystems in Alberta.

Along the base of the mountains, near the mouths of the front-range canyons, along the Castle and Carbondale Rivers and within the Beaver Mines Lake area, are patches of Foothill Parkland.[175] Ecologically and climatically, Parkland is a transition zone located between the fescue grasslands and the montane or subalpine forests. Foothill Parkland is dominated by aspen poplar, a forest zone that functions in the Oldman region as a watershed as well as providing important habitat for many animals.

The coulees that intersect both the grasslands and montane are typically shortgrass prairie covered extensively by sagebrush habitat. Prickly pear, cushion cactus, greasewood, salt sage[176] sagebrush and winter fat are all common species within the coulees. On their exposed rims, creeping juniper often forms a dense carpet and wolf willow a near impenetrable border. Moss phlox creeps into the smaller places and orange and green lichens cover the lee surfaces of rocks and boulders. Along the slopes and bottom of the valleys, yellow bells, shooting stars and low larkspur dot the landscape. In the shelter of the coulee bottoms, bladder ferns and red osier dogwood are often found, and if there is water such as there is in the Oldman valley, cottonwoods and a variety of willows including the smaller diamond willows often flourish.[177]

Prior to European settlement, the streams and rivers of the Upper Oldman River basin supported cutthroat trout and bull, Dolly Varden trout and mountain whitefish.[178] The introduction of non-indigenous species, over-fishing, and development and pollution along these water courses have significantly reduced, or in some cases eliminated, native fish populations in the streams and rivers of the Upper Oldman River basin. Human induced siltation of these waters, due to activities such as clear cutting and intense livestock grazing along the water's edge, create a build up of fine material in the water that can have a negative effect on fish reproduction and food supply. Further, lakes and streams in the region were probably stocked heavily in the beginning in the 1920s and 1930s by the Fish Culture Branch of the Federal Department of Fisheries mostly with rainbow

trout but also brook trout and Golden Trout.[179] These introduced species, or hybrids of these species, now dominate many of the Upper Oldman River basin's water courses.

Birds identified in the Front Ranges include 150 breeding birds and 60 migration species. Some of the more common avian residents include: the Canada Goose, Red-tailed Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Belted Kingfisher, Barn swallow, Crow, Raven, Jay, Magpie, Dark-eyed Junko, Pine Siskin and various sparrows.[180] Many of these same species, particulary those migrating through the mountains, can be found in the foothills and across the plains. Some species of birds such as Ruffed Grouse, Red-winged Blackbird and Black-billed Magpie are common in the mountains, foothills and across the prairies but others more common to the plains include: the Sharp-tailed Grouse, Swainson and Ferruginous Hawks, Prairie Falcon, Short-eared and Great Horned Owls, Killdeer, Rosy Finch, Meadowlark and Longspurs.[181]

European settlement gone amiss

In making their case for increased environmental protection in the Upper Oldman River basin, wilderness activists commonly extol the many beauties of the place and offer details about the natural history and bioecology details such as those I have just outlined. The story told through use of this data is not of a community slowly evolving and bettering but of a community in crisis and rapidly disappearing. Consider the sentiments of two wilderness activists, one a local resident and the other from outside the area:

> Wayne Hailey: To me I see these things [the wild land] disappearing...we build a new road into the mountains...I see [that] as a major loss of wildness and wild things and wild country, when we've already lost a whole lot in this area because of what I would say is careless development and not bothering to restore disturbed areas as well as having development in every square mile of land, in the mountains and the foothills.[182]

> Harvey Locke: Right near the boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park at the head of one of these long valleys there are clearcuts in the Castle Wilderness. Grizzly bear are being removed from the Castle at an alarming rate...[183]

In response to the surge of oil and gas development, the clear cutting of forests and the damming of rivers within the basin and across the province on June 29, 1968 a number of concerned outfitters, ranchers, hunters and naturalists formed the province's first wilderness activist organization, the Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA). The first meeting of AWA was held in Lundbreck in the west-central part of the Upper Oldman River basin where in the words of AWA's first president, William Michalsky, "a group of about 60 enthusiastic people attended. The reason of course was to do something to preserve some of our vanishing wilderness."[184] While the AWA would a few years later move to Calgary in order to increase its profile and membership, it would maintain a

strong membership and keen interest in the area. In the years ahead it would spearhead many of the environmental campaigns against development in the area.

One of the first issues that the AWA and other environmentalists in the region focused on was the development of oil and gas. The rapid pace of exploration and drilling in the region initiated concern amongst some of the residents. As local conservationist Ed Connors told me, it wasn't that he was against seismic exploration, it was the way it was being done: "The oil companies just moved in and they didn't ask any questions about what they could do and what they couldn't do, and they messed it up, and tore the confounded country apart."[185]

As has been the custom throughout all of Alberta, the discovery and development of oil and natural gas within the Upper Oldman River region had been accompanied by extensive seismic exploration and road construction. Seismic exploration is thought to have begun in the area in the 1956.[186] Early seismic lines were created by bulldozers cutting trails, which were often eventually developed into roads, along all the major drainage ways in the Front Ranges and across the prairies. When the initial swaths were completed there was no requirement for reclamation, and hence most of these seismic lines remain visible even today, particularly in the mountains and foothills. Since then, many of the trails have become the favoured routes of snowmobilers and off road vehicle users.

However, more than the tearing up of the land by seismic crews, what concerned most local residents was the potential effects of sour gas. In other parts of the province, as well as throughout the United States, drilling and processing of oil and natural gas already had taken place and stories circulated about some of the health problems others had experienced as a result of these developments. After the Shell gas processing plant came on line some of the local ranchers down wind of the plume began to complain about the negative health effects both they and their cattle were experiencing as a result of the sour gas. In the late 1950s this worry transformed into a lawsuit served to Shell by seven ranching families. After several years of legal wrangling, the company settled out of court. Shell provided financial compensation to a number of landowners down wind from the plume based on the number of acres of affected land owned which supported cattle. With money in hand, some of the affected families moved out of the region and others found a new location within the Oldman basin for their home. Still others, particularly those ranchers who had not participated in the lawsuit, took advantage of the newly available land and stayed put, unconvinced by the claims of health problems resulting from the sour gas.

Shell's settlement quieted some of the controversy in the community about oil and gas development in the region, but did not squelch it altogether. In response to on-going health concerns, over the next twenty years a number of studies were conducted focused on examining the impact of sour gas emissions on the health of humans and livestock. Whether initiated by the government or other parties, nothing was ever conclusively determined. According to a number of conservationists, if anything, the studies only seemed to further entrench the

positions of people in the community as well as create tensions that led to ostracism. Wayne Hailey offers his version of these events:

> There was two feelings. One was those guys [the ranchers who received financial compensation from Shell] are getting something for nothing...The second was to simply ignore the problem. And that was done for years and years, in fact people go around bad mouthing people who complained about the problem. Instead of supporting them as a part of the community, they were ostracised. [Those who complained] were on their own And this was the medical profession who behaved disgracefully in this town because they never did deal with the health issues of the pollution problem. Instead they supported Shell. And of course the head of the clinic here was the mayor of Pincher Creek at that time. So it was very difficult for those people in the community. And to some extent, I think they are still regarded as odd balls though their families go back as many generations as any one else. They are still kinda ostracised in a way.[187]

While still keeping oil and gas exploration and drilling under surveillance, the AWA and other environmentalists became increasingly concerned about a dam being built at the confluence of the Castle, Crowsnest and Oldman Rivers (the Three Rivers site). According to past-president of the AWA, Kevin Van Tighem, the demand for more water was fed by new irrigation technologies that emerged in the 1970s which allowed farmers to irrigate uphill by pumping water into huge sprinkler systems.[188] Further, failing to secure much support in the south during his first term in office as premier of Alberta, in 1975 Peter Lougheed, leader of the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party, promised public money to rehabilitate and increase water supplies for irrigation.[189] Shortly after the election, the Alberta government adopted a new water management policy titled, *Water Management for Irrigation,* and between 1974 and 1984 commissioned a series of studies to explore the need and possible sites for construction of a dam in the south-west corner of the province.[190]

Many in southern Alberta were supportive of the idea of building a dam at the Three Rivers site. Those who openly opposed the idea included agriculturists whose homes and land would be flooded by the reservoir (some of whom formed the Committee for the Preservation of Three Rivers), the Peigan Nation who interpreted Treaty 7 as claiming the Oldman River as a part of their territory and hence argued that the provincial government should be consulting with them about building a dam, and the environmentalists, both those who resided in the area and far beyond. At each step in the process, a number of environmentalists questioned the utility of increased irrigation and the damming of rivers. Specifically, a number of environmentalists took the province to task for their poor water management practices.[191]

In spite of growing opposition, the Alberta government forged ahead with their plans to build the dam at the Three Rivers site and sparked increased environmental concerns and effort. In 1983 access roads and a camp were

constructed and an application submitted to Transport Canada to construct the dam under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. By the fall of 1986 the excavation of twin diversion tunnels was undertaken with construction of the dam slated for the spring of 1988. At that time contracts also were issued to build a reservoir perimeter dike on the left side of the river and two drainage tunnels, one on each bank, which would eventually carry seepage downstream. The construction of the tunnels required work in the river, and so in August 1987 the Alberta government issued itself a license, under the Water Resources Act, to construct the Oldman Dam.[192]

That same summer 17 environmentalists from across Alberta convened in Lethbridge to try and stop further construction of the Oldman River Dam. Out of this meeting emerged the formation of the Friends of the Oldman River Society (FOR), spearheaded by Cliff Wallis, biologist and then president of the AWA, and Martha Kostuch, a veterinarian from Rocky Mountain House. The first action taken by FOR was to challenge in court the issuing of a license to build the dam because the provincial government had failed to advertise their application for a permit for that purpose. The Alberta government's license was quashed on December 8 because they had failed to obtain the required clearances from the Energy and Resources Conservation Board and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek. The Alberta government appealed the decision and continued to build the dam, arguing that no stop order had been issued. Prior to the hearing, the Alberta government applied for a new license before the stay on the existing license expired. Again FOR challenged the new license. They argued that the provincial government had failed to provide the necessary information required in support of an application to build a dam for irrigation purposes and again, failed to give public notice.[193] This time FOR lost and construction at the dam site continued.

Just after the river was diverted from its bed to flow through the diversion tunnels, on behalf of FOR, Kostuch appeared before the courts again, this time charging the Alberta government for violating the Federal Fisheries Act by destroying fish habitat. But FOR did not stop there. A Federal Court ruling had quashed the license of the Saskatchewan government to build dams on the Souris River and Mouse Mountain Creek because, according to federal standards, the environmental review did not provide adequate information. Hoping for a similar result, FOR filed an application to quash federal approval of the Oldman River Dam and require a federal environmental impact assessment of the project. With the construction of the dam well underway, in March 1990 the federal Court of Appeal ruled that the Ministers of Transport and Fisheries and Oceans must comply with the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process. In turn, they instructed the federal Minister of the Environment to undertake a public review of the project.

The six member Federal Environmental Assessment Panel undertook its review of the Oldman River Dam between November 1990 and April 1992.[194] Aside from a number of individuals who presented environmental concerns including Kevin Van Tighem, Vivien Pharis and Diane Pachal, representatives from FOR, AWA, the Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN), the Canadian Parks

and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), the Sierra Club, Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association, Edmonton Friends of the North (EFON) and the Bert Riggall Environmental Foundation either submitted written briefs and/or appeared before the panel.[195] According to Wallis, one of the most outspoken of the environmental critics, aside from the illegality of constructing the dam, the Alberta government was not only misguided for ecological reasons, but economically it made no sense to finish the dam. Alternatively, Wallis suggested that "water conservation and fair pricing [charging farmers for the water used] are the best ways of stretching what everybody says is a limited water supply in the south." [196]

The dam was completed during the review and was in its second year of operation when the panel released their report. The panel's first recommendation was to decommission the dam. Recognising the unlikely acceptance of their first suggestion, they also recommended a series of environmental mitigation strategies and encouraged the federal government to press the Alberta government to reach agreement with the Peigan band who had also taken the province to court for failing to consult with them as proprietors of the Oldman River under Treaty 7. The federal government rejected the first recommendation. They took some time doing so, perhaps in hopes of dissipating some of the anticipated outrage by environmentalists, but in the end as a way of avoiding any more inter-jurisdictional difficulties, the federal government pragmatically interpreted the remaining four recommendations in a way favourable to the Alberta government. The environmentalists not only had lost their fight to decommission the dam but also any significant chance of influencing the operating regime of the project.[197]

The final outcomes of the court challenges and environmental assessment review contributed to increased cynicism amongst many environmentalists, yet with other potential threats to the natural world awaiting them they had little time to lick their wounds. Within the Oldman River district, the next large-scale development of concern to environmentalists was the application by the Vacation Alberta Corporation (Vacation Alberta), a private company in agreement with Tourism Alberta, to expand existing ski facilities at Westcastle Ski Park.[198] The proposed project would directly impact a wildland recreation area called the Castle Wilderness area that had formally been recognized as an environmental hotspot in 1990 with the creation of the Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition (CCWC). The Castle Wilderness is a mountainous and montane region that forms the western boundary of the Upper Oldman River basin. The proposal put forth was to replace 20 ski runs, three T-bar lifts and a small day lodge with a four season destination resort that would accommodate 3,200 skiers/day, include two 18-hole golf courses and accommodation for up to 2,500 people. Vacation Alberta prepared and submitted an environmental impact assessment in April 1992 and between June and July 1993 the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB – a provincially appointed board) held public hearings in Pincher Creek to review the project and determine if it was in the public interest, their mandate being to consider "the social and economic effects of the projects and the effect of the projects on the environment."[199]

The Castle Wilderness area had been of interest to environmentalists and nature enthusiasts in the region for quite some time. In 1895 the Dominion government had set aside Waterton Lakes as a Forest Park and later in 1911 designated it a Dominion park encompassing $35km^2$.[200] Two years later, in 1914, what was then called Waterton Park was greatly enlarged to an area of 1347 km^2 [201] to include much of the northern portion of what is now the Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve which includes the Castle Wilderness area (see Figure 5, page145). In 1921 the 1914 park boundary decision was reversed and Waterton Lakes National Park was reduced to $570km^2$.[202]

Initially the Canadian government controlled the Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve. Although Alberta became a province in 1905, for 25 years the Federal government still retained control of all natural resources within the provinces. However, in 1930, control of natural resources was turned over to the province through the Resources Transfer Act and the Provincial Forest Service became the manager of the Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve, which they managed as a Game Preserve.

When Vacation Alberta's application was submitted a number of environmentalists and environmental organisations from within the region and beyond mobilised their membership. Environmental organisations including Trout Unlimited and the West Castle Ecosystem Coalition (WCEC) asked that the NRCB deny the application in its entirety based on the environmental disturbance it would create, as well as the potential for the development to foreclose on economic opportunities which could build on the region's natural attributes.[203] In the report they submitted in December 1993, the NRCB recommended a conditional approval on Vacation Alberta's proposed development with one major provision. The requested Vacation Alberta to set aside an area of substantially the same size and ecological importance for wildland recreation purposes with all the area surrounding the resort receive protected status.[204] The Alberta government failed to make any concrete decision about the area, instead referring it for consideration by stakeholder review bodies under their Special Places 2000 initiative, a program designed to identify and protect natural areas in Alberta. On March 18, 1998 a decision was struck to designate a major portion of the area (104, 103 square hectares) as the Castle Special Management Area Forest Land Use Zone, and later on August 26 of that same year to put aside 94 square hectares as West Castle Wetland Ecological reserve.[205] The current status is still part of an on-going debate regarding what constitutes appropriate activities within this area.

In the eyes of environmentalists the Castle Wilderness area is still under threat by continued and future industrial developments. In an effort to leverage new support for the protection of the area, the CCWC joined the Yukon to Yellowstone Conservation Initiative (Y2Y). Y2Y is part of the much larger Wildlands Project, the goal of which is to design a continental ecological reserve system consisting of large core protected areas surrounded by buffer zones and connected to other core habitat areas through a series of corridors (see Figure 7).

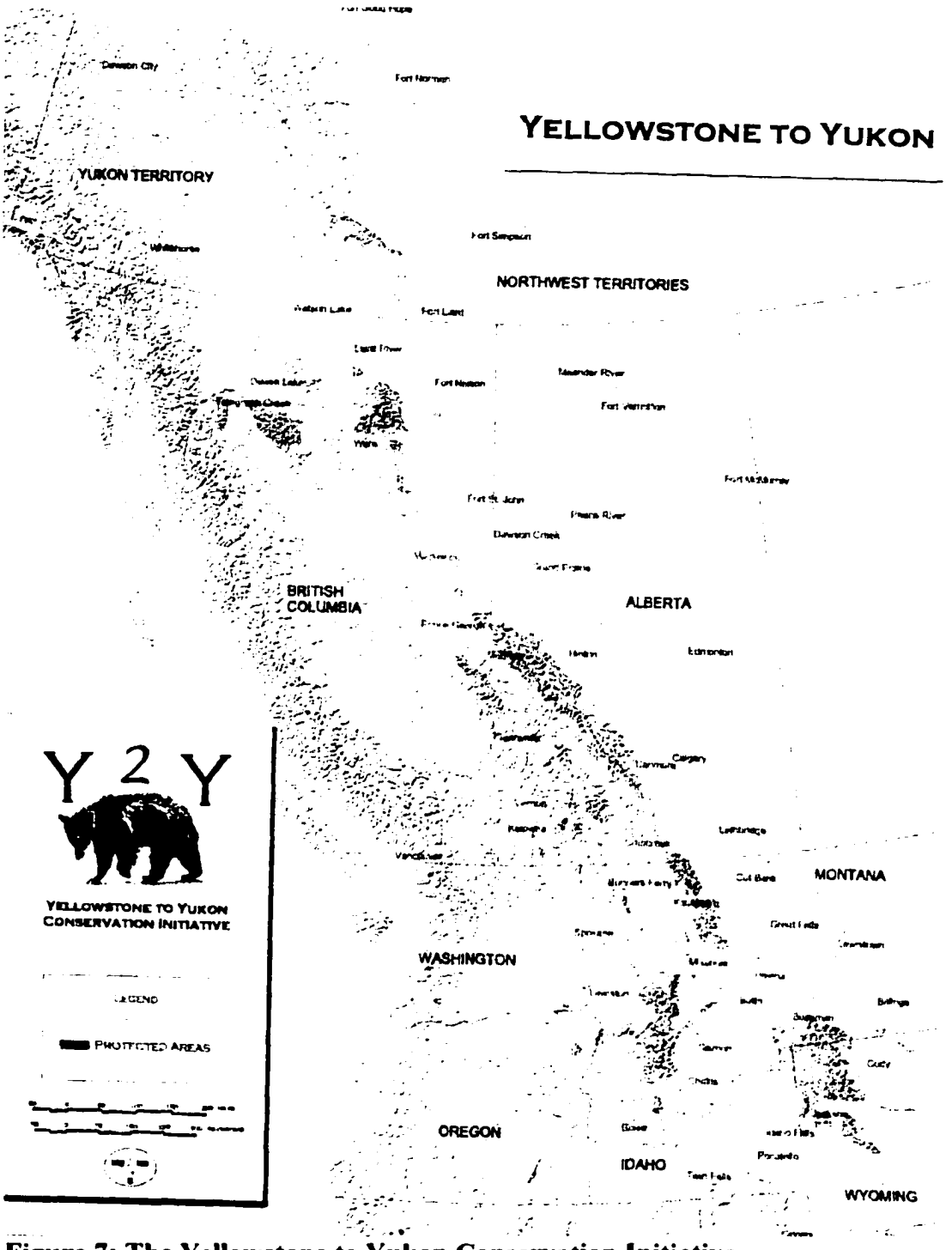

Figure 7: The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative
(The darkened areas are existing protected areas that would be connected by protected corridors to the span the entire region highlighted as lighter).
Source: Stephen Legault and Kathleen Wiebe, eds. *Connections – Proceedings from the First Conference of the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative*, 8.

an attempt to raise attention about and support for protection of this the largest intact montane region in Canada. In the words of FOW members: "The Friends are asking the provincial government to join Albertans who want to see the integrity of the Whaleback maintained. If any place in Alberta is special, surely it's the Whaleback."[206] The FOW supported the Hunter Creek Coalition (seven of nine ranching families whose operations are adjacent to the Whaleback) and the Whaleback Coalition (wilderness advocates) who earlier in May had asked the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) to deny approval of the application. The ERCB denied Amoco's application. In 1997, the area was recommended for protection under the province's natural protected areas program, Special Places, and in May, 1999 became the Bob Creek Wildland Park and Black Creek Heritage Rangeland. Over 300 km^2 of largely undisturbed montane is now preserved free of mining, oil and gas development and logging. Forestry tenures were relinquished and oil and gas rights donated to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Grazing leaseholders supported inclusion of their leases in the protected area.[207]

Having a context to further explore discursive representations of identity, community and space

The stories you just read were intended to provide you with three somewhat fragmented, discontinuous, contradictory and yet integrated narratives about the Upper Oldman River Basin. They were written to stand on their own and as such are analytical and descriptive presentations about three different views of the Oldman Basin. But in the chapters that follow I also build from the previous stories in that I use them as the broad historical and social context that I continually refer back to in the next two chapters. As a part of this analysis, I integrate a number of broad themes that were woven into the stories you just read including: the rancher identity and its importance as a timeless narrative and an identity constructed through relation to the 'Other' – other inhabitants such as the farmers, Peigan and environmentalists; the connections and distances between the agricultural, Native and environmental communities; and the Upper Oldman River basin as a site of intersecting, competing and transforming spatialities. In understanding these narratives as elements of discursive constructions, I am interested in how elements of the stories support and enable particular understandings of identity, community and space, but also in how they are used to restrict and contest other discursive constructions of these concepts.

Chapter Five
Belongings and Identifications:
Binding and Marking the Boundaries of Self and Place

> As a radical standpoint, perspective, position, 'the politics of location' necessarily calls those of us who would participate in the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practice to identify the spaces where we begin the process of re-vision.
>
> - bell hooks, *Yearning – Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*

> He was the boy of this place, of these woods, these beaches, the boy who smelled like this forest. If identity was geography instead of blood – if living in a place was what really mattered – then Ishmale was a part of her, inside of her, as much as anything Japanese.
>
> - David Guterson, *Snow Falling on Cedars*

> The transition to a new age in turn necessitates a new perception and a new conception of *space-time*, the *inhabiting of places*, and of *containers*, or *envelopes of identity*.
>
> - Luce Irigaray, "An Ethics of Sexual Difference"

Introduction

As an outsider talking to people about the Upper Oldman River basin and trying to make sense of their community narratives of belonging, connection and ostracism, I found myself sorting through matters of difference, representation and constituency – matters of identity. Debates around issues like the completion of the Oldman River Dam, proposed Westcastle development and natural gas drilling in the region frequently addressed matters central to identity politics: who are the real members of this community, or who belongs to this place and should therefore have the right to decide its future? Issues of identity also repeatedly surfaced in the community in the form of collective narratives, narratives that construct emblematic identities around which attempts are made to encode and stabilise the meaning of this place.

As I proceeded with my research and analysis I discovered that identity was key to understanding not only belonging, but other spatial metaphors such as dwelling, home and territory. Exploring identity and identification allowed me to begin to answer a number of questions that had baffled me throughout my analysis. Some of these questions included: Why was it that in spite of sharing

the position that the Oldman River Dam should not be completed, the ranchers and environmentalists were unable to form a political coalition aimed at protesting the ongoing construction of the dam? Why are ranchers in the Basin allowing one of the things they value most, ranch land, to be converted into acreage developments, which in turn threatens the future viability of family-owned and operated ranches in the community? What was, if any, the significance of the frequent reference to the feud between the sodbusters and ranchers?

In this chapter, I explore some of the representations of identity that are central to the debates over place within the Upper Oldman River basin. As I indicated in chapter three, I approach this topic largely from a poststructural framework, but I also discuss humanistic understandings of the self. I am interested in understanding how representations of identity inform the ways in which place is socially constructed, and specifically, how particular perceptions of identity are deployed to develop spatial identity. In undertaking my analysis, I begin by reading excerpts I collected from various data sources that present a largely humanistic construction of identity. Then, using reformulations of identity developed by theorists including Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall and Chris Weedon, I explore notions of identity as contested, multiple and conflicting claims of the self. More specifically, I use a poststructural framework to examine the relationship between constructions of the identity of places and the construction of the terrain of belonging.

Throughout the discussion considerable attention is given to exploring the identity/ identification of the rancher. The identity of the rancher has been selected as a focus of examination because in Upper Oldman River basin the rancher acts as a 'touchstone' of sorts: the rancher is a common referent to which other identities are compared; the rancher is the 'original' resident of the community; and, the rancher is a coveted identity that is not only given venerated status in the community but which others aspire to embody. Also, my interest in ranchers is partly because they provide an interesting comparative study to environmentalists. Parallels can be drawn between ranchers and environmentalists with respect to how their subjectivity is bound together with place and locality, while at the same time, these subjectivities are deployed to serve incommensurable political aims revealing identifications that are simultaneously connected and in conflict.

Humanist identifications

In chapter three I detailed several challenges to the unity of positivistic conceptualisations of place, one of which was informed by humanism. I discussed how humanistic geographers such as Relph focus on describing the varied lifeworlds of ordinary people and the innate creative capacities of humans to discover meaning in place. In their conceptual shift away from the totalising, rational gaze of spatial science, humanistic geographers argue for the centrality of values and valuing in the construction of knowledge.[1]

Humanist interpretations of identity likewise construct individuals as possessing a unique essence. Humanist discourse about identity presupposes that at the heart of each of us is a core self that is unique, fixed and coherent. It is out of this essence that we derive our identity. It is from this inner core that we gain a sense of personal location and are able to represent ourselves and be recognised.

When speaking to residents and environmentalists within the Oldman basin, I frequently discovered threads of humanism within their discourse as they focused on experience as being a key force in shaping, if not determining, identity. Take, for example, the following passages:

> Scott Hammond: ...let me identify two of the reasons I have for making this presentation. The first, a long standing interest and concern for the land owners' rights in this area. The second, a deeply felt sense of identity with this area, its people, its environment, and its history. I have therefore a concern for the future society that we build for our children here both socially and environmentally.[2]
>
> Leonard Bougerolle: My family and I live on the Castle River, two miles east of Cowley. We moved here 16 years ago with the fullest intentions of raising our family where life has a real offering for young people...It's a place where our family finds a real reason for working and sharing together...We have lived in this community all our lives and don't feel money can replace our lifestyle. When you're a farmer at heart, it's for a lifetime.[3]
>
> Susan Hall: I've lived on the Crowsnest River and the Castle River for the past 15 years of my life, first on my parent's ranch and then on my sister's ranch. During this time I have learned what it means to have privacy and what it means to enjoy the splendours of nature.[4]
>
> Jim Brockwell: We ourselves would have to, or probably have to move to town or city into a life which we have little or no knowledge [of], as there is no other water source on our land. Most of what we know and love is right here on our ranch. With four generations of our family having lived here already, it would be a shame to have our land lost to future generations.[5]

One way to read these excerpts is that they are testimonies of how experiences in the Oldman basin have fed the residents' knowledge of the world and from this, their sense of themselves, their identity. From the perspective of these Oldman residents, experience provides personal direction, experience determines interest and concern, and experience moulds character. In this sense, experience is constructed as a foundational term in association with identity – internally it is the expression of an individual's consciousness and externally it is the material upon which the consciousness acts.[6] Experience is to be understood as complete awareness that provides the social agent access to that which is

authentic and true. As Raymond Williams explains, it is typical for experience to be posited as "the fullest, most open, most active kind of consciousness...offered not only as truth, but as the most authentic kind of truth...the necessary (immediate and authentic) ground for all (subsequent) reasoning and analysis."[7] Experience offers knowledge to ascertain what is correct, what is valid and what is important.

In the debate over the construction of the Oldman River Dam, experience was key for many in identifying what was "practical and fair" amongst all the competing views being voiced. In the Oldman basin many people equated experience with authority and legitimacy to speak about the community and what was appropriate development within the area. According to Dennis Olsen, experience mattered, not because it made people like him "experts" who have years of schooling and in-depth knowledge about a very specific area of research, but because they were "a bit more than that."[8] They were individuals whose lives were directly impacted by the construction of the dam. In Olsen's words:

> I'm coming from a different point of view, and that view is that the dam is being built, and as a local citizen and probably one that's more affected than anybody else by that dam, not only in the past, but in the future. I'm only a stone-throw -- or not even a stone-throw away from that reservoir boundary or the edge of the water itself...I had left my presentation to you until last because I thought that you would probably ask us, the people involved, the local people. We are not experts, but we're a bit more than that. We're the people that step up there every day and are involved in that dam in every way.[9]

Similarly, agriculturist David Wilms, saw himself as representing "local wisdom" and "common-sense". As one of the dispossessed farmers, Wilms felt disappointed over the river front property he lost as a result of the construction of the Oldman River Dam, but he was not about to start vocalising about ecological principles with "religious fervour", or appeal to "political correctness" in order to demonstrate his regret. As a man of integrity he could not lose sight of "common-sense," lose sight of what experience had taught him. In Wilms' words:

> I guess the only thing I have going for me is that I'm local wisdom...Until right now, I feel that David Suzuki, who lives in Vancouver, the last I heard, has had an awful lot more influence on what has happened to that dam than I have, because I don't think anybody has even listened to what I have said about it... I'm one of the dispossessed farmers. I had 420 acres, I had a half a mile of river. I don't own any river frontage now at all. I'm disappointed about that. I've always had a policy or philosophy with regards to what a person's responsibility was in regards to progress. My philosophy has always been that I didn't believe that it was my right as an individual to stop the progress of a whole country. That philosophy was tested when I had the opportunity or occasion to have to give up my land...It was a lifelong dream that I had had, and so I was a little bit -- you know, quite disappointed about having to give up my land...I never heard

> the words 'common sense' mentioned once today while I was listening to all the briefs, and I noticed there was a lot of lack of common sense in a lot of the information that was disseminated here...I'd like to express some of the things that I had sensed here that didn't include common sense. One of them was sort of a desire of certain individuals to appeal to the political correctness, politically correct philosophy, and that usually includes psychology, which I am certainly a great believer in myself. But I'm not so sure that it's something that I would like to adhere to as a part of a -- almost with religious fervour as an ecological cult as with the kind of fervour that was demonstrated here, where dramatics and those kind of things were used to try to make the case for this extremism. Because I don't believe in any extremism, and that extremism in ecology is also what I don't believe in...Now, on the other hand, it's common sense, I guess, that in any case where a decision like this is being made, there is going to be negative effects. I think that has been one of the problems where common sense has been lacking in our debate, in Pincher Creek in particular, because of the simple fact that on both sides, on the pro-dam sides and the anti-dam side there's been a distinct lack of honesty, and even integrity and unethicalness in presenting facts, so that the lay person like myself is sitting there baffled and hears two opposing sets of facts and doesn't know which set of facts to follow.[10]

The legitimacy given to knowledge gained through first-hand experience, such as we see here, suggests that experience is the optical device through which the world is seen, almost as if it offers an "unmediated, apprehension of a world of transparent objects."[11] According to Chris Weedon, from a humanist perspective, "[t]he power of experience in the constitution of the individual as a social agent comes from the dominant assumption in our society that experience gives access to truth."[12] It is out of our conscious rationalisation of experience that we come to know the world and our place in it. As Oldman basin resident Roy Jensen argues, what could provide more valid knowledge than that derived from living in a place for a long time?

> I'm a farmer and I've been a farmer all my life, and I think I know a little bit about farming. I certainly know a heck of a lot more about irrigating and water needs for crops than Cliff Wallis [an environmentalist with the Alberta Wilderness Association and Friends of the Oldman River] does. But of course, he presents himself as the expert instead of myself.[13]

As well, Jensen, Wilms and Olsen each bind their identities to particular social and spatial arrangements as if out of these configurations arise valuable knowledge, as well as authenticity, assurance and stability of the self. Evidence of the prevalence of this association was revealed throughout all three sets of public hearings I examined, when repeatedly people used a portion of the time they were allotted for their presentation to the panel to discuss their residency in the community. For many, locating themselves within the geographic area of the

Oldman basin seemed a necessary declaration, a required preamble that established their authority and the validity of their views. The following are a few of many such declarations that can be found in the hearing transcripts that illustrate attempts to anchor residency to expertise:

> Doug Buchanan: My name is Doug Buchanan, and I'm a resident on the Castle River. Before I give my brief, I would like to give a little background of our family and what – when they came to this country and how we came to live in this river valley. Grandfather came here in 1901 and settled in the South Fork, as it was named then, or the Castle now, and raised his family there. Dad, in turn, lived in the river valley, and I've been there all my life part from five years that we were in B.C. when I was from five to ten years old. We came back here and took on the old place again, and I have raised a family of five. One son is still on the place and running it now. He has a grandson – or he has a son, and I hope that he will go ahead and use this farm....Having lived within one of the valleys of the Three Rivers for sixty one of my sixty-six years, I have very deep feelings for these river valleys...This God-given heritage should also be passed on to future generations.[14]
>
> Andy Russell: My grandfather came to this Oldman River country in 1882 by a Red River cart from Brandon, and there are four generations of Russels born here in Alberta on the Oldman. I think the family is about as old a one as any you can find in Alberta. We've all lived on the Oldman watershed over those years in the ranching business; in my case in the professional guiding and outfitting business for over 20 years and as – also as a rancher. I was raised on a cattle ranch and horse ranch...So when I - when I talk to you about the Oldman, it is not as someone who hasn't swum a horse across it on occasion, has also fished in it, and has eaten vegetables grown on its banks, with some kind of picture of the productivity of the Oldman, not only naturally but what has occurred throughout settlement.[15]
>
> Joe Thibert: ...my name is Joe Thibert and I am actually considered nowadays an oldtimer in the area. I was born and raised. I was here all my life, and I at this time reside 20 miles north of here along the shores of the north branch of the Oldman River.[16]
>
> Bill Elton: My name is Bill Elton, and I am the fourth generation of my family to occupy our farm north of Cowley. We have been involved in the development of this area for the last 92 years, and it has changed from a frontier to its present settled state.[17]

As I indicated in chapters two and three, this idea that humans can provide 'mirrors' of the world reflecting its shapes and structures without distortion has been seriously challenged. From a poststructural perspective the act of

observation is constitutive and not simply reflective. "Experience is not something which language reflects. In so far as it is meaningful, experience is constituted in language."[18] In the course of interacting with the world, the linguistic processes of thought and speech allow us to give meaning to our experiences. The assumptions we associate with these experiences transform the meanings, and hence, we can see that there is a range of interpretations one can have about any one experience. For example, as Weedon explains, the way in which a woman understands and responds to domestic violence will depend upon her assumptions about masculinity and family life. If she believes men to be innately aggressive and a woman's role as one of serving her husband, she will interpret the violence to be only a personal issue rather than also a social or political problem.[19] This recognition that experience is open to contradictory and conflicting interpretations brings into question the idea that language is transparent and that there are fixed meanings that can be associated with specific experiences. It also opens up for debate the question of the subject and identity being fixed, and how it is as individuals that we come to have the interpretations we have about our experiences. It is to a closer examination of a poststructural view of identity that we now turn.

Discursively constituted subjects

Many of the current reformulated understandings of identity build from a deconstructive critique of a self-defined subject acting in her own interests. From a poststructural perspective the unity that every identity evokes is not understood as foundational or natural, but a constructed form of closure, a creation of margins or boundaries. In Lacanian terms, the unified identity is imaginary. Identities function as points of identification, connection and attachment but they do so only because of their function to exclude, to leave out, to abject. As Stuart Hall explains, while directly contrary to their invocation, all identities are constructed in this manner, through, not outside of difference. It is through relation to the 'Other', the relation to what it is not, or to that which it lacks, that an identity is formulated:

> If...an objectivity manages to partially affirm itself it is only repressing that which threatens it. Derrida has shown how an identity's constitution is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles man/woman. What is peculiar to the second term is thus reduced to the function of an accident as opposed to the essentiality of the first. It is the same with the black-white relationship, in which white of course, is equivalent to 'human being'. 'Women' and 'black' are thus 'marks' (i.e., marked terms) in contrast to the unmarked terms of 'man' and 'white'. [20]

Yet, as Stuart Hall notes, it is not that the concept of identity has been censured.[21] Like many essentialist concepts, a deconstructive critique puts the notion of identity under scrutiny making it no longer serviceable in its originary and unreconstructed form. Yet, because identity has not been superseded

dialectically, nor supplanted by an entirely different concept, there is nothing to do but to continue to think with it. The question is what are the parameters within which identity can be reformulated? According to Derrida, conceptualizing identity in a detotalized and reconstructed form requires one to think at the limit, to read identity as found in the interval between inversion and insertion, reversal and emergence - a concept that can no longer be thought of in the same way, but without which certain key questions cannot be addressed.[22]

For example, even within a deconstructive framework, we see issues of identity emerge in terms of matters of politics. Identity is necessarily evoked in environmental debates such as that of the Oldman River Dam by individuals wishing to establish a signifier of a politics of location, or by those wanting to defend nature. To engage in such identity politics, even when one is mindful of the manifest difficulties and instabilities of identity, requires deploying or formulating some conception of what constitutes a legitimate subject if one is to effectively engage in the debate, even if it is to argue for a broader, more complex opening up of what we understand as the acting subject.[23] The poststructural challenge in gaining political recognition and legitimacy for a subject is how to do so while not essentialising the identity of the subject for whom political representation is pursued. It is in this context that Hall looks to Foucault to transcend traditional understandings of identity and to bring about a decentring of the subject - not an abolition of the subject but a reconceptualisation - through a theory of discursive practice.

Recall that for Foucault subjects are produced by discourses in two different ways – one by constructing the subject and two, by creating a subject position.[24] The discourse produces the subject by constructing figures (criminals, homosexuals, hysterical women, etc.) that personify the particular forms of knowledge that the discourse produces. Identities are constructed within discourse, produced within specific historical and institutional parameters through specific enunciative strategies. The subject becomes the bearer or personification of the knowledge the discourse produces, as well as the object through which power is relayed.

It is in this sense that one might enter into the discussion of the notion of interpellation – the "haling" or "summoning into place" of the subject through discourse and positioning in relation to ideology. In his theory of interpellation, Louis Althusser staged a scene where he describes a subject being hailed on a street by an officer of the law, the subject turning around, and in so doing, accepting the judicial and regulatory codes of law by which he was haled. In the scene Althussur describes, the crucial moment is when the subject takes on the subject position by turning around and responding to the police officer's call, and in so doing becomes an agent of specific ideologies, sustaining particular material and social relations. While the individual assumes that he is the author of the ideology he speaks, in control of the meaning he ascribes to the world around him, the relationship between the individual and subject position is only imaginary: "[i]deology mediates between individuals and their real conditions of existence...function[ing] by interpellating individuals as subjects within specific

ideologies which exist in material apparatuses and their practices."[25] Hence, the individual cannot stand outside the discourse as the sole source and author of the power/knowledge or subjectivity.

According to Foucault, the discourse also produces a place for the subject (subject-positions) from which particular knowledge and meaning makes most sense. Foucault's radical historicisation of the category of the subject posited subjects as an 'effect' through and within a discourse. Discourses construct subject positions in a variety of ways: through images of how one should look and behave; by rules about how one should conform which are reinforced formally through laws and regulations and informally through approval and condemnation; by particular definitions of what is natural or pleasurable; and, by constraining opportunities for negotiating that subject position.

Not all individuals will become subjects of a particular discourse, but in order to enter into the discourse they must locate themselves within it. In order for the discourse to make sense, the subject must assume a subject-position. In this way, individuals are complicit in subjecting themselves to the rules of the discourse and in becoming bearers of its meaning and subjects of its power and regulation. So while identities arise out of a narratisation of the self that is necessarily fictional in nature, this should in no way be interpreted as a denial of the impact of the effects of their signification.

Discourses and the institutions and social practices that support them are never neutral. The way the discourse constitutes the subject affects the process of confirming or challenging the status quo. Different discourses provide for a range of possible subjectivities and these forms of subjectivity will variously privilege and draw upon discourses such as rationality, science, intuition or emotionality. But also in assuming a particular subjectivity, one is denied the structures of feeling and thought offered by other discourses.

Trying to make sense of identities becomes then a process of searching for the "conditions of existence" for these identities, a matter of understanding the structures and systems of organization that enable, normalise or disallow particular discourses and specific identities to gain legitimacy and dominance. Recall that from a Foucauldian perspective all practices have a discursive aspect that influences how ideas are put into operation and regulates the conduct of others. Discourses rule what is intelligible or meaningful, regulating what can be and cannot be said. Discourses produce particular ways of understanding, talking about and producing knowledge. In this sense we can speak about knowledge as inextricably enmeshed in relations of power. As Foucault observed, "[t]he exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcomes...To govern in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others."[26] Joan Scott provides a view of this discursive process as it applies to the formation of subjects, highlighting how the agency of an individual is discursively constituted and therefore enabled in some ways, but limited in others:

> Subjects are constituted discursively, but there are conflicts among discursive systems, contradictions within any one of them, multiple

> meanings possible for the concepts they deploy. And subjects have agency. They are not unified, autonomous individuals exercising free will, but rather subjects whose agency is created through situations and statuses conferred on them. Being a subject means being subject to definite conditions of existence, conditions of endowment of agents and conditions of exercise. These conditions enable choices, although those choices are not unlimited.[27]

These reformulations of identity offered by theorists like Hall and Foucault offer a useful lens for critical scrutiny of explanatory categories often taken for granted, including the category of experience. The meaning of experience is one of the most important sites of political struggle since it involves psychological and emotional investments on the part of the individual. Hence, our understandings of experience play an important part in determining our role as social agents. In turn, our interpretations affect where and how we act, and whether we act in accordance with the dominant social structures and institutions, or consciously resist them. Rather than treating identity constructions such as man, woman, rancher, environmentalist and Import as given markers, a poststructural understanding of subjects direct attention to the constituted relationality of subjectivities and "the ways in which identity is a contested terrain, the site of multiple and conflicting claims."[28]

It is to a closer examination of the contested terrain of identity as a part of a wider network of power relations and institutional parameters within the Oldman River basin that we now turn. The discussion begins by re-examining first-hand experience as tactical manoeuvre and then focuses on an examination of Western myths as communal and individual symbols and representations of belonging and identity.

The hegemony of scientific discourse

Like most environmental assessment hearings, the series of meetings set up to discuss storage of water within the Oldman River basin were designed as forums in which, as a Study Group on Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures stated, "expert opinions on technical subjects as well as value judgements or the choices of society [can] intersect and merge."[29] In general, the working assumption underlying public hearings is that fact and opinions are clearly distinct and it is scientists who provide the objective facts while residents offer their views. Widely perceived as value-free, science is given dominant authority. Science is the hegemonic discourse used to arbitrate between competing social policy options. Science provides a defensible rationalisation for an 'inevitable" choice of actions. Conrad Brunk, Lawrence Haworth, and Brenda Lee explain this discursive association in their examination of risk assessment as it was negotiated in the federal Canadian review of the chemical herbicide alachlor:[30]

> Because the actions of government regulatory agencies profoundly affect the liberties and opportunities of individuals and corporations, the norms

> of our liberal, democratic social order require that these actions not be arbitrary or capricious. They must be based upon a clearly articulated rationale, and that rationale must not be seriously biased in favour of the values of one interest group against the values of another. That is to say, within the liberal, democratic tradition the rationale by which the government intervenes in the lives of its citizens should either reflect a social consensus or be entirely neutral *vis à vis* the competing values and interests affected by it...If science is objective and if it is value-free, it can arbitrate between competing views about social policy options by demonstrating which of these impose the greatest costs or risks upon society and generate the greatest compensating benefits; and it can do so by appealing to empirically demonstrable data and principles of science universally accepted even in a pluralistic society.[31]

Scientists become then the people best qualified to impartially assess the effects of large-scale industrial developments. While the report of the Study Group on Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures suggests that the views of scientists and lay people are treated as equally valuable information, given the hegemonic status of science within contemporary Western societies, scientific testimonies clearly carry more weight than do personal views. While this view was never explicitly stated by anyone on the public hearing panels, nonetheless many who presented to the panels shared the perception that there was a difference between the information provided by scientific and technical experts and what the residents had to say, and the former was clearly valued more than the latter. Consider the following comments:

> Scott Hammond: I guess I might digress a little bit here, as this presentation is by and large philosophical or humanitarian in scope, and I may well be a little out of my league in that my diploma in agriculture many not equip me too well as an academic, but nevertheless, I've watched this thing develop for quite a while, and some of these things I think are important.[32]

> Tim Abbe: Good science is not desirable, it is required if benefits are to be realized and undesirable impacts minimized.[33]

> Henry Hammond: Dr. Platt, members of the panel: What I have to say is not very profound. It's not technical and certainly not scientific. I'll leave that to the experts....What I have to say is simply the thoughts of a grass roots farmer.[34]

> Dan Reader: My name is Dan Reader. I don't believe I can speak in any capacity other than that of a concerned citizen and perhaps as a friend and acquaintance of some of the directly affected landowners in the Three River Basin.[35]

Moreover, within the Oldman River Dam hearings there was a predominance of 'experts' providing information to the panel. In terms of sheer volume, expert scientific and technical discourse dominated these discussions.

Given the legitimacy granted to science, in many ways Olsen, Wilms and many of the other residents were disadvantaged significantly in effectively participating in the scientific and technical debates that constituted the major focus of the hearings. Not being able to construct their identities as scientific or technical experts, Wilms and Olsen still had to discursively structure their presentation to draw upon concerns and opinions considered legitimate and persuasive rather than irrelevant and 'mere opinion' if they were to exercise power in the hearings and thereby influence the hearing panel and shape community discourse about the dam. By situating themselves locally, the residents drew upon the authority and legitimacy derived from living and working in a place long enough to know it intimately.

The agriculturists were not alone in attributing authority and expertise to familiarity and knowledge of the basin acquired first-hand. Indeed, in spite of the central role of technical experts and scientific knowledge in the hearings, much of the structure of the hearings was built around the assumption that it was crucial to capture, or at least appear to capture, local knowledge and opinion. The hearings were held mostly in communities bordering the Oldman River, and those individuals who received intervenor funding (funding applied for by stakeholders and allocated by the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Office to conduct or hire persons to conduct studies and gather information regarding the development under review) were determined to a great extent by whether they represented "those directly affected" by the construction of the Oldman River Dam. When one of the residents questioned why during the Oldman River Dam hearings more local people were not asked for their opinions, Chair Bill Ross assured everyone that he and the Panel greatly valued first-hand experience and welcomed the input of local residents. "I want to make clear that it is now, and has always been the Panel's position that people who live in this area and are affected have every right to explain to us what their concerns are, and in that sense you are an expert by virtue of where you live and what you have been through," Ross stated.[36]

It should come as little surprise, therefore, that throughout the hearing process, in addition to relying on the authority of science to make their case, some of the environmentalists tried to also 'place' themselves within the region. While some of these individuals could certainly make a claim to being a local resident, even a few of those who did not live in the region attempted to gain authority for their views about development in this place by identifying with the area. Consider, for example, the claims of identification to the Oldman River basin made by Dianne Pachal, a Calgary resident, and the then President of the Alberta Wilderness Association and resident of Okotoks, Kevin Van Tighem:

> Dianne Pachal: I am presenting this submission as a citizen who has spent considerable time since I was 10 years old in the region that will suffer the environmental devastation and social costs of the Three Rivers Dam. I am

> a citizen directly affected by the mega-project...my family considers itself a part of this community, even though we're not living here right now. [37]
> ---
>
> Kevin Van Tighem: And I consider myself an Albertan. I don't consider myself an Ontarian, or a New Zealander or an English person or whatever and the reason is, because I live in this unique, special environment that I love quite a lot, and it's defined to me by the things that are native to this place and by the unique things that are available here.[38]

The environmentalists combined scientific information and first-hand experience as a strategy to further legitimise their position on the need to decommission the Oldman River Dam.

Nonetheless, what we see in these two discourses are competing claims about what is important and true about the Upper Oldman River basin. These are what Foucault called 'tactical elements in the field of force relations,' and as such they do not exist in bi-polar power relations where one of the discourses is powerful and the other not. They each take specific forms of power supported by various institutional practices and are the sites of discursive conflict over how subjectivities and social relations should be constituted and social control exercised. Yet, while Pachal attempted to claim herself as a community member, one can read in some of the regional residents' responses to her that they did not accept her claims of subjectivity as one of them. Oldman resident Ken Dickie illustrated such contestation with Pachal's claims of subjectivity when he questioned her after her presentation to the panel, pointing out that she and many environmentalists failed to understand the 'real problems' in the community:

> Ken Dickie: And Dianne, I notice that you're here as a private citizen, as are a few other people, and I guess that's because Mr. Power was the AWA rep to make the presentation....So now we've looked at some of the things that we have been involved with here...But we have some other problems here too...some really heavy problems that have a real impact on the people in this community.
>
> I don't know if you've been down here in the spring and fall of the last two years when we have an awful lot of topsoil...tone of topsoil heading east. I guess the part that really concerns me is, when this happens, I don't see any of...the environmentalists here willing to help us out with things like that...as a whole community we have some really pressing problems here. We have no work for young people. We have no training facilities to prepare these young people for work. We have a terrible substance abuse problem, not just on the reserve, but in town, a very big substance abuse problem. Where are all the people that are going to help us with the dam? You know, where do they get off not coming to help us with our other problems?...we don't have anybody from outside of the area coming in to help us out with what I perceive are our biggest problems, and those are our big problems.[39]

In his analysis of the environmental conflict surrounding the Cheviot Mine development proposal near Hinton, Alberta, Ian Urquhart argues that the battle was essentially one of competing visions - resource-led economic growth versus environmental protection – smashing against one another. "People who feel at home in one vision are shut out of the other," he states.[40] These individuals are shut out of economic opportunities, but more broadly, also are shut out of opportunities to embody subject positions with which they feel comfortable and derive many pleasures. For example, Pachal and many other environmentalist's articulation of Oldman community's problems as largely ecological problems strikes a foul chord for Dickie and other agriculturists because it threatens not only the means by which they pay their bills but more broadly because it challenges their livelihoods and identity. Although generally unacknowledged, it should come as little surprise that identity is typically one of the central battles within environmental debates like that of the Cheviot Mine and the Oldman River Dam.

A focus on identity is not an attempt to downplay the importance of jobs, but rather to point out that a sole focus on employment fails to fully capture what all is at stake in these environmental debates. As essential elements within fields of power relations, identities are constantly reaffirmed and challenged within these controversies. Identity is central to the 'political' goals of the various sides. In saying this I am not trying to suggest that Wilms, Olsen and Dickie constitute a new social movement for I don't believe that their objections were ever established as a network of solidarity with collectively defined strategy against oppressive social relations. Nor am I prepared to argue that the environmentalists provided a fully developed counter-hegemonic position, although I think they had a more defined antagonistic stance than the agriculturists. My point is that identity is a integral element of democratic social movement politics. Identity finds its way into not only broad political debates but also in many everyday contestations of power that mark our daily lives. As Catriona Sandilands points out, the practice of alternative definitions of the self is not only a means but an end in a multiple political world.[41] Thus, if they are to fully understand the positions of central actors in debates like that waged over the Oldman River Dam, we must pay some attention to the different constructs of identity being articulated and defended.

Identifying the rancher: the discursive construction of a Western icon

A discussion of identity and portrait of the Oldman basin remains incomplete without some discussion of the ranchers, and the distinction made between them and other sub-communities. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the ranchers act as a 'touchstone' in the community, as the identity to which others make comparison and draw upon as a source of symbolism about not only the community but indeed themselves. Compare, for example, the following two descriptions of farmers and ranchers:

> Ruth Melindy: There's definitely a distinction between farmers and ranchers but politically I think they are all very much the same.

Lori Hanson: What's the distinction?

Ruth Melindy: I think just the way they make a living. Ranchers, I think especially the hard core cowboy ranchers don't identify themselves with farming at all and they hate farming, hate tractors, you do everything on horseback. And they have this sense of history that ranchers are better than farmers. But most of the people I know do both. You're a farmer and a rancher, and you have to make your living. So I have no feelings about it one way or another. But I know there's a lot of people who make their living ranching that sorta, it's the old historical thing between the ranchers and the sod busters and the sod busters came in and started farming the ranch lands there was a big sort of war there and I think maybe some of the attitude is left over from those days. And some of the guys that go around working on the big ranches their main identity is being a big cowboy. They have to make sure that everyone knows that they hate driving tractors, it's just not their thing and they don't like farmers. And whether they do or not that's very much their identity, their sort of thing.

Lori Hanson: That's interesting. So it's a tractor thing. Who would have known?

Ruth Melindy: Tractor versus the horse.

Alan Timms: I wouldn't call a farmer a rancher and I wouldn't call a rancher a farmer... Well I'd like to say that all of them put their pants on one leg at a time but in I would say in Pincher Creek there's a predominance of ranchers just because of the topographical features this landscape offers it doesn't survive as a farming community as such. And ranchers I believe they hold onto a very much, a prejudicial view point that people who make a living out of the soil literally are dirt farmers and they look down on dirt farmers because there's definitely a sociological, maybe we'll call it a view point as far as if you're running cattle you are higher up on the scale of class. If you're a dirt farmer you get dirty and you're hands get dirty. But that's not to say that...and I would say that ranchers get their hands dirty all the time as well but not in the same manner. I don't know, I just think it's almost like the situation you have in the Pass between Miners and professionals. One feels they are better than the other or vice versa and I think that they hang tight with each other. But ranchers, it is becoming more apparent that multi-pronged sort of agricultural practices are becoming more successful. So I would suggest a great deal of the ranchers in the community are becoming farmers just because the success of the farm unit is dependent upon them becoming more flexible in what they do and how they utilise their land.

Lori Hanson: And most of the farmers also ranch right?

Alan Timms: Yes, pretty much ...I grew up on a ranch and I know that when my, when you describe an operation some people prefer to call the operation a ranch, not a farm. And whether that's their own way of defining their operation I guess that's part of it. But I would suggest that most people prefer, and maybe that's prejudice on my part, most people would prefer their operation a ranch...I think [this attitude comes from being]... well versed in Louis L'Amour books....Louis L'Amour is definitely one to voice that opinion that dirt farmers are a lower breed as it were. In my opinion it has a lot to do with their lifestyles as well. You might want to think about how a farmer lives. He lives from spring to fall. Winter time there's nothing going on. He's very much free to kick up his heels and do what he wants. The ranchers unfortunately work year around because their cattle are on the hoof as it were, their livelihood is on the hoof. And in my opinion there is a certain amount of jealousy as a result of that. The rancher being locked down for 12 months of the year whereas the farmer is only locked down nine months of the year, or even eight. So I would suggest just because they see the farmer during winter time being very relaxed, probably they have [such a relaxed winter] too, I don't know. My feeling is a lot of the farmers live in town, have their shop out in the country but they don't live out in the country. And that might be one thing that they also see that they aren't truly country folk.[42]

In spite of any shared values and concerns, one would be mistaken to assume that in the contemporary context of the Upper Oldman River region, farming or any other occupation shares the same venerated status as does ranching. Yet, while reverence for ranching is extremely common throughout the community, and widely celebrated in most of southern Alberta, what exactly is being celebrated often remains vague and undefined. Indeed, one might question whether people are really celebrating the contemporary identity of ranchers or something else entirely.

In talking to people in the Oldman basin I often got the sense that many saw ranching as a profession of authenticity, genuine work and a lifestyle that should be honoured. Yet, when I asked residents to explain and specify what was so alluring about ranching as opposed to farming, or in contrast to other professions or lifestyles, I was often given vague and contradictory responses. For example, Robert Stacks, an environmentalist from Edmonton who has lived and worked in the community, points broadly to his own empathy for ranchers (a group he is often in conflict with) but was unable to fully explain his mixed feelings. Stated Stacks: "I'm drawn to the environmentalist, I'm drawn to the artists and you know I can sympathise with the ranchers who have been there first but somehow their cattle grazing all over the country doesn't hold up against the last little patch of wild flowers..."[43]

The reference Stacks made to "ranchers who have been there first," and the "sense of history" that Clarise Nicholls, Paul Torrington and Ruth Melindy speak about in the story, "Closing the Frontier" in chapter four, can be read as examples of an origin and continuity discourse Hall speaks about. These are key to the allure and contemporary currency of the rancher identity in the Oldman basin. These historical references speak to a popular regional narrative focused on the 'Old Stock'. The term Old Stock refers to those settlers of European descent who came to the Upper Oldman River basin at the end of the 19th century and first owned land in the area. In the Oldman basin, elevated status is assigned to ranchers but in particular it is reserved for those who are descendants of the first ranching families, the Old Stock. To be a rancher is a coveted occupation, but to be a member of one of the first families is of particular significance. According to many who live in the Upper Oldman River basin, it is not just long-term residency that counts as a mark of identity and provides authority to speak about the Oldman basin. Authority also arises from heritage, from roots in the community and from a multi-generational lineage of time spent in this place. As a means of exploring the authority of the rancher identity as it is discursively constituted in the Oldman River basin and the individual and communal investements associated with it, I am going to return to an analysis of Western myths within the context of discussing Stuart Hall's work on national discourses.

The rancher as a collective Western symbol

In the article, "The Global, the Local and the Return of Ethnicity,"[44] Hall examines national discourses, identifying five elements of these narratives that collectively define national identities. He argues that national cultures and identities arise not only from cultural institutions but also from symbols and representations. Hall is interested in understanding how these representations are deployed to construct our common-sense views of national belonging and identity. What is it in these narratives that wins the identification of people?

The first element Hall discusses is the presence of a narrative that is told and retold in national histories, literature, the media and throughout popular culture. These stories represent the shared experiences of a people and construct an 'imagined community' within which contemporary residents can locate themselves. The presence of these stories and the imagined community provide significance and importance to the everyday lives of current residents because they connect them with events from the past, as well as the future. In this way the discourse not only provides a form of community but it gives identity to those who live there. Second, Hall examines the emphasis on origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness in these narratives. There is an essential primordial quality to the individual and communal identities constructed in national discourses: they are simply the way things have always been. Through all of history the cultural character has remained unchanged, it is changeless and eternal. The third element of the national culture narrative is 'the invention of tradition'. Quoting from Hobsbawm and Ranger, he explains the invention of tradition as: "Traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in

origin and sometimes invented...'Invented tradition' [means] a set of practices...of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviours by repetition which automatically implies continuity with a suitable historical past."[45] Fourth, the narratives include a foundational myth – a story, which locates the origin of the community, the people and their culture so early that it is lost in 'mythic time'. Finally, the regional identity is symbolically grounded in the idea of a pure, original people or folk. Interestingly enough, in the realities of national development these 'original folk' rarely were seen as exercising power as they weren't the bureaucrats or ministers.

The term Old Stock can be read as not just a contemporary mark of identity but a central metaphor in a tale about the origins of settlement within the Upper Oldman River basin. Within the context of this origin tale, Old Stock is a clever and telling metaphor for it orients attention exclusively to those whose role is to work with livestock as founding the community. The frequency alone with which people make reference to the Old Stock or ranchers[46] as the 'original families' demonstrated to me the significance of this origin narrative to many within the community. In speaking about the Old Stock it is as if residents are evoking, reiterating and reaffirming a common and revered history. Consider again, Stacks' sentiments about the ranchers:

> Robert Stacks: Well, the status quo, turn of the century ranching community, those people who have been there the longest, their roots the deepest, I think feel a sense of propriety, or some kind of that to others that come. [47]

Recall that for many residents, the settling of cowboys in the region and the establishing of a ranch by the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) marks the beginning of human settlement in the Oldman watershed. However, the history being referenced is not just about the construction of a few sod roof houses and corrals, but is part of a larger discourse about the lure of the frontier and the tenacity, hard work, self-determination and eventual conquest of nature by the 'original settlers'- the ranchers. The Old Stock narrative fits within a larger Western discourse that is discussed by writers such as William Kittredge and Donald Worster.[48] This is a narrative that celebrates independence, and noble pioneers struggling against the harshness of the natural environment they love, innocent victims of circumstance in search of improved fortunes, freedom and maybe a little adventure.

As indicated in chapter four, there are many important differences between the settlement of the Canadian and American West, yet many of the mythic images about the West more commonly attributed to America are important symbols, images and folklore for people who settled in the Oldman region. These myths inform people's understanding of not only the past but also the present day, of not just the community but also themselves. In relation to current identity construction, historian Richard White provides a concise description of how these mythic images have been translated into contemporary understandings of the self by many westerners:

> In the imagination of modern America, the West has come to stand for independence, self-reliance and individualism. Rhetorically, at least, modern westerners see themselves as a part of a lineage that conquered a wilderness and transformed the land, they spring from a people who carved out their own destiny and remained beholden to no one.[49]

As White goes on to explain in greater detail later in his lengthy treatise about the American West, "the imagined West is a mythic West." What he means by this statement is not that the tales told about the West are just a bunch of lies and completely divorced from information found in historical records. Rather, he is highlighting how myths function as explanations, stories people tell to provide justification for why things are the way they are, and to explain who they are within this context. Quoting from literary historian Richard Slotkin, White elaborates on this idea:

> ...modern myths are "stories, drawn from history, that have acquired through usage over many generations a symbolizing function" central to the society that produces them. Myths are a deeply encoded set of metaphors that may contain all the "lessons we have learned from our history and all the essential elements of our world view." Myths give meaning to the world. In this sense the West is a story that explains who westerners...are and how they should act.[50]

In part, the persistence of myths can be explained by their ability to collapse temporality. Myths reduce past and present to single instances that transcend their historical context – this is the anachronistic element of contemporary nationalistic discourses of which Hall speaks. As social constructs that deny change, myths are ahistorical tales used to provide explanation for contemporary situations. Of course people in the past operated in different contexts than do people in the present, living by other logics,[51] and hence, it is problematic to derive uniformly valued rules about the present from the past. But in a myth, the past is constructed as metaphorically equivalent to the present such that the present becomes simply a repetition of persistently recurring structures identified with the past. This is simply 'the way things are.'

These recurring structures can be seen as supporting and producing the 'invention of tradition'. For example, in the Upper Oldman River basin, the Cowboy Poetry festival, the wearing of western clothes and the refusal to drive tractors are all practices of a ritual or symbolic nature which are seen as providing continuity with the past. According to Paul Torrington, the western apparel so many kids and adults wear in the Basin, be they ranchers or not, is a status symbol, almost as if somehow in wearing these clothes you gain access to some of the cowboy mystique.[52] As I said earlier, the kind of clothing an individual chooses to wear, or the form of entertainment they partake in, are common means through which identity is expressed and practised.

Applying Hall's overview of national discourses and identities to the Oldman basin allows for connections to be drawn between contemporary identities with more historical ones like the Old Stock, and provides a framework

for the integration of these identities with an origin tale, well edited history and current revered traditions and celebrations. It provides a lens for understanding representations of this place that win the identifications of and define the identities of many of the Basin residents. The discussion of the mythic West allows us to see how the rancher identity exists within a larger discursive construction of the Western frontier, the product of the ritualised reiteration of norms about what it means to be an 'authentic' rancher. Through the consistent and repeated invocation of rules that restrict the culturally intelligible practice of being a rancher, an identity unimaginable apart from the self-sufficient, independent persona is produced. As Hall indicates, it is significant that the identities national discourses construct are ambiguously placed between past and future. There is often an anachronistic element in these national stories, a looking back to a lost time when things were great. But in this very return to the past is concealed a contemporary struggle to mobilise the people in order to expel the 'others' who spoil the ranks and thereby threaten the identity of the original folk. In this sense, he explains, we can see that a national culture has never been simply a point of allegiance, bonding and symbolic identification. National cultures are also structures of cultural power.

Spatially-bound collective narratives

Myths also collapse the spatial perspective by integrating local elements with those from other places and times. Often found in the form of parody or folklore, these tales highlight unique features of the local area and combine them with events brazenly borrowed or imported from elsewhere. For example, in the Oldman basin I encountered references and stories focused on extreme weather conditions such as the wind, floods and sudden snowstorms that were tied to events, conditions and a larger explanatory context imported from the American west or another part of Canada. Alan Timms' explanation of Old Stock offers an example. As you read Timms' passage keep in mind that according to the local museum curator and most of the historical information I could find about the effects of the Depression on this region, during the 1930s there was not a dramatic increase in the number of people in the area who experienced deprivation or loss of property:

> Alan Timms: Well in my opinion, I think you become Old Stock if you survived the 30s. A lot of people didn't survive the 30s as a result of not being able to pay their taxes, and the land was taken as a result of non-payment. And in my mind people that started living here around the 30s. In other words, before the 30s for sure Old Stock, but I would say anybody that was in Pincher Creek, their family name was in Pincher Creek during the 30s and survived that period they are Old Stock.[53]

At the same time as these identities play off of what Hall calls "invented traditions," identity is always also inflected by race, gender, class and sexuality and particularly for many rural residents, by place identification. As Gerald Creed and Barbara Ching explain, in the binary construction of urban/rural it is

the urban which is the locus of political, economic and cultural power and the rural which is the marked/marginalised group.[54] Hence, it is rural residents who experience this spatial distinction more completely and intimately and for whom the difference becomes a significant element of their identity. While many urban dwellers go about blindly never considering the cultural value of where they are situated, the rural identified must either struggle for visibility or face spectacularly exaggerated denigration (rural as hicks, hayseeds, yokels, etc.). The decline of economic and demographic salience of many rural communities and the convergence of rural and urban lifestyles reinforces this predominantly negative construction or negation of the rural, a matter that has not escaped the attention of many rural residents within the Oldman basin:

> Lana Sturby: Well, there again, I suppose I come from pretty poor rural, and have felt and have been looked down on. And when these people come out with thousands and thousands of dollars and start building great big fancy houses and telling their neighbours what to do and how to do it, some resentment builds up there.
>
> Lori Hanson: Ahh, they've done that? Been telling their neighbours what they can do?
>
> Lana Sturby: Yeh, they certainly have. We've certainly had some of that. Now I don't know if our area's different than others. I would guess probably not. You take the families that have lived off the land for years and years and years, there's bound to be differences that can lead to conflict. When you have people come in with lots of money and suddenly want to sort of open the place and feel they can hunt on your land just because it's there, there's good hunting over there. Why can't we go over on your land and hunt? Like they don't sorta realize the value of land or how we need the land to make a living from it. That if we have a cow slip a calf because she's been chased over the hill too hard or something, that this is important to us. [55]
>
> ---
>
> Peggy Walsh: ...the [Old Stock] didn't want a whole bunch of people moving, coming in from outside and buying up little pieces of land and they were driving the price of land up, because they would pay big bucks to have these little pieces of land. And they are a nuisance because they need roads and services. And so....I think people felt that, people who were here already felt that they would contaminate the area, they'd pollute it....[56]
>
> ---
>
> Ruth Melindy: I think a lot of [the new people] are acreage owners who are buying quarter sections for recreational purposes or for retirement or whatever...[57]

As we shall explore in more depth in chapter six, place identification is not

only a matter of residency. Rural areas are interpreted through a myriad of economic and cultural factors. People not only assert their identification through their political views, but also "live the rural/urban distinction through mundane cultural activities such as their selection of music (country versus rap) and their choice of clothing (cowboy boots versus wing tips) - means through which identity is commonly expressed."[58] Because identity is constructed through difference, through relation to the other, by wearing wranglers instead of cargo pants or speaking with a twang and purposefully mispronouncing certain words, Oldman basin residents not only identify themselves as cowboys, they also denounce city-life by deploying an identity politics that challenges urban hegemony and asserts their own value.

Yet, as Pierre Bourdieu points out, while such condemnation and celebration cannot be denied, we must be careful not to romanticise this resistance by failing to account for the "choice of the necessary", an attempt to present one's life, about which one has few choices, as a totally conscious preference.[59] Brian Masterson illustrates this contradiction in the following passage, demonstrating how Oldman basin residents speak with pride and affection for the rural life they live while at the same time they encourage their children to get out and find a better life: "...we probably wanted to have some other opportunities for the children as opposed to saying well, keep working [at the lumber mill]."[60]

Rural areas are also interpreted through a grid of population density and development. Even though rural areas are celebrated by many urbanites as places to visit, and increasingly as places where they wish to live, nonetheless, what is often valorised is an abstract countryside of beauty (as either untamed wilderness, quaint homesteads or sprawling estates) not a rural area where people eke out a living. Farmers and ranchers and their labour start to vanish when their products and activities are either aestheticised into scenery or frozen into history as tourist attractions. Rural residents can often profit from this urban imaginary, being incorporated as key players in it, but it is almost always according to terms defined by urban interests. Very simply, rural residents generally lack the economic and cultural capital to reappropriate urban commodified images of themselves and their activities.

Further, like gender, race, sexuality and class, place identification is not taken up in a homogenous fashion but is a contingent and contested aspect of identity construction. How it is applied and understood in one context by an individual may differ radically over time, in different situations and even according to whom the label is being applied. Yet, as White explains such identifications to place, even when expressed humorously or derisively, create a link between local people and endured hardships, between local people and the unique qualities of the place they live. Peggy Walsh told me a story that I wrote about in my fieldnotes that illustrates this idea well:

> It was so bloody windy today and so of course we started telling stories about the wind. Peggy told me this hilarious story about her and her son going to pick up a truckload of bales just west of their ranch. The truck was an old one ton and the gas gauge and speedometer didn't work. Well,

on the way back, only a few miles from home, they ran out of gas and so Peggy put the truck in neutral and instructed her son to open his door, as she did and like a sail boat, the wind pushed them the rest of the way home. It reminded me of what Peggy said in her interview about missing the wind when she was away, that it becomes a part of you.[61]

"By denigrating nature, [Oldman basin residents like Peggy] exalt the pioneers,"[62] and support a discourse about how they and their ancestors survived and created order in this place. As an invention of a common past as well as a pattern of shared memory, White argues that myths are less a construction of historical facts and more a collective remembering of events of "great emblematic significance." Myths are used to define the community and place as well as provide the criteria by which it is decided who is an authentic resident and who is not. Having established the meaning of this place, subsequent residents structure their memories to conform to this myth and build their sense of self around what they understand as the importance of this place.

Unstable narratives: looking for gaps and erasures

As White's phrase "the mythic West" suggests the contemporary stories told about the West, while not entirely a bunch of lies, are often to a great extent, an invention. For example, recall that local and regional histories show that there was settlement in the region prior to the arrival of either the ranchers or the NWMP. Prospectors and trappers settled in the area preceding the arrival of ranchers and although farmers came to the region several decades after the first ranches were established, some historians suggest that they were in many ways more influential in terms of nurturing a communal spirit in the basin than were their neighbouring ranchers.[63] But perhaps most glaringly absent in the popularised tale of the origins of this community are the Peigan and other Aboriginal peoples who made this area their home for tens of thousands of years prior to the arrival of the ranchers. As Raymond Crowshoe reminded the Oldman River Dam hearing panel "We've got more heritage here than you'll ever have."[64]

Read in the context of the history and on-going struggle of the Peigan people to fight for and claim rights to land in the Oldman basin, the origin story of the Old Stock emerges as a tale about white northern Europeans who, with the aid of the Dominion government, invaded a region and displaced the existing residents. With the arrival of the ranchers, the people who had for centuries called this place their home were left disenfranchised and cut off from the possibility of succeeding in the emerging society, imprisoned on a postage stamp-sized piece of their former territory. In the context of this history and concerns, the Old Stock narrative now reads as a story about exclusion, of invasion and succession, of purity and contamination, of anomie and powerlessness. As Michael Keith and Steve Pile point out, these are terms in the glossary for ethnic cleansing.[65]

Accounting for the disenfranchisement of the Peigans destabilises the ranchers' identity as courageous, innocent and independent men.[66] The

representation of the origins of settlement in the basin as a story of Old Stock is replete with devices of exclusion and marginalisation by which the mainstream white middle class serve to 'other' different races and classes, as well as different countrysides. The boundaries of the self and other are formed through the construction of certain identities, identities embedded not only in social relations but specific spatial contexts. The arrival of the ranchers to the Oldman Basin was not only the end of Aboriginal supremacy on the Canadian plains, and the subsequent disenfranchisement of nation from society, but also the transition of territory into the spatial logic of property.

Nonetheless, the Old Stock narrative of settlement persists precisely because the larger discursive structure out of which it emerges constructs closure, and is successful for the most part in excluding and leaving out undesirable aspects of the origin story and erasing spatial notions of productive land as anything but property. This Western tale acts as the hegemonic discourse precisely because, as Marilynne Robinson points out, it serves to characterise a culture, to encode ambivalences and to promote stasis.[67] The taming of the frontier as a story of conquest has been largely muted or displaced by a tale of adventure and courage based on "stereotypes of savages and noble pioneers struggling quaintly in the wilderness.

A form of closure is created that not only feeds narratives of history and of residency, but also is crucial in the formulation of identity. As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, and as was shown in the discussion of Dickie and Pachal, individuals affirm their identity by repressing what threatens it. It is in this context that we can return to an examination of the smashing visions of environmentalists and ranchers. While many ranchers shared with the environmentalists a strong objection to the completed construction of the Oldman River Dam, as Ruth Melindy describes, the ranchers felt a need to construct their identity in such a way that they were not associated with the environmentalists.

> ...there was such a division between the environmental group and the agricultural communities and they see each other as mortal enemies no matter what the issue is they just assume that they are going to be on opposite sides of the fence. And what was ironic in that controversy was that they were on the same side and I don't think they recognized it...
>
> I think a lot of the ranchers and especially the old families that had lived here for so long thought it was just a huge tragedy too. And not just because a lot of the families lost their land, like they had to buy them out in order to build the dam and that was sad I think for a lot of the old families that lived there. But I think a lot of them thought it was an environmental tragedy too for the ranchers who have no idea of environmental theory and they don't have the same sense of environmentalism as ... or ... but the basic feeling from a lot of people was the same. It was a big disaster from my parents' point of view. They didn't see it as a good thing at all. A historical tragedy and an environmental tragedy too. But they never really got together on the issue and they never talked to each other and fought on the same side which I

think is too bad. Because they just assumed I mean they have nothing in common, they don't talk any way so why start now?... the whole dam thing, I was anti-dam. And I have quite different political views or philosophy than even my parents. I don't discuss politics with them at all. I am much farther to the left then they are and all of their social network and all the people I know in their family. So I'm very much a black sheep...I can relate a lot to the people who want things to never change, to stay the same, keep the new people out, we don't want them, let's keep things the way they are. But then on the other hand, the people that are here I don't relate to. I'm not like, I feel I'm personally like a lot of the people who are saying the same thing, "Let's keep the people out." A lot of those new people have a lot in common with me, and think the same way that I do. So why wouldn't I want to have them sort of here to relate to. And I think it's a good thing you know being able to have people look at things from a different perspective. And you know, politically I have very little in common with the old families and the people that, the agriculture type people. So. I don't want things to stay the same that way. Politically I would really like things to change, but then again, that would mean a lot of changes would happen that I wouldn't like. So I don't know. I'm very ambivalent about it, and I'll be very interested to see what happens like in the next twenty years. Sometimes I wish that the economy would just crash so that the people who can make a living from the land and grow their own vegetables can fend for themselves would be able to make it and all the rich people from Calgary would have to flock back to the cities and abandon their nice little weekend retreats and stuff and leave us alone, but of course I know...intellectually, of course I know that that's stupid and selfish.[68]

As the 'Other', the environmentalists were represented as ecological fanatics from whom the ranchers attempted to differentiate themselves. Wilms, Olsen, Dickie and many of their neighbours used what was uniquely available to them, what distinguished them from these 'ecological fanatics', that being their agricultural lifestyle. In speaking of their identity as grounded in spatiality, they were asserting not only a matter of residency but clearly demarcating their identity, reifying the opposition as a necessity. As a signifying practice that seeks to conceal its workings and naturalise its effects, this process of subjectivity becomes hidden underneath the naturalising effect of the signification to become 'just the way it is'. Yet, like the category woman, Old Stock and Import are phantasmatic constructions that certainly have their purposes but that also deny the internal complexities and indeterminancy of these subjectivities and constitute themselves only through some aspect of that constituency they seek to represent.[69] The identity therefore is both enabling and restricting: it allows for the persistence of the Western myth and for continuation of a lifestyle, but it also forecloses on opportunities such as the ability to act collectively to protect long-term the agricultural land in the region.

The stability of the Old Stock narrative and rancher identity is a product of not only the setting of boundaries between individuals but also involved the repeated inculcation of a norm. From a poststructuralist perspective, the Old Stock narrative is an integral element of a discursive construction that maintains hegemonic hold on the imaginations of many through the process of reiteration of norms. Even a century later, the Old Stock narrative is taken up and coveted by many that have moved to the area recently including lawyers, doctors and retirees escaping the city and looking for a more authentic way of life. According to one of the newer residents, "...the ranching and the farming sectors have always established the foundation of the community and they always will."[70] Melindy's description of the adoption of the label rancher by individuals who do not make their income from raising cattle offers evidence of the esteem given to ranching in the Oldman basin as well as the production and destablisation of norms through ritual practice:

> Ruth Melindy: Well, one of the big things about people who come in and buy an acreage or a quarter section, they refer to themselves as ranchers. And that's even funny to me. Why, like they have two cows, but they don't know anything. They bought them from somebody really cheap because somebody was culling them out of their herd because they are no good, and they get this really good deal on two cows and they are bred. But they are never here. They live in the city. So they just leave them to fend for themselves and then the neighbours end up watching them for them and stuff. But then they go back to the city and talk to their friends about their big ranch.[71]

In her description of the Cowboy Poetry festival, Melindy provides a fuller account of the investment made by many in trying to keep this ranching history alive and some of the ways in which the cowboy identity is constructed and performed in a contemporary context in the Oldman basin:

> Ruth Melindy: ...for some people it's really important that if you are involved in Cowboy Poetry you have to make your living being a rancher, you have to have a history and you have to be the real thing in order to participate in Cowboy Poetry stuff. And there's a lot of people who don't necessarily have that connection any more and I think there's a big division in the Cowboy Poetry thing, between the wanna bes and the people who live on acreages and quarter sections and come to the Cowboy Poetry and wear their garb and do their poems and stuff versus people that think they really know what it's all about. There's sort of a division between those groups of people...The people that are at the base of it they really play the role - this is what I am, this is all that I am, I am cowboy and this is the only life I know and they talk very cowboyish...they have this way of talking that you can't use sophisticated words. You know you don't talk like you are educated. You don't talk like a city person, you have to talk like the old cowboys talked, and you have to dress that way. For me it's important that they know that that's not what it's all about. I

have as much of a history as they do. You know, so I can talk about it the way that I talk about it, my history, my family and my relationship to ranching and cowboys and stuff is just as legitimate as their view is. But I don't know if there's a lot room in the whole Cowboy Poetry movement for that kind of discussion. I don't know...I like to participate in them and I like to go to them because I do identify with those people. But there's a real attitude of those people that's just and I don't feel welcome by those people and I don't feel a part of it.

Lori Hanson: And that attitude is, is this far right political view or is it?

Ruth Melindy: Just very, ummm...

Lori Hanson: Constructing this historical identity, or?

Ruth Melindy: Yeah, my way of looking at it is the only way, and my sense of history and talking about it is the only way. You don't know anything until you talk to me and I'll tell you sorta the history of western Canada and the history of cowboys and stuff and my view is more legitimate than yours because...

Lori Hanson: Do you think some of it is pretty romanticised?

Ruth Melindy: I think, yeah, but then when you look at some of the people who are doing, I think they do know what they are talking about. And so I don't know if the romanticism is coming from the people who really don't know, you know what it was really like. I think it is but then there are still elements of truth to it. I think that's what people buy into, that's what brings people to the gatherings, that's what people buy into...

Lori Hanson: ...the romantic part of it?

Ruth Melindy: ...yeah. And that's what they focus on, although the whole thing isn't just about the romantic view of it. Because I think that most of the people that are at the base of it, they do know what they are talking about. So they see the reality of it, so even though they do sometimes talk about it in a romantic way, it is realistic. And the people that are buying into it believe that romanticism and maybe take it to this unrealistic level....[Jeff Stengson]....He's someone I can identify with even though I don't really like him, personally I don't. But I have to respect him because he's a really good poet too and he's really, really funny... And I think you can tell, if you're on the inside you can tell who's real and who's not and who knows what they are talking about and who doesn't. Whether they are good poets or bad poets, you can tell if they are the real thing.[72]

There is widespread celebration amongst most within the Oldman basin and beyond for what agriculturists represent. As Wayne Hailey and poet Susan Vogelaar describe, these are proud, hard-working and self-sufficient individuals:

> Wayne Hailey: They value the agricultural way of life and they want, I think it's a way of life that most farmers and ranchers have been very happy with and I think made a living at, self-sufficient life where you're not dependent upon an employer or the bad things of a big city and so on, but you've been able to make your own life and get your own satisfaction out of accomplishing that life.[73]
>
> ---
>
> Susan Vogelaar:
> A secret shared by my man, my sons, my daughter, my life
> Freedom of choice, of time, of faith.
> Calloused hands but joyful hearts
> Reaping the harvest of life.[74]

The self-sufficient nature so highly venerated within this region finds political expression in the individualistic anti-government views many residents in the area hold. Simply put, this is a fairly politically conservative community, or as some refer to it, a "redneck" community where many are suspicious of government, particularly the federal government. This redneck identity finds expression in a variety of ways, one of which is political. For example, in the 1997 provincial election the Progressive Conservative incumbent, Dave Coutts, received half (51%) of all the votes cast and in the federal election that same year, Grant Hill, the Reform Party candidate, received 68% of the popular vote.[75] Melindy, a member of a traditional ranching family, and Robert Stacks, an outside environmentalist, elaborate on the features of this community that earn it the redneck label:

> Ruth Melindy: And I would also, a big thing would be to tell you [about the community is] how conservative it is and how redneck it is here, ...that's a big part of what makes this community what it is and identifies this community as you know the way people even view social issues and stuff so.
>
> Lori Hanson: And if I was to ask you what do you mean what does it mean to be redneck?
>
> Ruth Melindy: Very anti-government, very independent, every man for himself, very free enterprise, very capitalist,
>
> Lori Hanson: Chauvinist, would you say that's a part of it?
>
> Ruth Melindy: Hmm, hmm.[76]

Robert Stacks: You know the anarchist, right-wing patriots in the States. You know the guys who hole up in cabins in Montana and refuse to pay any taxes. There are that, like I think that's a strong, it may not be that far along the continuum, but I think there's a reluctance to allow, or acknowledge the more federal, like the federal government, like I don't think you call it a higher order, but a more Canadian order in determining some of that. They are on the land. They were the first ones there, first on the land, they get the water. It's the wild west, there's that ethic there. Kind of finders- keepers, we were here first, we need it.[77]

The maintenance of such traditions and practices ensures an exclusivity of who is considered an acceptable participant in ranching traditions (Cowboy Poetry gatherings, rodeos and round ups) and who is given largely unquestioned rights in this community: white, heterosexual, landowners who earn their income primarily by raising and selling cattle. Yet, in Melindy's description of the Cowboy Poetry gathering and in the stories from the previous chapters we begin to see how in spite of the anchoring of the Oldman basin origin story and rancher's identity to a static moment in 'history' identity is constituted differently through time. At the same time, this discourse is always open to resignification and intervention, and so the identification process persists as that which always is both constituting and contested, as enabling and limiting. The rancher as proud, self-sufficient land owner is being destabilised not only by Aboriginal people gaining voice and making legal claims to land but also by environmentalists who speak of alternative community values and by a new breed of landowner - wealthy, urban acreage owners.

In spite of its 'apparent primordial qualities,' the changelessness of the rancher as the authentic resident is only imaginary. A reading of identity as inscribed through difference obliges recognition of the radical instability of identity. The rancher identity read through a historical lens reveals this identity as never unified, but fractured and fragmented, and as not singular, but always multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions. These claims to identity are a powerful political force in the dispersion of political power in society. However, as I will discuss in the conclusions and as Sandilands points out, the very act of formulating politics around a core identity, the potential for anti-democratic politics looms large.[78]

Chapter Six
Representations of Place, Space and Community

Without a sense of place there can never be community.
- Dan Needles, author of *Letters from Wingfield Farm*, 1998

We must listen to the voices of our communities as expressed in the transformation and appropriation of already existing spaces and structures because these are visible memory and evidence of those who have been treated as invisible people.
- Allessandra Moctezuma

Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power... I think it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand. Each can only be understood through the other.
- Michel Foucault, 1984

Introduction

As the discussion in chapter three of the new cultural geography illustrated, the meanings we attribute to spatial concepts are the result of multiple, often competing discourses that are marked by gender, race, class, rurality, sexuality and other identity constructs, as well as myriad macro-scale processes. Space and place are not mere locations but rather are socially constructed phenomena infused with social intent. As geographers like Massey, Keith, Shields and others discuss, space is not only socially constituted, but society is also constituted spatially: space and the spatial are implicated in the production of history and politics. The application of Foucault's ideas of power/knowledge to spatial concerns highlights some of the ways that in its material, imaginary and symbolic forms, space acts as a regime that controls, disciplines and orders. To insist that spatial knowledge is linked to power is to argue not only that these discourses are particular ways of knowing the world, but it is also a recognition that spatial discourses operate within specific social contexts and have material and symbolic consequences.

In this chapter I build on the material presented in chapters three, four and

five and integrate it with material extracted from more of the interview, observational and archival data I collected. So far the emphasis has been on the constitution of social relations in a discrete geographical setting, a setting that in many ways has been framed as a stage for the interplay of human histories. In this chapter, I try to provide a different lens through which to view the Upper Oldman River basin. I highlight the "hidden geography" - the taken for granted spatial context within which events in the Basin have taken place - as a means of exploring not only how places are 'labelled' but also how these spatial representations have been articulated as locally specific spatial orderings. I am interested in how these discursive formations find expression as concrete forms, institutional policies and socio-economic arrangements and how these forms in turn reaffirm and reproduce spatial and other social discourses. In particular, I trace the consequences of these spatial representations as they relate to community, history and global/local relations within the Upper Oldman River basin.

A. Community

PLACE (n): a portion of space in which people dwell together...the portion of space actually occupied by a person or thing; the position of a body in space, or with reference to other bodies; locality; situation... *(OED)*

A trusting, caring community

To know a place is to occupy a place, to find a position within space. Bodies are always positioned in space but when that 'locatedness' becomes conscious and intentional, some humanistic geographers like Edward Relph speak of being in place, or having a sense of place. The position one occupies spatially is distinguished in part by reference to other entities, people and places. For Yi-Fu Tuan, places become meaningful as emotionally charged relationships between people become anchored to a particular site through repetition and familiarity.[1] David Ley speaks of spatial meanings as being created intersubjectively.[2] It is individuals within social groups who make places meaningful through social interaction. It is in this sense that connections can be drawn between social relations and a sense of place, and by extension between community and place.

As a rural community of just over 7000 residents, the Oldman River basin is a region in which people, intentionally or not, often encounter each other, a factor many residents believe shapes the social relations in this place. According to these residents, this is a community where everyone knows one another. As we walked down the street to go have lunch, long-time resident Kim O'Brien demonstrated such familiarity, saying hello to almost all those we passed. At one point I asked Kim, "If you are walking down the street do you know most of the people?" and she responded, "Yes".[3]

For many of the residents, particularly those who come from established families, such familiarity is one of the things that differentiates the Upper Oldman

River basin from urban centres and contributes to making this a friendly community. According to one resident, the translation of familiarity into friendliness is "...because everybody is related to everybody and they've lived here for generations and generations and...they've been able to provide for themselves and for their children in a way that they're not wanting."[4] Many of the residents speak of this familiarity translating into trust, and this being an essential element in building and maintaining a sense of community.

From a very practical perspective, the friendliness and familiarity amongst the residents of the Upper Oldman River basin often finds expression through people helping each other out. As in many communities, residents of the Upper Oldman River basin rely on their family, friends and neighbours for support, for help in times of tragedy and distress, and for assistance with the mundane activities of daily living. Oldman watershed residents provided me ample stories of neighbours and friends helping each other out. Here are just a few:

> Peggy Walsh: ...when I decided I had to have a milk cow, that was the bee in my bonnet, I wanted a milk cow, to make butter and learn to do all those things, have nice, fresh milk. And so I saw an ad in the paper that there was an auction coming up for dairy dispersal, brown Swiss cows...Where do you go to buy a brown Swiss cow? Well, hit your neighbours up and say, "Hey, let's go to an auction I want to buy a cow. Help me pick one out." So we all went... And of course I had never been to an auction before. And I said, "Oh, that's my cow," right out loud. So everyone knows I want this cow...my neighbour's going like this, "God, you don't do that." So as soon as the auctioneer starts his spiel, and I'm looking, I can't understand a word he's saying. "What'd he say?" So the guy said, "They're opening at a certain amount." So I put up my hand. I'll pay that much for it. And going on and I turned to my neighbour and I said, "Is she still mine?" "Nope, somebody else has a bid in there."... Finally... everybody stopped bidding and I got my cow. So we took it home, we took it to the neighbour's place and I went over for milking lessons. I'd go over twice a day into their barn and learn how to milk this cow. And I finally took her home when I knew how to look after a milk cow...[5]
>
> ---
>
> Brian Masterson: I feel a strong community here, as far as...I think it is quite strong. What brings it together, I'm not sure. But I think one thing especially - maybe not so much in town but in the agriculture - the community...it would be a belief that we are in an excellent country and we do need each other.[6]
>
> ---
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> Lori Hanson: As a contrast to the controversy over the sour gas emissions, Kim O'Brien told me about a funeral of a relative of hers that occurred on Tuesday and she told me that there were over 1200 people there. She told me how the Hutterites had made over 500 buns for the social after and that before, the Mennonites went over to the family's home and they brought

gifts and food to the family and sang outside the door of the house. I asked her if the environmentalists did anything for the funeral and she said no. And then I told her that in the transcripts people had said that it was tragedy that brought people together and she agreed and I said that they mentioned the flood and she agreed.[7]

In a more spatially material sense, the friendliness and trust shared between individuals in the community is a consequence of physical proximity. The Upper Oldman River basin's relatively small population and considerable distance from an urban centre make this a place where most people repeatedly encounter each other, even if they do not share the same interests or views, as they go about the tasks of daily living – working, shopping and paying bills. As Rex Gibson explained, "there's going to be differences in the community but they share common things, they use common things. People on the other side of the issue will use the same doctor, they'll cross paths at the grocery store, and they're a community in all kinds of ways still."[8] To a large extent these frequent encounters help create a sense of familiarity and neighbourliness that translates into providing assistance to those in need. Physical proximity also means for some residents, particularly neighbours, that frequent interactions result in shared meanings, memories and 'lifeworlds'. Audrey Westrop's presentation to the Oldman River Dam Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) panel, emphasises the spatial context of shared lifeworlds arising through the intersection of different individuals' routine, daily activities:

> We had, oh, probably a nucleus of seven families where we lived, that's just right where we lived. One of them moved on the other side of Pincher Creek, Rainers, who we do still keep in fairly good contact with, but not like before, because before, they were just a mile away. When my husband needed help with a bloat or something he'd just get them on the phone, and Joseph would be right there. It's not like that now, of course...But some other great friends of ours moved up to northern Alberta, into B.C., Buchanans, so we only see them once about every two or three years. And there's not a lot of – without living in that same vicinity, you just do not have that same relationship with the people...Lasting relationships because we got to work with the people so closely. It would have been great if we could, you know, know them like we did and still be able to enjoy their company because we knew them very well, and we had lots in common...You know, you still care and you still remember them and you still know them, but without that lack of doing things together, it's not the same after a while.[9]

Trust and familiarity are expressed not only in one-to-one interactions but more generally illustrated in how local businesses and services treat their clients. In trying to provide a picture for me of the ways in which trust materialises in the public sphere, a member of the Oldman community related the following local custom: "You can go downtown to the post office and get somebody else's

mail."[10] Trust is shared not only between those who live in the Basin, but also extended to people from outside of the community, particularly those who marry into a well-respected family. Paul Torrington's wife, Vera, offered a description of this trust and how it was extended to her because she married Paul:

> I find them really, I find [the people in the community], everybody I have met from that area has accepted me right away. I remember once I went to the style shop which is the ladies dress shop in Pincher Creek. We were visiting [Paul's] parents in Pincher Creek and I thought oh, I have a couple of hours. Went down there because they had a big sale and my grandmother said, "There's a sale on, go check it out. You need back to school clothes." And so I went in there and I bought a couple of outfits and I went to write a cheque and I asked "Can I write a cheque?" And the lady said no problem. And I wrote the cheque and I asked, "Would you like some ID?" And the lady says, "I see on your cheque the name's Torrington." And said, "Yeah." She said, "Are you related to Beatrice Torrington?", which is Paul's grandmother. "Yeah that's my grandmother, or my husband's." "We don't need ID." And I spent 200 bucks. It wasn't like I spent 20 bucks. It was like we know the family and, but your family is pretty well accepted in that community.[11]

These residents' characterisation of the Oldman basin as friendly, trusting and supportive is reminiscent of Tönnies' Gemeinschaft or Redfield's folk society in which community is believed to emerge from forms of human association which are intimate, familiar, mutually interdependent, and reflective of a shared moral code and social consciousness. These are communities with a strong sense of group solidarity based largely on kinship structures and characterised by behaviours that are traditional, spontaneous, uncritical and personal. Community in this sense is about belonging and security.

However, recall as Zygmunt Bauman and Iris Marion Young caution, the unity of community is only achieved by erecting boundaries, by keeping some people out. Homogeneity does not simply come into being as if suddenly discovered. Unity is not a natural feature of communities 'that work'. As Bauman reminds us,

> Common understanding can be only an *achievement*, attained (if at all) at the end of a long and tortuous labour of arrangement and persuasion and in strenuous competition with an indefinite number of other potentialities – all vying for attention and each promising a better (more correct, more effective, or more pleasurable) assortment of life tasks and solutions for life problems...
>
> Community of common understanding, even if reached, will therefore stay fragile and vulnerable, forever in need of vigilance, fortification and defence. People who dream of community in the hope of finding a long-term security which they miss so painfully in their daily pursuits, and of liberating themselves from the irksome burden of ever new and always risky choices, will be sorely disappointed.[12]

Communities that resemble folk societies are made through selection, separation and exclusion.

Hence it should not be surprising that the trust and affability many believe characterise the Oldman basin is neither an experience that is open to all, nor are these forms of interaction extended consistently. In many cases social factors such as race, gender and occupation play a central role in whether friendliness marks an interaction. The regional public health inspector recounted a scenario he encountered when he first began his job that illustrates how even in a friendly community like the Oldman basin geniality is not a constant.

As a part of his orientation to his new job and the region, when the health inspector first arrived he spent time driving around and stopping at various ranches to meet the people in the community and get a lay of the land. To his surprise, often he was greeted by a certain degree of suspicion and ill will.[13] As he stepped outside his truck he often felt as if the ranchers were trying to let him know that he was trespassing on their land and that he had no right to tell them what they should be doing there. Eventually this distrust was replaced by mutual respect and understanding, but it illustrates how friendliness and trust are not automatically extended to all within the Oldman community.

A more protracted example of distrust and alienation in the Oldman basin emerges in examining the relationship between Aboriginal people and the dominant white population. When I asked several of the long-term white residents if this was a racist community or a community that struggled with racial issues, a few forthrightly replied no. "People try to play up race in terms of us being closer to a...a Native reserve, or whatever but...that's an issue if you want to make it one - I choose not to, you know what I'm saying?" commented one resident.[14] Walsh likewise felt racial issues have been given too much attention and the focus instead should be on greater assimilation of Natives into the dominant white culture:

> Peggy Walsh: A lot of people think that ahhh, that there shouldn't be a Peigan, there shouldn't be an Indian Reservation, there shouldn't, these people should not have this land, not be given houses, they should not have free medical, free school, a lot of people believe they are catered to out of guilt... if they are kept from us by treating them this way and giving them all this stuff by legislation they are kept from assimilating in and ahh, and kept from having to go it on their own and the problem is just compounding. A lot of people just don't think that's fair. And then there are people who are really concerned with Native's problems.
>
> Lori Hanson: Hmm, hmm. Where do you sit?
>
> Peggy Walsh: I tend to be on the former.... if there are five drunken people on the streets of Pincher Creek, four of them are Indians. ...talk about drunk Indians... you're not allowed to, and if they are loitering, sitting on someone's window sill it's not fair to tell them they can't do

that, and all this, trying to - some people are calling it racism or what are the other words? But I don't think that's truly what it is. It's simply that it's a drunken person that nobody wants to have around.... but [in] general, I think mostly, the Indians are a problem because they are a problem in the school.... they're rude and undisciplined. Really hard for the teachers to deal with. There's a bunch of non-natives that are too. But it's just funny how that, how you're first sense is if you say, if you're saying well, you're going to have three native kids in your class, I bet the reaction is "Oh God, no." Which is really too bad, because you expect them to be a problem. And maybe one of them won't be a problem, but that's your first reaction when you hear there's going to be natives involved, "Oh, no there's going to be trouble with this."[15]

Masterson also spoke about the drunk Natives on main street but wasn't so concerned about removing them. Masterson spoke openly about racial tensions in the community but also expressed hope about the community coming together to resolve their social and racial problems.

Well, I think there's real efforts being made on both sides of the...I know that, and then there's little problems. There's things like some highly visible on Main street sometimes. And most of them are people who have an alcohol problem. Natives here are not violent people by-in-large. Definitely not...There's people at Napi here, that are white and Native on their group and they work together. Cross cultural events that are coming on that I think have helped to get people to address it. We're all on this world together and I think that a lot of native people have an awful lot to offer us and we have things to offer them. And it's not going to be settled in a day or two yet. For things that I think, some hurts on both sides...[16]

Wayne Hailey, a white Import who had lived in the community for nearly twenty-five years, concurred largely with Masterson but was more frank in his reply to the question of whether this was racist community:

Let me say that overall Pincher Creek is a very racist community...I hope it is changing. I think it is changing with the cross cultural conference, gradual. Like when we came here, one of the really distasteful things about living in the community was the racism that would come forward every now and then, it still does...Just in conversation. Racist remarks about native people, this is a conversation between non-native people you understand, not native people...I don't think [these people] realise they are being racist at all. Well, maybe some do, some of the more vicious and blatant ones do. To make a casual remark about a native person I don't think they think about it. You don't find this from people who have moved into the area, this is the rural farm face of people who have lived here for awhile. I think that's changing, slowly, and of course that old view is dying out as we all get older and pass on and hopefully are not passing it on so strong to their kids. I know that the cross cultural conference has

done a lot to raise awareness about these things. And it's been going on for six years or something, and it's really done a great thing with the community. But still it is there you know I mean...there's still this them and us and they're not really thought of as part of the community, I don't think overall. They've got their own community.[17]

In speaking with Peigan in the area about their experiences as residents of the Upper Oldman River basin, many spoke about the prejudices they encountered daily as Native people within a largely white community. As Henry Plains Hawk explains, while spatially the Peigan and Pincher Creek residents live as neighbours, the friendliness, familiarity and trust that many associate with neighbourly relationships are largely absent. "[I]t's very frustrating trying to be part of your neighbours, trying to live with them you know. And the same town of Pincher Creek, they absolutely don't know anything about us."[18] The most frequent example cited by the Peigan members I spoke to of prejudice and evidence of a lack of acceptance of them in the community was their absence as employees. Aside from the hospital, IGA and Royal Bank, few other establishments or organisations hire Native people. In a community with an unemployment rate somewhere between 21.9 and 85, employment is an obvious concern amongst many on the Peigan Reserve and a source of their resentment toward the white community. In Plains Hawk's words, amongst the white and native communities "there is no genuine deep relationships."[19]

The lack of natives employed in the region has gained the attention of some within the white community. Hailey, for example, commented on the general absence of Native employees within Pincher Creek:

> And I am pleased to see that the I.G.A. hired some native people, new staff. The Co-op never really, well they had one lady working in the business office. Maybe she's still there. But in the check outs and the grocery end of things there hasn't been a native person working there since we have been here as far as I know. But it's true of every other store in town. Again, it's part of it all. And this has been an issue raised at the cross cultural conference more than once. And the Peigans spend a lot of money in Pincher Creek and get very little community value in return.[20]

Some health care and community service workers likewise commented indirectly on the lack of Natives employed within the community. The issue they raised concerned communication barriers, specifically that it is difficult to educate people about existing social and health services when they are isolated from the rest of the community. The absence of native employees in the region translates into a communication or outreach barrier and therefore presents a health promotion and community services concern. In Edna Graves' words:

> I think that if you're ...a non-native person then you would think that everything is wonderful or everything is fine...but now if you're speaking to an Aboriginal person, they might have a completely different idea because a lot of times they don't know what the resources are because

> they've never used them, they've never felt comfortable using them. There's no Aboriginal faces there, bad ...people, you know...if ...Aboriginal people are very proud and if, you know...if they don't feel comfortable or don't feel that that trust is there, they're just not gonna go there.[21]

At the same time, not all white people agree with these racialised assessments of the lack of natives as employees. Torrington, for example, believes it is not prejudice but a lack of education that keeps natives from being hired in the community.[22]

The stories provided by Timms, Hailey and Masterson allow us to appreciate some of the ways in which belonging in a community has a spatial dimension. For the most part, Natives are not found in the Basin's businesses and services as employees or contributors to the community. Rather, Natives are visible in the community in many people's minds largely as drunken patrons of the local bars, as individuals who are out of control, as people who have yet to learn how to behave properly. White Euro-Canadians like Walsh argue that these Indians should not be allowed to loiter on the main street – drunk Indians do not belong in this community. Yet, for the most part it is not just drunk Indians, but Natives as an entire group who are not provided opportunities to be contributors in this community and so the Peigan are rendered invisible to many White Euro-Canadians outside of their role as drunks.

Racial segregation has been studied extensively by social scientists to demonstrate the myriad ways in which space is used as a means of social control. It is often the case that hostility towards another group is expressed through concerns about space. As David Sibley explains, stereotypes play an important role in the configuration of social spaces because of the importance of distanciation in the behaviour of social groups.[23] Whether it be in terms of social issues of race, class, sexuality, or other forms of prejudice, when an individual thinks of a group negatively this often translates into a distancing from these people emotionally, psychologically, economically and physically. One obvious example of the spatial expression of racial distancing in the Oldman basin is the creation and housing of 'Indians' on the Peigan reserve. Blockades on roads and trespassing issues on private property are also demonstrations of antagonisms between ethnic and racial groups that have translated into issues of access to, or ownership of space. Masterson speaks to this latter issue:

> Well, the Peigans here, was a time when their land was sold out from under them by an Indian agent and Crooked Chief and so they did get about four million dollars I think towards recompense, but they didn't get the money back. They will, the idea of that money was that they could get land back, but one thing you have to remember is that they try to settle things by blockade, the natives have. So that puts a fear in the community and so if you want to take their four million dollars and buy land now, there's some places that people would be up in arms against it. I know that when the... [Natives] were going to buy a large ranch just north of here, it

would have cut the road, the ranch was on both sides of the same road. And there was a fear there by all the people further up Beaver Creek that they'd be a disagreement and the road would be blockaded. So they were opposed to the idea. [24]

Space plays an important role in social distancing. Group images and place images combine to create landscapes of exclusion. The spatial boundaries erected are not only material but also imagined: ideological justifications for class and racial oppression that find form in the material production of space. As Elspeth Probyn points out, belonging foregrounds the space of movement – the changing configurations of social relations across space.[25] Those not considered to belong in a community are denied access or movement within that space. The spatial distribution of individuals is one of the four major ways Foucault outlined for discipline to proceed in a modern context. Partitioning certain groups of people from the larger community is a procedure used to ensure that one 'knows one's place' in the general economy of space associated with disciplinary power.[26]

The development of cultural marginality occurs through a complex process of social activity and cultural work that returns us to the discussion from chapter five of the creation of binary oppositions and the spectacle of the "Other". The stereotypes that underlie these spatialised constructions are structured by binary thinking that sets up a powerful opposition between the EuroCanadians/ Whites and the Peigans/Natives each as signifiers of absolute difference. There are a variety of forms of distinction that cluster around the two poles of this binary. On the one hand, the supposed link between white races and civilisation – refinement, learning and knowledge, a belief in reason, the presence of developed institutions, formal government and law, and emotional and physical restraint – a theme associated with 'culture'. On the other hand, the link is forged between the Peigan and savagery – the open expression of raw, violent and chaotic emotion and feeling rather than intellect, a lack of sexual and social refinement, a reliance on custom and ritual and a lack of reason – a theme linked to 'nature'. Consider for example the comments of Plains Hawk about his culture being seen as a bunch of savages that needed civilising by the white men (see page 120) or Peggy Walsh's comments about 'Indians being rude and undisciplined". In this context, the statements of some Oldman residents that race is not an issue in their community could be interpreted as attempts to ignore many Aboriginal people's experiences in this community. This devaluing of the Native experience is a consequence of a white view of nativeness as Other – an act of exclusion, a rejection of differences in particular localities. Blamed for eroding the quality of life in the town, the Native people's contributions are devalued and with one broad stroke all native people are painted as lazy, drunk Indians. To objectify people in this way then becomes justification, however subtly it is expressed, for members of the dominant group to distance themselves from the subordinated group and ensure boundaries are well maintained.

The residents' comments as well as the stories from chapter four illustrate

how racial prejudice directed at the Peigan in the Oldman community is an objectification of them that translates into the need to control their presence in public spaces in order to keep them 'in place', and limit their 'inappropriate' behaviours. Their transgressions, that is their inversion of public spaces for purposes other than their intended function, be it in the form of a rest stop or road blockades, create anxiety, nervousness and fear within the dominant group that is integrated into a discourse about property and access issues. One can read into this discourse the rationality of capitalism at work: efficiency and profit being paramount and used to determine appropriate use of space.

This is the logic that underlies the "abstract space" of which Lefebvre speaks – bureaucratised and commodified space made in capitalism's image in order to facilitate the continuation of this mode of production. In abstract space exchange is primary, and economic and political spaces converge towards the elimination of all resistance directed at impeding or disrupting this exchange.[27] Abstract space is represented by elite social groups as homogenised, ahistorical and instrumental in order to facilitate state power and the free flow of capital. At the same time it is fundamentally contradictory, because a space that emphasises homogeneity can only exist by accentuating difference.[28] The image of unity that is central to abstract space is achieved then by a state-sponsored process of fragmentation and marginalisation that omits difference in order to prevent conflict.

This returns us to the binary poles of civilisation and savagery in which the violation of space by the 'uncivilised' native peoples is seen as unproductive, irrational behaviour that must be controlled, if not prevented. In relation to the concept of community, we return to the 'sameness' that underlies many conceptualisations of this notion. Sameness means the absence of the 'Other' - particularly a stubbornly different Other capable of protest and other disruptive practices. In the figure of the Other (the alien, the 'out of place') the fears of uncertainty find embodiment. Resistance to the underlying logic of abstract space is constrained in part by a discourse about this community as being a happy collective where everyone works together for a common future and in this sense erases the racialised spatialisation of the Basin. As well, resistance is contained by maintaining spatial and cultural differences between the Native and white communities, as we see in the creation of the Peigan Reserve. In this context one can read comments about the community as being close knit "...because everybody is related to everybody and they've lived here for generations and generations and...they've been able to provide for themselves and for their children in a way that they're not wanting"[29] as attempts to reassert both an exclusionary notion of community and the dominance of homogenised, abstract place. Groups not included in this image of a prosperous white, rural community are continually made to feel out of place at the same time as they are told that if they want to succeed they must assimilate.[30]

Social mapping also directs one to consider the myriad ways in which the politics of identity enters into the production of belonging in the community. Again we can return to the origin tales of the Old Stock in the Oldman River basin

discussed in chapter five. These stories about the ranchers' roots being the deepest are tales about the first settlers who, in spite of the harsh political, economic and physical circumstances, through sheer determination triumphed and built a prosperous, healthy community. While issues around identity and identity politics are about standing out, being different, communal identities are about boundary drawing. However, rubbing shoulders in the trenches is not aimed at protecting existing fences. As Bauman explains, borrowing from Norwegian anthropologist Frederick Barth, origin tales are frequently recent manifestations used to claim greater legitimacy:

> the ostensibly shared 'communal' identities are after-effects or by-products of forever unfinished (and all the more feverish and ferocious for that reason) boundary drawing. It is only when the border poles are being dug in and the guns are aimed at the trespassers that they myths of the border's antiquity are spun and the recent cultural political origins of identity are carefully covered up by the 'genesis stories'.[31]

It is no surprise then, that as the Oldman basin ranch land is quickly bought up and converted into luxury retirement and recreation properties, and the long-term future of family-run ranching in the region is threatened, that we see the emergence of Cowboy Poetry gatherings. This poetry, though often about contemporary events, nonetheless draws on and celebrates the communal identity of ranchers as the first settlers. These origin tales help to identify those who founded the community – those who truly belong to this place – from all the rest, and in this way reassures some of the equilibrium of the world.

Sub-communities

Feelings of exclusion and bonding are not only expressed by the presence or absence of neighbourly gestures but also in terms of the membership and formation of sub-communities. The process of social mapping directs us to consider other stereotypes beyond the rancher and points us to a discussion of some other forms of identification. To some degree, the establishment of sub-communities or subset groupings within the larger population is the result of individuals getting together because they share common interests, have familial bonds, or are simply within close physical proximity of each other. In other cases, people are "haled" into these groups as the larger population is divided according to lines of class, religion, ethnicity or sexual preference. So as we saw in previous chapters, in the Oldman basin divisions are also drawn according to a lineage of ancestry in the area, as well as the opinions people hold about particular issues. Others classify the sub-communities in terms of occupational categories (i.e., farmer versus rancher, or Old Stock versus everyone else).

One can begin to see that these lines of distinction that create the sub-communities, though often very real in effect, are also variable. While the subcategories are useful in attempting to gather a general understanding of the community, the lines delineating sub-communities become perforated, broken and redrawn when one examines a series of controversial community issues.

Masterson speaks to this matter: "When an issue is front and centre, ...it divide[s] the community for a time. Because we've all got different points of view. Sometimes it's a little hard to respect the other person's."[32] For example, the construction of the Oldman River Dam and the subsequent hearings concerning this dam created dissension in the community about whether the dam should be decommissioned or not. According to many,[33] the Oldman River Dam divided the community. Generally, on one side were environmentalists and those who had been or would be required to move off their farms and ranches. These people spoke about loss and catastrophe and advocated the removal of the valves in the diversion tunnels. On the other side of the debate were members of the community who celebrated the construction of the dam and were convinced of the future prosperity the dam would bring to the region and therefore wanted the project completed. Yet, at a more specific level, it was not always the case that agriculturists that lost their land were against the dam. While they may have been displaced physically by the dam, for some individuals their political beliefs regarding the necessity for economic development were of greater significance, and consequently, while they regretted having to move, they were nonetheless in favour of the dam. In addition, recall from chapter five that while many ranchers were against the dam they maintained a distance from the environmentalists. As Melindy recounts:

> ...there was such a division between the environmental group and the agricultural communities and they see each other as mortal enemies no matter what the issue is they just assume that they are going to be on opposite sides of the fence. And what was ironic in that controversy was that they were on the same side and I don't think they recognized it. I think a lot of the ranchers and especially the old families that had lived here for so long thought it was just a huge tragedy too. And not just because a lot of the families lost their land...But I think a lot of them thought it was an environmental tragedy...the basic feeling from a lot of people was the same. It was a big disaster from my parent's point of view, they didn't see it as a good thing at all. A historical tragedy and an environmental tragedy too. But [the ranchers and the environmentalists] never really got together on the issue and they never talked to each other and fought on the same side, which I think is too bad. Because they just assumed I mean they have nothing in common, they don't talk any way so why start now?[34]

How the divisions between social groups are determined depends greatly on who is doing the drawing, and from what subject position they stand. As Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose remind us, "[t]he multidimensionality of the space of a politics of location arises from what Haraway describes as a 'geometrics of difference and contradiction': an interpretation of the diverse axes of identity that constitute any and every subject position and that never neatly align into a stable and coherent sense of self."[35] As I pointed out in chapter five, while we have deep conscious and unconscious investments in our identities, identity is not

stable. People construct different 'places to stand' according to their strategic context and need, both of which are readjusted and redefined continually.

Just as the identification of sub-communities varies widely, so do feelings about these sub-communities. According to some residents, these sub-communities give the community a cultural richness:

> [it's an] interesting and diverse population ranging from ranching/farming type to the oil executive to the rabid environmental type to the mild environmental type to the lover of...you know recreational facilities – the hunters and then we deal with some of the Miners from the Crowsnest Pass. So we've got a very diverse...and of course we've got all the urban dwellers. The people that work in the hospital, the school teachers, the few lawyers and accountants and things like that. Oh there's a lot of diversity in our population.[36]

As evidence of this diversity, many folks pointed to the many socio-cultural events that occur in the community such as the Cowboy Poetry Gathering, rodeo, parade, Aboriginal film festival, community theatre, Cross-cultural Conference and Pow Wow, kite festival, music festivals, art shows and museums. To a large degree, the residents cite the diversity of cultural events as an indication of the ethnic diversity within the region. Speaking with people casually or in more formal interviews, time and again they mentioned with pride how ethnically diverse their community is. In Masterson's words:

> I think that this community of Pincher Creek had got...the diversity of people. A large Native population. These early French people. The early British people. The German people, lots of German people. A lot of them first were in the States and then moved. Hutterite people. We have a real diversity. I mean we've got the people who come in to Shell and things like that, with technology. For me any way, we've got the old ranch families they are solid and the old farm families.[37]

Some might question just how ethnically diverse this region really is since, just as was the case at the beginning of the century, the 1996 Canadian census reveals that the current ethnic background of the residents of Pincher Creek is predominantly of British origin (53%). The second most common heritage is German (12%), followed by Canadian (7%), French, (4.9%), Ukrainian (2.7%), Chinese (1.4%), Italian (1.1%), and Aboriginal (0.9%).[38] The remaining residents (18.4%) claim a diversity of heritages grouped under Other. The residents of the hamlet of Cowley are predominantly of French background (27%), followed by British (16%), a number declaring themselves to be Canadian (14%), some of German heritage (11%) and of Ukrainian background (8.1%). The remaining 45 individuals (24%) identify with a large group of Other backgrounds.[39] The Peigan Reserve, which borders the eastern edge of the Upper Oldman River basin, has a population of 1662 individuals who are almost all of Aboriginal heritage.

For recent Import, Timms, he quickly established feelings of connection not because of his ethnicity but through involvement in his church and so for him religion was an important basis for an association and belonging. In his words:

> I pretty much walked in here cold and within a few months, a very few months, I already, I joined a church for example and that opened up doors. I joined the Lutheran Church and started to actively participate in that congregation and the families you were talking about in terms of starting, the pioneers or what have you, there's a bunch of families there that are definitely Old Stock. I find that that opened a lot of doors for me. [40]

The contemporary upper Oldman River region's religious community is composed predominantly of Protestants (59%), followed by Catholics (24%), 14.4% with no religious affiliation and 1.1% who are members of a variety of other religions.[41]

In addition, the Upper Oldman River region is home to five Hutterite colonies and a number of Doukhobors, people who historically fled persecution in eastern Europe for their religious beliefs and pacifism and settled in a number of regions throughout western Canada and the United States. Conscientious objection to war drove the Hutterites from North and South Dakota in 1918.[42] Until 1973, with the passing of the provincial Bill of Rights, Hutterite expansion and land purchases were restricted in Alberta under the Communal Property Act of 1947.[43] However, since 1973, there have been many new Hutterite settlements established throughout Alberta, including several within the Upper Oldman River basin. The history of the Doukhobors is similar in many respects to that of the Hutterites although they have not been as successful in expanding their collectives. In 1915 three hundred Doukhobors arrived in southern Cowley and Lundbreck via British Columbia where they organised a small communal village, built grain elevators and a flour mill, and cultivated 12,000 acres of land.[44] Today many of the descendants of the pioneer Doukhobors still live in the area and maintain their traditions, although their communal society has largely disappeared.

While the region has a fair number of Christian churches and a fairly substantial population of residents who practise a very traditional religious lifestyle, in comparison to the neighbouring communities south of Lethbridge, overall the inhabitants of the Upper Oldman River basin are not seen as particularly religious. Barry Watson described the establishment of the first churches in the region and provided an interesting contextualisation of how religion plays out in a community that covets a way of life that is known more for its independence and gruff, raucous ways than its puritanical behaviours:

> Lori Hanson: Was it a really religious community?
>
> Barry Watson: I think it was, probably, just by the standards of how religious Canadian society would have been at that point, at the turn of the century, it'd probably be more so than today. But I don't think Pincher Creek would have been any more religious than any other community,

especially in terms of their...There would have been but there was also bit of the frontier built into it and all that. They'd always been religious and go to church on Sundays but they wouldn't have been an overly religious community. I can think of more religious communities in southern Alberta, like the Mormon church had a great influence in Cardston, that's always been a very religious community and a very cohesive community. Like with Pincher Creek, with a bit more diversity and some of its churches, the churches established early in here like in the 1880s and '90s, but by the turn of the century there was only four well established churches. So there was less, perhaps, cohesion, in terms of that. The Lutherans also established a church in here but I think in 1904. So that would have been a fifth church in here. The Baptists were packed in here for quite a few years as well.

Lori Hanson: So which was established in 1904?

Barry Watson: The Lutherans. They established a church south of town. The Baptists had church services here off and on. It was about this time period as well. So it was a religious community....

Lori Hanson: ...but there was also this frontier, hard working, rabble rousing....

Barry Watson: ...yeah, that aspect of it as well.

Yet, in spite of the feelings of connection felt by Masterson and others, for some residents the sub-communities in the Oldman watershed represent 'cliques', nearly impenetrable sub-communities that serve to fragment the community and exclude certain individuals within the larger community:

> I don't know if I can explain the cliqueyness, but it's definitely there. Lots of people in this town have lives here and their kids have all grown up here and they're still here so...that creates some of it. Lots of families that are related to lots of different families so, you know, it's hard to come in as an outsider who's not related to anybody.[45]

> I don't know I guess the other thing is that...it's a community where...that were everybody is kind of related and if you're an outsider it's kind of tough to...to...you know...to become part of it because they're not really, you know...everybody is related to everybody so ...they don't ...[but] you have to work at belonging and...becoming a part of the community...[46]

These narratives of cliques point to the Upper Oldman River basin as a place of social fragmentation, divisiveness and marginality. This is a view that was shared by not only the Peigan but many of the Imports, as well as some that reside outside the community but visit it frequently. Consider for example the words of

two environmentalists, first Robert Stacks who lives in the community but only on a temporary basis, and following him, a long-time resident of the Basin speaks of his experience:

> Robert Stacks: Well I don't see it as a community that has one view. I think there's quite a number of views and it's fairly fragmented and divided...it's a community of communities but not like Joe Clark's community of communities where the communities are all co-operating. Like I got the sense that there's quite a diverse, like a lot of communities but I don't know if they are pulling together. I'm not sure when they come together to what end."[47]
>
> ---
>
> Focus group participant: Well, I think a lot of it has come 'cause of all these different - there's different diverse groups in here. And some, some of the issues it's ranchers against ...the ranch community versus the town community, and environmental issues – say environmentalists...against developers you know. And so whatever the sort of battlefield, this community is very good at splitting up, drawing lines...it doesn't matter, the issues can be health, they can be the Castle Valley, it can be something else.[48]

For those who reside in a community in which they feel excluded, staying in that community can translate into feelings of not being accepted, of not being a 'full member' of the community, of being marginalised. Stacks offered an example of such exclusion felt by a friend of his who resides in the Upper Oldman River basin: "You know Cheryl Yardley says, she's been there for years and still feels an outsider, so there's a community she feels outside to..."[49] Likewise, Lana Sturby, who works with "under-serviced families" and "families in need" sees the community as divided, but for her it is a division fed by money. Several other residents concurred with Sturby's position believing that money divided the community but as it was conflated with other social factors such as race and religious beliefs:

> Lana Sturby: There are the families that have enough money to get most of their needs met on their own and there is the ones that don't. And I know, you know, I certainly know families and individuals that aren't able to get the help they need just because they don't have the money and even if they, you know, know where to access it and they're not comfortable of doing it that way...and I see that with the kids too.... the kids that don't have a heck of a lot of money and they often, you know, get pushed aside or looked down on...[50]
>
> ---
>
> Focus group participant: I think as funding is getting tighter and tighter and I think there's also some ...animosity between the public and separate systems and I think there's ...it's seen as - since it's important to have kids enrolled in your school, and there don't seem to be a whole lot kids in this community, I think it's almost seen as competitive trying to get kids to...[51]

> Focus group participant: You get very major socio-economic people who have a lot and people who have virtually nothing and that cuts right down the line of races as well with the Aboriginals in particular.[52]

Still others believe the community is divided by the rural/urban distinction – a segregation of attitudes that arises from living in town or in the country:

> Focus group participant: ...people in the Town learn to live together, whereas in the rural area... "Hey we're independent - we wanna do what we wanna do!" and that's it.[53]

And Barry Watson speaks of the duration of residency in the Basin feeding divisiveness:

> The main conflict, or the main hindrance to that spirit of co-operation, that community spirit, is perhaps the difference in terms of how long you have lived in the community.[54]

Clearly living and interacting in the same defined geography does not guarantee a sense of belonging and mutual feelings of connection. Certainly, for some individuals the Oldman River basin is conceived as a structured by deep, horizontal comradeship. There are residents like Brian Masterson who speak of the strong community he feels in this place which exists for him in a very practical sense in his ability to call on family, friends and neighbours to share in celebration, good fortune, tragedy and the mundane activities of daily living. But we see in the sentiments of Sturby, Stacks and Plains Hawk that such 'fields of care' are not equally accessible to all.

We also see how these feelings of belonging or marginality translate spatially. The Oldman basin residents' discussions of their sense of belonging in the community and their identification with certain sub-communities provides some indication of the variable perceptions and experiences of place. The social relations that constitute an individual's life play a significant role in how it is he perceives, interacts with, and experiences the spatial configurations of his life. To some degree this is an individualised encounter with the world, yet these experiences are always mediated by the wider social structure in which people live, work and play. Structures of place – imagined, material and symbolic - are shaped by social class, ethnicity, religious affiliation, heritage and political views, and in turn they become manifest in ideology, social policy and social action. So understanding the presence and movement of individuals across that space is about accounting for factors like race and class over which these people have very little control. Examining the lives of many of the Peigan reminds us that certain groups of people are not provided equal access to or mobility within specific spaces.

Place and community

Social relations shape structures of place, but nonetheless, this does not suggest that a sense of community and sense of place necessarily assume one another. Many traditional definitions of community and place construct community as only materialising in a defined geographical place and humanistic discussions of place suggest that they become meaningful only through social interaction. Yet, as we see from the experiences of place and community of many Oldman basin residents, there is nothing inherently unifying about living in the same locality. As well, as Young points out, we cannot assume that face-to-face relations are somehow more authentic than those that occur across great distances with the aid of advanced communication technologies.[55] The assumed connection between sense of place and feeling a part of the community is more about romantic notions of place and community than many people's lived spatial and communal experiences.

I am not denying that for some, place and community are closely aligned constructs. Sarah Wounded Knee discussed how the Peigan Chief and Council talk about community development and community, "they don't say land but you just know that that's what they mean. They mean the community and the people and they mean the land and they mean everything that's on it and culture and language and everything so."[56] At the same time, there were some residents, particularly some of the Imports who did not feel a sense of belonging and community but this does not mean they do not have a sense of place. Many of the environmentalists, for example, feel ostracised from the larger community yet they consciously chose to come to the Oldman River basin and make this their home because they feel a strong sense of place. For these individuals their sense of belonging is defined more by the place than by their feelings of connection to other people. It is interesting to note that the ranchers historically and in a contemporary context share an attachment to the land that mirrors in some ways the affective values held by the environmentalists, but this is a group with which the ranchers largely have refused to form any of substantial alliance. Consider for example, Melindy's explanation of her sense of attachment to her family's ranch:

> I think I always kind of knew I would end up back here just because of my attachment to the ranch and to my family...No matter what I did in the mean time, I could go away but I would always come back...It was the attachment to the place...this particular place, this actual ranch. I don't have a real big attachment to Pincher Creek, Lundbreck, the town or anything, but just this piece of land this is where the attachment comes from.[57]

Yet, while there may be some shared emotions about the place and community between various groups, the consensus often dissolves in considering the variable definitions of community. For example, local environmentalist Wayne Hailey spoke about how he understood community as different than most of his neighbours, as not just about humans. For Hailey community is "the nature, the land and the people."[58] Appearing before the Oldman River Dam

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) panel, Kevin Van Tighem spoke of his love for his home and how he identified with this place: "because I live in this unique, special environment that I love quite a lot, and it's defined to me by the things that are native to this place."[59] When I asked temporary resident and environmentalist Robert Stacks to define community he too emphasised the geography:

> You know you can have communities of interest or communities of place or communities of located somewhere, concrete in that way or tied to geography. I don't know, I lean towards a community of geography over a community of interest in terms of being more along a continuum of what a community is.[60]

In a focus group of environmentalists who were asked what attracted them to the region one participant replied, "It's definitely the location. It's definitely not the community."[61] In each of these definitions the natural world is accentuated. I don't want to suggest that the human community is not of some importance to these people but rather that in their list of valued attributes of the region, nature ranks higher than do the social relations they have with their neighbours. Consider the position of David Sheppard, resident of the Upper Oldman River basin, in his presentation to the panel for the Public Hearings on Management of Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin:

> There's lots of loose talk about heritage and heritage funds in this province. Some of us regard the natural environment as an important aspect of our heritage, perhaps the most important aspect. Personally, if it were not for the natural environment of south-western Alberta, I would not choose to live here. I have nothing against you people. I just happen to be more interested in the natural environment than anything else.[62]

As well, in trying to compare definitions of community there needs to be some recognition of who constitutes their community, that they may rely on human connections that go beyond the physical boundaries of the M.D. of Pincher Creek. As one focus group participant put it, "Then there are people who come here because they are attracted by the landscape, but not by the community necessarily because they still have communities outside the community."[63] My own experience speaks to this participant's view, as prior to ever visiting the Basin I knew many of the environmentalists who live in the Upper Oldman River basin as a result of our interactions at wilderness meetings and workshops. Their colleagues in the environmental movement constitute a community for them in the sense that these are people with whom not only do they share common concerns about the state of the natural world, but from whom they receive support and caring.

As I have discussed, for many of the long-time residents, community is about friendliness, trust and helping out your family, friends and neighbours. But belonging in the community is also about learning the accepted way of interacting and being. It is about the operation of disciplinary power and the creation of

disciplined subjects who alter their behaviours in order to adhere to acceptable standards. Because it is a small community, there is a certain degree of care and affability practised by most residents simply because of the frequency of interaction they have with each other. Even when residents share few common interests or hold polarised opinions about certain issues there seems to be a courtesy extended towards others, a constricting of one's opinions for the sake of maintaining harmony. As one resident described it, "...you kind of have to sit down side by side sometimes, and rub shoulders here and there no matter who you are, and I think maybe that's one thing that does sort of...people end up being together...kind of gives them a chance to...close the gaps a little bit or something..."[64]

In his book, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, David Guterson describes more fully and eloquently the internalisation and impact of such silences. While Guterson attributes this careful voicing of opinions to the restrictive geography of the island his characters live on, I think such island mentality is found in many small communities, places where residents perceive their community to have boundaries as distinct as an island's shore:

> For he'd recognised limits and the grayness of the world, which is what endeared him to island life, limited as it was by surrounding waters, which imposed upon islanders certain duties and conditions foreign to mainlanders. An enemy on an island is an enemy forever, he'd been fond of reminding his son. There was no blending into an anonymous background, no neighbouring society to shift toward. Islanders were required, by the very nature of their landscape, to watch their step moment to moment. No one trod easily upon the emotions of another where the sea licked everywhere against an endless shoreline. And this was excellent and poor at the same time – excellent because it meant most people took care, poor because it meant an inbreeding of the spirit, too much held in, regret and silent brooding, a world whose inhabitants walked in trepidation, in fear of opening up. Considered and considerate, formal at every turn, they were shut out and shut off from the deep interplay of their minds. They could not speak freely because they were cornered: everywhere they turned there was water and more water, a limitless expanse of it in which to drown. They held their breath and walked with care, and this made them who they were inside, constricted and small, good neighbours.[65]

Guterson's description provides a view of small rural communities akin to Jeremy Bentham's notion of the panopticon: an architectural system based on a centre tower pierced with windows from which are visible the contents and activities within an outer ring of separate, distinct cells. The structure allows for the residents of the cells to be constantly observed but to never know whether they are under surveillance. The result is a guarantee of order in that the resident's permanent visibility ensures the atomising of self-regulation and uniform exercise of disciplinary power.[66] The subject is under constant possible

gaze and hence internalises the social code of acceptability and, in accordance, disciplines him or herself. This visibility creates for some residents a sense of belonging, support and nurturing. For others the constant observation of their every move creates feelings of oppression. In this context, such familiarity is about a lack of anonymity as everyone knows everyone else's business. As one person revealed in speaking about many of the region's residents' use of health services outside of the area, when people desire confidentiality, they purposefully leave to get the care they need:

> Focus group participant: Because of the small town, they didn't want everybody to know and there's always that fear whether it's real or whether it's not real, there's certainly always that perception. That drives a lot of people [who want medical help] out of town.[67]

Yet even in light of such strong social mores, as Walsh explains, some of the Imports have difficulty adhering to, or accepting these standards of behaviour:

> Peggy Walsh: You sort your life out, put it in compartments and umm, and when you're talking to somebody that's a friend that you know [disagrees with you], you don't talk about it.
>
> Lori Hanson: Okay, so the Imports understand that?
>
> Peggy Walsh: Well, not really well. I think they get the hang of it once they realise that it has to be that way. In a small community you don't, well the people have to mix whether they are on different sides of the public issues or not. They'll end up on the same side on another issue, so they have to be able to set things aside.[68]

Timms elaborated more specifically on environmentalists and the discomfort some ranchers have with their outspokenness. While he and many of the residents feel the environmentalists play an important 'watch dog' role in the community, nonetheless some find their candour off putting:

> I don't think ranchers understand where they are coming from. Because first of all, I think a strong portion of those environmentally more sensitised people show tendencies to be hostile towards their neighbours... Second of all, they are very vocal. You may have noticed those people are very vocal and aren't scared to express their opinion instead of being very much laid back, community minded, quietly Christian whatever, don't make waves that sort of stuff. I think that that sort of viewpoint doesn't go well with anybody. And as soon as you start yipping and yapping about something that maybe your neighbours don't understand fully, I would hasten to add, maybe just maybe the environmentalists have a greater perspective or a greater, a broader perspective on what is exactly is happening and what exactly the issue is instead of one side... And I don't want to suggest that environmentalists don't have their head on straight or anything like that. But I'd suggest that some people have not understood,

> don't understand why people are going out of their way to make waves and perhaps ranchers don't like to be told what to do, whether it be a government person ... or somebody telling them they can't spread manure more than twice a year because it upsets the people living in town.[69]

As Foucault discussed, normalisation is crucial in a social organization dedicated to the administration of life. In the context of community, some normalisation procedures enable the continuous and effective functioning of systems of trade and services, and of preventing civil disorder. Creating a dividing line between what is normal and abnormal behaviour is a way of cultivating disciplined bodies.

It is interesting to note that it is the environmentalists not the Hutterites or Doukhobors, people who often visually stand out from the rest of the community, who are central to the discussions about people who don't fit in the community. Perhaps, this is because these two religious groups do not directly threaten the effective functioning of capitalist order, but it could also be because these people are not accusing the dominant social groups of being exclusionary.

Local environmentalist Wayne Hailey recognises that most in the agricultural community keep their opinions to themselves. He understands that this is considered normal behaviour but he chooses not to conform to these standards. Instead he chooses to assert a counter-space and construct a counter-public. From Hailey's perspective, the agriculturists' silence does nothing to protect wilderness areas from disturbance and destruction and therefore he fails to comply by adopting these regulatory norms:

> ...the ranchers in this area, and the farm people that I know are very reluctant to criticise their neighbours. So that if their neighbour is doing something destructive to the land, they are not likely to say anything. They won't like it, and they might talk confidentially to another neighbour and ask them what they think of that, but publicly they would never do any thing to stop that or to question it...[70]

He shares with the Peigan tactics of resistance aimed at dismantling the dominant social order. Yet as I will discuss in the next section, the resistance of environmentalists and the Peigan while having commonalties, are also distinct from each other in many others ways.

Community is obviously a contested terrain in the Upper Oldman River basin, as it is in varying degrees in all communities. As Young points out, as in all conceptual reflection, there is no universally shared notion of community but only particular articulations that overlap, complement, or sit at acute angles to one another.[71] Community is a process of contestation and struggle that is fundamentally shaped by social constructs like race, class, sexuality and gender and entails the making of spaces (material, imaginary and symbolic) that reinforce and resist the dominant social order and simultaneously the social construction of subjectivity and political activity through spatiality. The totalising impulse to see communities dichotomously as either communal bliss or individualised anomie is more about an 'imagined community' than it is most people's experiences of

belonging and connection in a place. Imagining several thousand people sharing characteristics that are fundamental to their identities not having different views of community requires a lot of ignoring or forgetting about internal social divisions.

B. Changing configurations of spatial relations over time

> **PLACE (n)** ...to leave or win place: to lose or gain ground, to retreat or advance...OED).

Observing change

Like many rural communities in the Rocky Mountain West, there has been change over the past half century in both the type of people who live in the Upper Oldman River basin and how it is that these people interact with this place. Yet, for many residents, the change has been slow and largely unnoticed. In the words of Peggy Walsh, "[c]hange seems to take place quite slowly and I have trouble thinking back to...it really sneaks up on you. I can't, I'd have to think hard to recognise the changes."[72] When I spoke with Ruth Melindy she too had a hard time identifying changes that have occurred in her community over the past decade or two until it struck her that she was unfamiliar with most of the family names of the children attending the school where she had completed grades one to twelve:

> I went to school in Lundbreck and most of the kids probably did come from a ranching or farming families, or families that have lived here quite awhile. And come to think of it now, I don't know any of the names of the people who are going to school there. They're not from any of the families I really know, or from families that have been here a long time.[73]

In contrast, ask any wilderness activist about this place and one gets a very different sense of both the degree and rate of change in the Upper Oldman River basin. The story they tell is not of a community slowly evolving and bettering but of a community in crisis and rapidly disappearing. Consider the sentiments of two wilderness activists, one a local resident and the other from outside the area:

> Wayne Hailey: To me I see these things [the wild land] disappearing...we build a new road into the mountains...I see [that] as a major loss of wildness and wild things and wild country, when we've already lost a whole lot in this area because of what I would say is careless development and not bothering to restore disturbed areas as well as having development in every square mile of land, in the mountains and the foothills.[74]

> Harvey Locke: Right near the boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park at the head of one of these long valleys there are clearcuts in the Castle

> Wilderness. Grizzly bear are being removed from the Castle at an alarming rate...[75]

How can one understand such polarised perceptions of the Upper Oldman River basin?

In part, the lack of observance of the changes occurring in the Upper Oldman River basin can be attributed to the gradual transformations and the kinds of changes that are occurring. The Upper Oldman River basin is not experiencing the rate of residential and commercial growth neighbouring Alberta communities like Canmore, Cochrane or Waterton are currently undergoing - at least not yet. As the Canadian census for the period from 1991 to 1996 illustrates, the Upper Oldman River region has increased in population steadily, but relatively slowly. The 1996 population for the region as a whole is 7277 residents as compared to 7175 residents five years previous.[76] More specifically, the population breaks down as follows: the municipality of Pincher Creek has increased 1.99% from 3110 residents in 1991 to 3172 residents in 1996; the town of Pincher Creek's population has had little variability over the census period, decreasing by only one person in that time period to 3659 residents; and, similarly, the village of Cowley has decreased insignificantly in population by 1.4% from 275 residents in 1991 to 273 in 1996.[77] For the past 15 years, there has been a fairly steady yet slow decline in population of residents in Cowley (.09%) from 304 residents in 1981 to the current 273 individuals.[78] In sharp contrast, the Rocky Mountain community of Canmore has increased in population a whopping 47.1% over the same period of time.[79]

Yet, I suspect that it isn't just the degree of change in the Basin that obscures the view of the transformation of this place. To suggest that places change isn't a profound statement. Yet, as I discussed in chapter three and as many cultural and human geographers have pointed out over the past several decades, space and place have often been treated as if fixed and immobile. People talk about places as if they are immutable and the meaning of these places given and transparent. Yet, as Allan Pred reminds us, places are in constant flux:

> Place...always involves an appropriation and transformation of space and nature that is inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space. As such, place is characterized by the uninterrupted flux of human practice – and experience thereof – in time and space. It is not only what is fleetingly observed on the landscape, a "locale" or setting for activity and social interaction, it is also what takes place ceaselessly, what contributes to history in a specific context through the creation and utilization of a physical setting.[80]

Peigan territory: transformations and an embodied reading

The story called "A Conquest of People and Place" provides a view of some the transformations in the spatial configurations of the Basin that have impacted many Peigan people's lives. In centuries previous, the Peigan as members of the Blackfoot Confederacy travelled across the land bordered by the

Red Deer River to the north, the mountains to the west and down south to Crow's Creek into what is now Montana. This was their home territory. As Plains Hawk explained (see Figure 4, page 89), it wasn't that they just wandered aimlessly across the plains. Rather the Blackfoot people moved with the buffalo and travelled in order to care for their territory. "Everyone looked after what I refer to as a country...Everybody lived in an area as a caretaker and they learned how to survive."[81]

The arrival of Europeans and Americans critically impacted the Blackfoot peoples' movement across the land. Their spatial motions were severely restricted and their ways of interacting with the land changed significantly. It is not that the Blackfoot were a culture caught in a temporal vacuum prior to the arrival of Europeans. Like all cultures they evolved, developing new techniques and ideas themselves, and borrowed ideas and materials from others. For example, recall that in the early 18th century the Blackfoot acquired horses that extended both the extent and speed of their travel (see page 90). In contrast, their interactions with Europeans over the 19th century had largely the reverse effect. Outbreaks of smallpox and other diseases arrested the movement of many as they succumbed to illness and death or tended to those who had, and as they avoided sites of infestation such as the upper Missouri River. The demise of the bison and introduction of alcohol further punctuated their movement across the plains. The spatial configuration of their lives was severely restricted and with that, their routines, identity and communities altered, and the land itself transformed.

Centuries ago the Blackfoot had been regarded as "the power" on the plains of the Upper Oldman River basin. Today the community is beleaguered by high rates of poverty, substance abuse and unemployment, amongst other social difficulties. Peigan band members Henry Plains Hawk and Sarah Wounded Knee talk about the strong bonds they and many Peigans still feel to the land, yet they also acknowledge a radical change in the spatial relations that once characterised their community. The land that is now identified as Peigan is but a postage stamp-sized piece of what was historically their territory. The reserve they live on measures only 12 by 15 miles, bordering the eastern edge of the M.D. of Pincher Creek. The reserve is intersected by a highway and spotted with buildings, the largest concentration of these structures situated around the hamlet of Brocket. Most people live fairly settled lives complete with contemporary technologies such as refrigerators, telephones and automobiles. Like their white neighbours, Peigan Band members own pieces of the reserve, portions of which are used for agricultural purposes. Yet, it would be wrong to assume that the continued presence of the past is no longer written on the spatial surface of today.

Throughout the Oldman Dam hearings members of the Peigan Nation stood before the assessment panel and chronicled traditional uses of the land and water still practised, and sacred sites and historically significant locations within the Upper Oldman River basin that were threatened or lost because of the dam's construction. Archaeologist Dr. Brian Reeves spoke to these historical trajectories in his discussion of the Oldman basin as "sacred geography":

> ...this geography consists, like that of other peoples of the world including the Abrahamic religions, of sacred mountains and hills, springs, lakes, rivers, places and spaces of spiritual power and renewal. These places are part of a larger sacred space, a sacred landscape, a sacred ecology, when you include the sacred plants and animals and the other then-human beings, the spirits...I hope my few examples...give you an idea of the nature of the Piikani (Peigan) sacred geography. It's more than a collection of sites and specific places...These are all integrated into within a traditional Nitsitappi (Blackfoot) holistic view of the world as it was, and indeed, as it is today. The Oldman River Valley on the Peigan Nation is a very significant area for collecting sacred plants, animals and carrying out traditional religious activities. The valley is clearly the focus for many core religious activities, the most important of which, in my opinion, because it is a tribal ceremony...is the Okan or Sundance. The Medicine Lodge can only be constructed of the sacred cottonwood tree. Indeed, the selection and construction of the lodge itself is an integral part and a very focal part of ongoing ceremonies. Only cottonwood punk can be used to light the fires for smudges and pipes during these and other ceremonies... [and] used for heating of the rocks which are used on sweat lodge ceremonial.[82]

Prairie or plains cottonwoods are a species of poplar native to the river valleys of southern Alberta's grasslands. Along with balsam poplars, the cottonwoods are the dominant and anchor species of riparian cottonwood ecosystems, habitats that have been characterised as among the most threatened ecosystems in arid and semiarid regions of the world, such as the grasslands of the Oldman basin.[83] Cottonwoods are dependent upon seasonal flooding in the spring and a high water table to create moist seedbeds to ensure germination and continued growth and hence, the concern of many Peigan and environmentalists about the construction of the dam affecting the decline of the cottonwoods in southern Alberta.

Reeves' points about the cottonwoods and importance of the Oldman River were echoed by many. Peigan elder, Nick Smith, told the Oldman River Dam assessment panel about the strong relationship his people had to the river. "Our people, our old people, lived in and camped in this valley and used this water for all purposes for their life....They used this land, the rivers. The birds, animals and the fish, all thrived off of that river. It was their life."[84] Likewise, immigrants of European heritage depended on immediate access to the rivers and creeks in the basin. Clarise Nicholls recounted how when she was younger her family and others always lived near the river so that the women could have easy access to the water to do laundry and other household chores.[85] The river bottoms provided respite from the harsh winds, and provided wood for construction of houses and barns. [86] Recall, as well, that one of the central concerns of the Canadian Northwest Territories Stock Association over the Dominion Government's policy to open up range lands for settlement by farmers was about

access to water.[87] Aside from domestic uses, the ranchers required an easily accessible source of water in order to feed their stock, but meanwhile it was these better-watered bottomlands that were of most interest to incoming farmers.

These uses of the land and waterscapes are not just historical events, spatial practices of the past. Consider for example the explanation provided by Devalon Small Legs of the Oldman River valley's importance in supplementing the diet today of many Peigan who receive welfare:

> On the Peigan Reserve, we have the large majority of the population is dependent on the Welfare cheque. To supplement that, to supplement the diet for the family, we go out and we hunt in many particular areas, different areas. According to a study that was done – I believe it was two years ago – by the health people, it was determined that as much as 40% of our diet is from the river bottom or from the wildlife that we do hunt. [88]

Also, some Peigan still collect plants for ceremonial and healing purposes. Perhaps though, a story told by Plains Hawk about his uncle travelling in a contemporary context across southern Alberta best helps to illuminate this fluidity of spatial registers across time:

> The Red Deer River is a, to me is an important marker. Because even travelling with my uncle and going north in a vehicle, we are going to Edmonton. And as we approach the Red Deer River he says, "Ahh, we are going to es-quwaa-way. We've got to be careful." - meaning we are going to Cree country. You know we've got to be careful on our journey. Well this is just something that he did, this is just something that carried on. And on the way home, he'd either sing a song all the way back into our home territory back in Blackfoot country, back in this territory that he knows as our territory. So as we crossed the river he'd do this little victory song, you know victory song for making it back.[89]

One way of reading Plains Hawk's uncle's actions is to see him as a highly spiritual Aboriginal who as he crosses the Red Deer River honours the territory of his ancestors and offers thanks to Napi, the creator, for a safe return home. A Foucauldian interpretation of this spiritual reading of land suggests that Plains Hawk's uncle's sense of place is a temporally-dependent conceptualisation or embodiment of place that emerged out of particular social relations between two warring peoples. Entering onto Cree territory, Plains Hawk's uncle felt a disciplined sense of personal risk and need for greater care. The spatial organisation and knowledge-power regime that Plains Hawk's uncle grew up in translated into an embodied reading of the land wherein the social order was such that the Cree claimed and had control north of the Red Deer River and the Blackfoot south. Hence, Plains Hawk's uncle felt unease crossing the river, crossing into Cree territory even though those spatial configurations were no longer relevant. Or were they?

European settlement in the Basin: gendered and historical spatial relations

Geographical scholars such as Doreen Massey,[90] David Harvey[91] and Allan Pred[92] ask us to consider that it is not that our social relations are temporal or spatial, rather it is that they are always both temporal and spatial. In chapter three I discussed how these human geographers have tried to show how simultaneously time and space are deeply implicated in social reproduction.[93] Space is not some absolute dimension, but constructed out of social relations, relations that are inherently dynamic.[94] These social relations of space are experienced differently and variously interpreted by different social actors, and in turn these individuals constitute space and history in divergent ways.

Travelling across the Great Plains in the late 1800s, many cowboys covered hundreds of kilometres with few restraints put on their movements. The signing of treaties with the Indians, the creation of reserves and the decimation of the bison opened up the country to settlement. The generous terms of the Dominion government's Lands Act, intended to encourage the influx of immigrants into the region, enticed many cowboys to consider settling in the area. The image projected of the Northwest Territories was that here was an empty frontier just awaiting their arrival.

Like many of the European explorers and missionaries that preceded them, the first ranchers in the Basin were almost exclusively young, white men. In 1891, men outnumbered women fully two to one.[95] Outside of the context of brothels,[96] single, white women were largely absent from the Basin for many years. Though by the time the NWMP arrived and ranches started to be established, women of European descent from Eastern Canada and Western Europe also arrived. Generally these women travelled in pairs or groups for it wasn't acceptable for 'decent' women to travel alone.[97] Aside from their roles as wives and mothers, most of the local history texts reveal little else about the lives of the women who immigrated to the Upper Oldman River basin in the late nineteenth century.

The absence of stories of these women can be read as an extension of patriarchal social norms that effectively fed ignorance if not denial of women's contributions and constrained their participation in public life. From a more spatial perspective, what we can discern from such accounts is that a woman's place was in the home. The consignment/confinement of women to the domestic sphere has in many cultures and times effectively limited women's mobility and through that, their choices in life. However, as a number of feminist geographers have pointed out,[98] while patriarchal discourses are grounded in physical and symbolic spaces, gender relations vary over space. So while some generalisations can be drawn about the plight of most women in Canada in the late 19th century, it is important to recognize the variations in the construction and reconstruction of gender across space and time. While typically private space is seen as a domestic haven of feminine grace and charm and public space an arena of aggressive masculine competition,[99] for some women this distinction of public and private space is neither of great importance nor applicable to their lives in such a simplified form. As Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, quoting from Henrietta

Moore, suggest, "gendered spaces should be understood less as a geography imposed by patriarchal structures, and more as a social process of symbolic encoding and decoding that produces 'a series of homologies between the spatial, symbolic and social order.'"[100]

While there can be little doubt of the presence of strong patriarchal norms and limitations on the mobility of women at the turn of the twentieth century, many women who came west to the Basin experienced a significantly different gendered experience than that which they had previously known. The parameters of authority and participation of women new to the West were expanded from those that their female relatives experienced in Eastern Canada or Western Europe. Circumstances, work and duty created a shared experience in which women were vigorous participants in the settling of the West. The lack of an established social structure and the uneven balance between work and the capable hands to perform it created conditions on the western frontier in which women found themselves doing work that typically was considered the male domain. Without a doubt the changes and opportunities for women were considerably less than those that opened up to their husbands. Nonetheless, as the story of Mary Inderwick (see page 75) illustrates, a few women broke through the social barriers to assume positions overseeing a ranch, working with cattle and some even took to drinking and smoking in public.

More often though, many women shared a commonality of purpose with their husbands. Most women shared with their husbands in the tasks required to build a home, to generate a family income and to build a prosperous agricultural operation, and their contributions to both the private and public spheres often were valued greatly. Their primary responsibilities of tending to matters inside the home as well as performing some of the ranch chores were contributions essential to whatever successes their husbands and families would enjoy. While some women "may have conformed to the image of the passive, suffering, female pioneer, the majority were too busy for such dramatisation. Cooking, cleaning, washing, caring for children, planting gardens – any number of activities took priority over brooding."[101] Further, while the distinction between the private and public sphere for many women and men was not so important, this doesn't mean that some women didn't take great pride and joy in their domestic and social roles, and in applying a 'feminine touch' to the spaces where they lived. Consider for example this incident recounted by Clarise Nicholls:

> I loved this old lady in Claresholme who told me she came out here married to a rancher. She had been raised in the noisest part of London and had been dumped out on the prairie east of Claresholme, no land marks and the poor thing even silence scared her, terrified. And no visitors. No ladies within 23 miles. She made it. Had a wonderful personality. But what a shock to be dumped there. Sometimes they had only one shelf to have in their rustic cabin that they could put a doily on and something precious that they saved from their youth. Maybe an ornamental little clock, or something. And that was the only civilised spot

in that rustic cabin. The nice doily, lace...a little link, a tiny link with what they gave up to come there.[102]

An account of the life of Bert Riggall,[103] a deceased local resident who immigrated from England to Canada in 1904, provides a glimpse into the partnerships that were often forged between husbands and wives in order to feed and clothe their families. Bert came to Canada from England and met Dora Williams at the Craighurst Farm owned by C. W. Peterson, the Minister of Agriculture for the North West Territories. Bert worked as a ranch hand and Dora as a cook. A year and a half after meeting they were wed, where upon they left their jobs with the Petersons and began a new life in the Upper Oldman River basin. In 1906 when they built their home, both Bert and Dora unloaded their wagon before every hill and then after carrying each plank of wood and the other items over the hill, they reloaded the wagon. Their team of horses had nearly starved to death the winter previous and thus was too weak to pull a full load over the steep hills of the foothills. When Bert later began his guiding and outfitting business, Dora assisted him by cooking for the hunters and other guests and maintaining the camps. For 47 years she accompanied Bert on guiding trips through the mountains and foothills of southern Alberta.

The life of Dora's daughter Doris Burton, while mirroring her own life in many respects, was more illustrative of some of the hardships women encountered. In her autobiographical book, *Babe's Sunshine: I Made My Own*,[104] Doris, or Babe Burton as she is known in the Upper Oldman River region, recounts her life as a young naïve wife, with her husband Eddie Burton. They married when she was 16 and he in his late twenties. In the first decade of their marriage, Eddie worked as a cowboy during the summer herding cattle for the North Fork Stockman's Association and in the winter he trapped. He was known and respected in the region for his great hunting skills, particularly his prowess at killing cougar, but was not so well known was the way he often treated Babe and the children with little compassion and sometimes even hostility and neglect. Eddie had a terrible temper and in her book Babe provides several accounts of him beating both their animals and children, and of the many days she was left alone at the ranch to care for the children and animals, sometimes very ill, uncertain about when he was returning.

Ed Burton was not a villain, nor do I want to suggest that he is representative of the men in the region, but neither was he alone in treating his family harshly.[105] Babe's story is not just a story about abuse but also about a woman who loved the country where she grew up following her father on his guiding and outfitting trips and later working with her husband to provide for their family and animals. It is a tale that reveals many of the challenges faced by women living in the Oldman region in the early 1900s. Like most women in the region, Babe accepted and to some degree supported many of the rigid female limitations which were strongly enforced both officially through the law as well as unofficially, though no less rigorously, through social sanctions such as ostracism and gossip. Although she loved being out on the range, Babe accepted

that as a wife and mother her place was in the home. On the other hand, while she and Eddie shared a life, home and family, she reveals through her story the very different experiences of "the opening up of the West" of many women and men. Babe's account of her life with Eddie provides one view of the isolation and drudgery many women experienced, as well as the lack of choices many women had in getting through difficult times. While the historical accounts of men frequently reveal a tone of excitement about the new challenges they faced in moving out West, for many women their letters home to family spoke of their concerns about maintaining their families through the transitions.[106]

It wasn't just one's choice of a husband that contributed to the divergent experiences of women in the Oldman River basin at the turn of the 20th century. Factors such as class and race also played a role in strongly influencing the conditions encountered and the responses of individual women to the surrounding new world. For example, the lives of Mary MacLeod, the wife of Colonel James MacLeod (after whom the Fort and later town were named) and "Auntie", a black women who worked for the MacLeod's caring for their home and children, offers a case in point. While both shared in many of the domestic chores, the lives they led were significantly different. Local accounts celebrate Mary as one of the few women to sign Treaty 7 and then host of a number of distinguished guests including the first Governor General, Marquis de Lorne. Upon her husband's retirement from ranching, Mary led a life of leisure, travelling and enjoying the company of friends in Calgary. In contrast, Auntie's opportunities were confined to assisting and waiting on Mary, her guests and family with little choice but to work until she was no longer able.[107] Auntie's life illustrates how race and class, not just gender, are implicated in one's mobility, and hence one's spatial existence.

Spatial boundaries provide form for any number of socially constructed categories (gender, sexuality, class, etc.). For example, with respect to gender, an exploration of social mapping directs us to consider spaces that are considered feminine and masculine and the activities that are allowed by men and women in various spaces (i.e., private and public), but also it points us to examine the ways in which the meaning of certain spaces and the material form of specific spaces reconstitute the meanings of what it means to be a man and woman and the power relations between the genders.[108] In terms of the discursive production of space, we understand that spaces are constituted through struggles over power/knowledge and as such we would consider material, symbolic and imaginary spatialities in tandem with the larger discursive gendered context from which they emerged. Hence, the same space can be understood to affect and be meaningful in very different ways for men and women, as well as between different women.

Contemporary stories told by women in the Oldman basin nonetheless contain threads that connect their lives to those of the women who lived there a century previous not only in terms of the existence of patriarchal norms but also in terms of the blurring of the distinction between private and public space. Concurrently there are some significant ways in which the lives of women I spoke

with in the Basin of today illustrate variable constructions and reconstructions of gender relations over time and space. Recall for example, Peggy Walsh's story about wanting a milk cow and asking her male neighbour for help in purchasing it and later milking it (see page 154). Contrast that story with following passage from an interview with Ruth Melindy:

> Ruth Melindy: My father's father's father's father came over from Ireland and then his sons moved out west and one of them, my great grandfather homesteaded here on this spot and had several children I guess. It happened to be that my grandfather was the only one that stayed and kept running the ranch and my dad took over from there...So I think they farmed just whatever they could. And they had such a small piece of land they had to farm, grow whatever they could wherever they could grow it. [He had] two boys and three girls and my grandpa was one of the boys... [The] three girls, two of them died fairly young...and another one who only died about ten years ago. She lived in Seattle and she was a real neat lady. She used to come up here and visit all the time...I don't know if she ever resented the fact that my grandfather took it over. And that's really interesting too, about that the women generally get screwed out of the inheritance....
>
> Lori Hanson: [So you're] the first [woman] to get the land?
>
> Ruth Melindy: Yeah, that's true. That's why I am keeping my name...
>
> Lori Hanson: Will your children have your name?
>
> Ruth Melindy: Probably hyphenated.[109]

As these excerpts reveal, it is not that either Melindy or Walsh have escaped the norms of gender formation. Gender remains a fundamental category that constitutes their social relations across time and space, as Lacan points out, a structural relation involving the insertion of subjects within an abstract network of pre-existing positions.[110] In Walsh's account there is evidence of the authority of the male voice in the public domain. In Melindy's excerpt, while her inheriting the land and keeping her name suggest a challenging of gender norms, at the same time in choosing to hyphenate her children's names she illustrates the maintenance of patriarchal traditions. However, the degree of financial and personal freedom Walsh and Melindy exhibit suggests that the social relations of gender they interpret and know are comparatively different from those experienced by Dora Riggall and Mary McLeod.

More vividly though, we can see the contrast between the social relations across time between the women who presently live in the Basin and those who did so at the turn of the twentieth century by comparing their 'senses' of place. In her

interview, Melindy talked extensively about what the land her family has ranched for four generations meant to her:

> I think I always kind of knew I would end up back here just because of my attachment to the ranch and to my family. I was always made aware that I was a fourth generation on this place and that was very important and significant. I think that sort of the big part that just brought me back here, I didn't feel like I really had much choice. That's where I was going to be. No matter what I did in the mean time, I could go away but I would always come back, sort of. So it was certainly wasn't employment or money, or anything like that. It was the attachment to the place, this particular place, this actual ranch. I don't have a real big attachment to Pincher Creek, Lundbreck, the town or anything, but just this piece of land this is where the attachment comes from. ...It's not so much ownership. I don't feel like this land has been owned by my family passed down and that it's very important for me to own it. But on the other hand I will never sell it either, and that's something my husband and I agree on. ...I am the only one left in my family and I am going to end up with the whole thing. And there's just no way I'll ever sell it, I'll never let it go because it does belong to me but not in the financial sense at all. I don't know...I feel that it's mine in the sense that sounds really greedy I guess, but it's hard to describe. I can't imagine not being here. I can't imagine this place...anybody else living here or even the land that isn't ours. It's still a part of this area and part of what I am attached to and I can't imagine anybody else ever moving into it because there's such a history here, and if there was anybody else here they wouldn't know that history, it would be totally lost.[111]

Melindy's connection to the land centres on her family's history, their historical use of the land and the history of the larger region her family's ranch is contained within. She speaks of her father's father's father's father coming over from Ireland, of her family planting trees on the banks of the creek that flows by the homestead and of the lines made by a plough that have grown over but are still visible on the steep hillsides of their property. To Melindy, the land is an extension of a familial bond and a source of identity, a sense of identity centred on her family. Yet this is a bond and a sense of place almost certainly not shared by her great, great grandmother or women like Dora Riggall and Mary McLeod. When many White women arrived in the Basin at the turn of the century they saw themselves as pioneers encountering a frontier in need of taming. While I cannot be certain that there were not some women who recognised that their settling in the Basin meant the relocation and near genocide of another culture, the frequency with which both men and women today and in the past spoke of the arrival of the NWMP and White ranchers as the origins of the community implies that most saw the Basin as empty prior to European immigration. To them there was no history in this place to draw on, for to recognise this place as having a history would have meant assuming a subjectivity very different from that of a

pioneer. Identifying themselves as invading and destroying another culture would arise from a discourse of shame, rather than the pride that currently accentuates most contemporary narratives of the origin story of this place.

Yet, again we can see trajectories of history spanning the century in considering that both Melindy and her great, great grandmother defined this land primarily according to its productivity. Unlike the newest pilgrims to the Basin, to Melindy and her ancestors the land is the means by which they sustain themselves. Considering these connections between the women reminds us, as Massey points out, that "the presentness of the horizontality of space is in fact a product of a multitude of histories whose resonances are still there, if we would but see them..."[112] The visible landscape may hide past uses and meanings, but those marks can still be seen in some existing practices and other more hidden forms, such as archaeological materials.

Similarly, returning to Plains Hawk's uncle's disciplined 'reading of the land' we can see the momentary coexistence of different histories - Plains Hawk's, his uncle's and the history of the landscape – the simultaneous constitution of not just the two men but space and time as well. Comparing these spatial configurations reveals the mobility and contingency of place and time. For example, one can contrast Plains Hawk's uncle's heightened alertness of territory, a product of social relations of centuries previous, against the contemporary, secular commodification and individualised notion of land as property that informs most contemporary Oldman residents' reading of the landscape.

While we often interpret and represent landscapes and space as if they are continuous, as if they are a given discrete surface upon which history plays out, we can well see in the two previous examples the simultaneity of different understandings and experiences of space-time. Very clearly in the tales of the women and the careful journeying of Plains Hawk's uncle we see the continued presence of the past in the spatial surface of today, just as we see the spatial implicated in the production of history. In variable spatial and temporal contexts, different social groups have greater access to particular spaces, greater mobility through spaces and are able to transform space more readily than others, and in each case there is a trace of history, however hidden or obvious, imprinted on these spatial configurations.

Further, through the brief accounts of the lives of Plains Hawk's uncle, Mary Inderwick, Dora Riggall, Doris Burton, Mary Macleod and Auntie we can see that social relations like class, race and gender are affected spatially and temporally, although not evenly. As Massey notes, "[a]ll observers (participants in social life) move relative to one another ...each therefore 'slicing the space-time continuum at different angles.'"[113] All social relations constitute space, and in turn spatial configurations encapsulate the interlacing of heterogeneous, multiple constellations of social trajectories. Inscribed onto the landscape are the imprints of pleasures, politics and cultural differences from across the ages.

Maps as cultural texts

Perhaps the most vivid of these cultural and political tracings are those read from any map. Mapping is a distinctive form of spatial representation emphasising visual interpretation of space. The traditional view of cartography is that it is a practice that when done properly creates products that are a 'mirror of nature.'[114] The assumptions underlying cartography are that the objects of the world can be known and understood through systematic observation and measurement, and objectively expressed in mathematical and linear terms. Under this view, maps are objective tools for transmitting information about the world. The increasingly sophisticated technologies of GIS and digital cartography, and ever more radical developments in virtual reality, allow the cartographer to create increasingly accurate and detailed duplications of external reality.

From a social constructionist perspective though, maps are seen as cultural texts and cartography a theoretical and practical body of knowledge and system of signs that map makers employ in order to produce a distinctive visual representation. Seeing maps as social products implies that they function as a form of writing embedded within the larger discursive contexts of social action and power.[115] Cartography produces and reproduces the values, beliefs and technologies of the age in which it is situated and encodes particular knowledges in its images. Far from being transparent openings into reality, maps are particular ways of looking at the world.[116] They are important visual tools used to persuade others and to influence the course of social history. Consider for example, Figures 2 (page 79), 4 (page 89) and 6 (page 112) included in chapter four. Each of these maps tells a very different story about the Basin. Figure 2 reveals a grid system of organising the landscape, where things are ordered symmetrically within politically determined boundaries. In contrast Figure 4 illustrates lived experience of the landscape in its indications of the days it takes to travel between significant sites. Still another view of the Basin is offered in Figure 6, in which we are provided an understanding of the established ecological zones in the region based on soil composition and dominant flora. In each case, the viewer is directed to understand the region in quite distinct ways.

To read maps as texts in the manner I have, highlights their social construction and the potential for multiple interpretations by both producers and consumers.[117] Exploring the spatial imagery of mapping destabilises the naturalness and innocence of these representations. Treating maps as texts is a form of deconstruction aimed at uncovering the rules governing their production. However, J.B. Harley warns that cartographic discourse operates a double silence that hinders disclosing this aspect of 'map knowledge'. The first form of obfuscation concerns the 'rule of ethnocentricity' in map construction, which encourages societies to place their own territory at the centre of the diagram. While not universal, (exceptions including the maps of pre-Columbian North American Indians and ancient Babylonia) it is likely that such centricity helped to codify, legitimate and promote the Eurocentric world view so prevalent in much of modern history.[118] Secondly, we tend not to notice the social construction of maps because the rules of the dominant social order from which they are

constituted insert themselves into all the stuff of which maps are made - the small spaces of maps such as the codes and spaces of cartographic transcription. The thickness of lines, size of symbols, height of lettering, hatching and shading within maps produce distinctions that discriminate class, preference and domination. For example, common provincial highway maps emphasise road networks but at the same time they delineate particular points of interest and produce a hierarchy of places. Further, the visual domination of the highways connecting significant population centres produces a text that implies that the roads are really what the province is all about. In this sense, one might read these maps as supporting the North American idolatry of the automobile and thereby supporting corporate interests associated with this mode of transportation. Thus, as Harley argues, "[w]e begin to see how maps, like art, become a mechanism 'for defining social relationships, sustaining social rules, strengthening social values."[119] Maps are as much texts of the social structures of a particular state as they are of its topography.

It is in this context that claims by Western historians like Patricia Nelson Limerick about the emotional centre of Western history being about real estate begin to ring true. According to Limerick, "Western history is a story structured by the drawing of lines and the marking of borders...[It] was an effort first to draw lines dividing the West into manageable units of property and then to persuade people to treat these lines with respect."[120] While Limerick is speaking about the history of Western America, much of her argument holds true for Western Canada, especially south-western Alberta. The conquest of the Canadian West was an act of colonialism in which maps acted as the graphic tools for colonising places perceived as empty and uninscribed.

Up until the creation of the reserves, Potyondi speaks of the region looking like the contents of a jigsaw puzzle spilled from its box. "[T]he Oldman River valley was without form, its pieces jumbled, its edges blurred, its pattern indistinct."[121] The division of the region into a symmetrical grid pattern was fundamental to the colonial order of things and to the production of respectable citizens for the burgeoning Dominion.[122] With the help of the NWMP, the Dominion government sent out its survey crews to try and bring order to the country.

The colonial organization of the Oldman landscape began in many ways in 1846 with the adoption by the American and British governments of the 49th parallel as the boundary between their territories north of the Lake of the Woods. This transformation of the Oldman basin from an 'untamed wilderness' into property was a process that effectively excluded the Peigan from the landscape. This wasn't just a process of physical displacement though. As Derek Gregory explains in tracing the genealogy of the discourse of geography, the scientific appropriation of the non-European world involved a process of constructing a figure of non-reason that was essential in the constitution of the European sovereign subject as one of reason and normality.[123] The self-image of late eighteenth century science was largely one of innocence. The geologists, naturalists and explorers were involved in a mapping project of anti-conquest,

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pursued all in the name of knowledge. Yet, their recording of the natural features of the land promised intellectual possession of the world, and thereby allowed for conquest of the people without physical dispossession. The grids "effectively prised non-European people away from the land which they inhabited, and once they had been textually removed from the landscape, it was presumably easier to do so physically as well."[124] Hence, the ease by which the Peigan's territory was divided in half to accommodate a national border, a border that effectively tore people away from their families, and their roots.

Thus, we can see that mapping is pre-eminently a language of power. Behind most cartographers there is a patron commissioning the drawing of lines in order to fulfil political, economic and social ends. In modern Western society, maps are crucial to the maintenance of state power not just through the establishment of boundaries, but also in terms of commerce, internal administration, controlling of populations and military strength. But in each case too, maps are associated with what Foucault calls 'juridical power'. The map becomes a juridical territory by facilitating surveillance and control.[125] The rhetorical strategies of mapping include the re-inscription, enclosure and hierarchisation of space which provide an analogue for the acquisition, management and reinforcement of power.[126] As well, maps have an internal power in that they become forces for change or stasis. Because of the appeal to common sense or its scientific status, these forms of representation are in themselves a form of power rather than simply a reflection of power relations in the world beyond their lines. One only has to consider the creation of Nunavut to see how profoundly maps manufacture power, a power that was likewise exercised through establishment of both the American and Canadian border and the municipality of Pincher Creek. Similarly, this is one of the reasons that the Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) produced their own map of Alberta in order that they too can highlight certain features, features that for them are in need of more recognition and protection. Through a redrawing of the lines on the frame of the province they hoped to sway people's opinions about the threats of industrialisation to the limited wilderness areas that remain.

The events that constitute the history of the municipality of Pincher Creek represent not a simple process of territorial expansion but rather an array of efforts directed at promoting and gaining support for the concept of property, map construction key amongst them. Broadly, this spatial organization of the landscape had two stages: the initial drawing of lines and the subsequent giving of meaning and power to those lines. As I said the creation of the border initiated this process, but it was further advanced with the creation of reserves and more so when the Geological Survey of Canada traversed the grasslands, foothills and mountains of the Basin to find and assess economic mineral deposits.[127] Later with the arrival of farmers to the region, the landscape was divided into quarter sections that were discernible by fence lines or roads and dotted by houses, barns and granaries. The unrelenting symmetry of the grid used to divide the land, the network of roads and the placement of buildings during that time is the dominant pattern of today.

While the current spatial order seems 'logical' to many of the current residents in the region, as Peigan members like Plains Hawk point out this was not the spatial logic underlying his ancestor's conceptualisation of the Basin.

> ...at the time of the signing of the treaty, there was, I would say there was mass confusion. There was confusion on our part. We didn't know what English was and the people, the Europeans that came didn't know what Blackfoot language was...And when you really look at what happened in this territory, what was being, what was brought out and what was suggested were two different things....Never mind English and Blackfoot now we are talking about realty. They had all these realty terms that they were using and my people were still talking territory, ownership to certain boundaries, certain identifiable boundaries within a territory. [128]

Likewise the symmetry that distinguishes prairie landscapes is not a logic predominant in all parts of contemporary Canada. In A Place to Belong[129], Ronald Pocius reveals how in the rural outport of Calvert, Newfoundland there are no clear endings or beginnings to individual property, just meadows, gardens, lawns, paths, cattle here, sheep there, sometimes penned in and other times roaming the lanes. Horses graze on the roads while cows are often found near the houses and it is not uncommon to find stables situated in front of the houses. "To those unfamiliar with the place, the landscape seems confused; the order of experience often looks like chaos to an outsider."[130] As Pocius illustrates, what is one person's chaos is another person's sense of order.

What Pocius does not mention is that in many Newfoundland outport communities like Calvert, much of the undeveloped land is considered not to be owned by anyone, including the provincial or municipal governments. Therefore, if someone wants to build a new house, she does not have to purchase the land, she simply locates a site that has not yet been built upon and begins construction. In some ways then the sense of property so firmly entrenched in many contemporary communities like the Upper Oldman River basin does not apply in many communities in Newfoundland. Rather, their sense of space, order and proprietary rights is more akin to notions of territory held by many of Plains Hawks' Peigan ancestors.

Landscape and place

As social values, beliefs and technologies have changed we can see corresponding transformations in these spatial forms. The stories in chapter four speak to some of these changing spatial configurations, not just historically but also in a contemporary context. As the following residents reveal, the Oldman basin's landscape is being continuously reconfigured:

> Barry Watson: ...coal mining and lumbering. Both of those industries did have their start in the...late 1880s and 1890s but most of them were mostly for domestic use markets like within the community itself. People would find a seam of coal nearby and harvest it for their own heating purposes and lumber for their own purposes...[and] they were exporting it

out beyond the immediate vicinity. And the same applied to the lumber industry as well. There was a number of logging companies that were set up in the mountains...they'd quite often work a system of floating the logs down the creeks and the rivers to a saw mill. There was a saw mill business that was out in Cowley and there was a lot of the logs were sent down to Fort Macleod and Lethbridge to saw mills themselves. So those sort of expanded. They were never the main industries in town. The first logging operation in the Pincher Creek area actually started in 1879 which was out at Mount Mill which is just west of town near Beaver Mines, and that was a make-work project for the Native peoples...Also important economically during this time period, there was the arrival of the local branch of the CPR into southwestern Alberta. And that was the CPR line that was built between Lethbridge and Nelson B.C. the one that goes past Pincher Station out through the Crowsnest Pass. And that was built in 1897-98. Now the impact of that was that it meant that the Pincher Creek and south-western Alberta was a lot more contact with the outside world which meant that it made it much easier for new settlers to come in and it made it much easier for us to export things from our local economy to outside markets. And that was a major factor in getting new people to move into the area.[131]

Ed Connors: The oil companies just moved in and they didn't ask any questions about what they could do and what they couldn't do and messed it up, and tore the confounded country apart and...Seismic operations... I phoned old Peter Keillor who owned the land and I said, "Peter, you got a visitor this morning on your land. There's a D-8 Cat just comin' through the bush in your cow pasture between you and I." ...[And] they ran across my place over on the far side of the ranch.[132]

Paul Torrington: You see a lot more cabins/cottages like around Beaver Mines. You know it used to be just a few poor ranchers and farmers out there and now there's very expensive log homes out there...But you know the wind mills along Cowley Ridge and the dam. It's all somewhat different. You're starting to get more cottage industry on Highway 6 toward Waterton...Twenty years ago it was farmers, ranchers, loggers, Shell people...Even when you go out on the Porcupine Hills north of Cowley, you notice a lot more houses and stuff out there. Things have been subdivided and you know you talk to some of the people that I grew up with and you also deal business with them there and this is a doctor from Calgary... [who spent] a $100,000 on a house that they use three times a year so...if you go up to Willow Valley and up there that's all ranchers. There's very few cottages up there if I know any. [But] I was talking to one of the ranchers up there and he said there's more and more traffic along that road all the time.[133]

Wayne Hailey: ...in some areas you can, like the Burmis/Lundbreck Corridor they seem to be allowing anything, any kind of subdivision there. It's going to be a mess when they are finished there. It's horrible, because it's one of the main barricades to wildlife dispersing up and down the mountains. And they just about destroyed any wildlife corridors through there now. The same thing, Beaver Mines is the other area that they picked.[134]

Dianne Pachal: ...people in Pincher Creek have suffered a lot through the years, you know, what they've had to give up supposedly for economic development is the wild lands they cherish[135]

With further expansion of industrial and recreational development in the area, overall there has been a significant increase in the network of roads through the foothills and forests of the Upper Oldman River region. These roads along with seismic lines have been invitations to increased recreational activity, natural gas exploration, logging and industrial development. To many environmentalists this development translates into decreased habitat for most animals, a loss of indigenous species and increased pressure on the few remaining wild places.

Recall that place and landscape are often treated as if they are a complementary pair and positioned in contrast to what also is seen as a natural pairing, space and location. Consideration of landscape, like place, opens up for discussion the creative and subjective aspects of our environmental relationships. Yet, as Barnes and Gregory point out, if landscape and place seem a natural pairing to people, it is only because we have been socialised to view them that way. There is nothing natural about these pairings and indeed, a historical analysis of the meaning and function of the terms reveals that they differ quite considerably. Place is typically perceived as bounded and circumscribed whereas landscape connotes openness and expansiveness constituted by forms and features that stretch out as far as the eye can see. The key here, as Gillian Rose and Denis Cosgrove point out, is the emphasis on the visual. The very existence of a landscape requires a person doing the viewing.

In their discussion of the Oldman basin as a place rather than as a community, most of the residents emphasise the visual. Be it the putting in of fences, removal of trees, or the increasing number of cottages and huge homes on ranch land, in the details they offer about the landscape and the transformations it has undergone, the focus is on what they see. In their submissions to the EIA panel or discussion of specific habitats, environmentalists frequently speak of ecological processes. However, when they began to speak about what these places meant to them, the visual becomes more prominent. Consider the following three excerpts:

Selena Cartwright: It was a place I came back through numerous times throughout the year to explore, to become familiar with the landscape, and the images so that in some ways I began to feel like a sense of coming,

when you go home to some place that is familiar. I began to feel like that was familiar as opposed to a place where you just sort of travel through or visit for a short period of time...I think that for me to feel at home in a place...for a longer term gives me a certain familiarity. Not that it's an easy place to be or necessarily totally safe, but that there are a few things that are known about it. Where the paths are, where the rocks are, where the water flows, how high the grass is, where the bugs are, you get to know a little bit more about as you're in a place...and then comes knowing where some of the risks are, where are some of the places that may be a little bit dangerous or where I could get bitten by bugs or where the land is low and swampy and wet, so I would avoid those places. Or where the big rocks were that I could stand on and get a higher view of the landscape so that I could know what was ahead. I know that I have to go to the top of this hill and see over here. So it's sorta knowing the lay of the land in a certain way, so that I could always know, maybe I would get lost, but I wouldn't be afraid that I was lost so much.[136]

Robert Stacks: ...it (the Whaleback) was a pretty significant landscape in that way. It spoke to me in some way that some other landscapes maybe don't. Like the mountains don't have the same appeal in that way. Like I'm not drawn to them in the same way. It's aesthetically beautiful. It's - that may even play a bigger role than the biological business, the diversity. Although it's hard to separate those two. I mean this last week when I was up there with Chris and I, the flowers, I'd never seen so many flowers in bloom at one time. Little different niches of them here and there. And so it enhanced or reaffirmed my feeling in that way for the Whaleback.[137]

Lori Hanson: You talked about being struck home by what you saw. I wondering if you can tell me what that means?

Rex Gibson: Well, when I saw the hill where the rig was, and I saw how it was, you know, we were about a mile and half, two miles away and the valley we were in was relatively, what we saw, was relatively natural - pretty wild. And I was, that vista...Because it was really sunny bit there was slushie snow about this deep at most. And really bright as well, so the mountains lit up and the green trees stood out. And I could understand the natural beauty. All the aesthetic factors, aesthetics, that motivated people like Dianne Pachal and Mike Judd to do what they did in regards to Shell's road and the bull dozers and stuff...And then the second image was driving upstream...well I guess we were looking at the south end of the Porcupine Hills and a couple times we were just, you had to stop and look around because everything was really golden and there was the Oldman Valley right. And the pines in clumps on the bluffs. It's the landscape they used for, or that kind of landscape they used for "Unforgiven" to portray the open west, the frontier, blah, blah, blah. And the contrast between

those vistas and really finally seeing it right, seeing the stuff that was written about, and then seeing how small the river was, but again how rich the valley was, the immediate riparian habitat, the bird life...[138]

What place and landscape do share (as do space and location), is their roles as techniques of ordering the world. As one of the central elements in a cultural system, landscape and place act as signifiers through which social systems are communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored.[139] As Foucault illustrates in *The Order of Things*,[140]the rules of formation, the regularities, and modes of organisation that lay beneath particular formations of thought, are fundamental to the constitution of the knowledge and discourse about the subject which is its focus. In his scrutiny of the origins of the term landscape and its evolution, Cosgrove details how over much of its history, landscape as a concept and construct of space has been closely bound up with practical appropriation of space. Conceiving of the natural world as landscape provided visual and ideological support for the control and domination of space as an absolute, objective entity. And as in cartography, it was in the application of Euclidean geometry that a sense of certainty was guaranteed about this spatial conception, organisation and representation.

Hence, according to Cosgrove, landscape is a "way of seeing, a composition and structuring of the world so that it may be appropriated by a detached, individual spectator to whom an illusion of order and control is offered through the compositions of space according to the certainties of geometry."[141] Landscapes distance us from the natural world in significant ways by defining our relationship to nature, what constitutes nature and offering us the illusion that we can subjectively access the reality of nature by entering the picture frame along the perspectival axis. Yet, as Cosgrove warns, this is an aesthetic entrance not an active engagement with nature.

Suppressed from most views of landscapes are the inherent tensions and contradictions between social groups that use that landscape. Missing is some sense of the power relations within which the defining of the landscape is embedded. Each major transformation of the land - from the invasion and division of Peigan territory, to the open-range of the early ranchers, to the checkerboard of wire-fenced rectangular patches of ploughed fields, to the seismic swaths, to the further subdivision of land into acreage plots – has translated into the disciplining of the landscape and its inhabitants, and as such the subsequent spatial configuration is normalised. The map and landscape boundaries standardise spatial images: abstraction, uniformity, repeatability and visuality together shaping mental structures and imparting a sense of place in the world, a sense of place seldom questioned. Landscape is a way of seeing, a 'visual ideology' that supports a particular relationship between the viewer and the land, a relationship bound by social constructs like class, gender and sexuality.

From a humanistic perspective, the key in understanding place is in discovering the essence or underlying structure that connects these perceptions into a coherent pattern or order. However, from a poststructural perspective, this

order is just as interesting, not because it indicates 'the truth' about the world, but rather because of what it indicates about the relationship between power and knowledge. In a discussion of place, patterns and order read as the mapping of space, highlighting features considered significant, inscribing coherence and difference, drawing boundaries and connections, and orienting the people to a linear interpretation of the spatial. As new cultural geographers discuss, from a geographical perspective many consider such activities the tools of the trade, these are the dominant ways we understand spaces like rural landscapes, but these are not impartial activities, nor are they the only way to read spaces, landscapes and communities.

C: The Geo - Spatiality of a Rural Place

> **PLACE (n):** ...A material space...extension in two (or three) directions; 'room'... to offer place, to make way, give way...A particular part of space, of defined or undefined extent... Short for 'place of battle', 'field'...to leave or win place: to lose or gain ground, to retreat or advance. Position or situation with reference to its occupation or occupant...a general designation for a city, town, village, hamlet, etc....a residence, dwelling, house; a seat, mansion, palace; formerly sometimes, a religious house, a convent ...The space which one person occupies by usage, allotment, or right...(OED)

Globalisation – economics spread out

As I discussed in chapter three, increasingly social scientists who write about rural issues are quick to indicate to their readership that in spite of the focus of their analysis, they recognise that rural and rurality are highly contested terms. Paul Cloke and Nigel Thrift attribute this variable framing of the rural as a result of three significant trends.[142] First, a number of academics have located rural studies within a broader social science context and in so doing, prompted debate over the plurality of meanings given to the term. Second, recently there has been a flood of publications – television shows, essays, local histories – celebrating and canonising the rural. It seems the countryside is in vogue these days. Third, rural areas have undergone rapid change in the past several decades. Like much of the rest of the world, these spaces have been subject to quantitatively and qualitatively distinct social processes many associate with the pervasive forces of globalisation.

Hyperboles abound about globalisation suggesting that we are in the midst of an unprecedented social reconfiguration. As Bauman asserts, globalisation seems to be on everyone's lips lately,[143] but too often articulated in terms so vague that what exactly people are alluding to remains unclear. According to Mike Featherstone, the term globalisation refers to:

> a sense of global compression in which the world is increasingly regarded

> Europe and the US are getting to the point that when it comes to a little country like Canada, [there] just [are] not viable options. But anyway, I would suggest that for raising cattle it is more successful to have more where its feedlot style cattle, just because you can out last waning years, in other words bad years, you can simply suffer through those simply because your margin is that much larger.[148]

As well, with the increasing internationalisation of industrial processes and the flow of financial capital, agriculture, like many other industries, has become increasingly vulnerable to decisions made in distant locations. Those in finance capital have gained the ability to by-pass many of the national strictures to which other industries are subject.[149] This has allowed for a form of integration that has blurred any previous distinction between agriculture and industry. The result has been an 'agrifood sector'- an intermediary between food producers and food consumers which links various elements of rural production, manufacturing and service industries. Friedmann provides a more detailed view of what this agri-food sector encompasses:

> Agrifood industries have grown up around two elements in the post-war diet of advanced capitalism: (1) manufactured foods - composed of several agricultural (and/or chemical) raw materials, notably sugar and oils; and (2) livestock production, especially intensively produced poultry and cattle.[150]

Five large feedlots in the area offer the outsider a visible sign of the emergence of the agri-food industry in the Oldman basin. According to Alan Timms, selling to feedlots is but one of the many ways ranchers altered their operations over the past few decades in order to maintain a competitive edge. "...[A]s a result [of using feedlots], the actual cost to feed a single animal becomes impressionably less. In other words, you retain more in your pocket as a result of having to feed these cattle less and sell more feed."[151]

In spite of the ingenuity, adaptability and resourcefulness of many ranchers and farmers, the Upper Oldman River basin mirrors the decline in trade in agriculture seen across Canada as well as other industrialised nations, but more specifically it mirrors the changes seen in other resource dependent communities across the Rocky Mountain West. In his presentation on behalf of the Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) to the Oldman River Dam EIA panel, Dr. Tom Power spoke about the importance of agriculture as a primary industry to Alberta's economic past and future. However, as he characterised it, "it is not the case that agriculture will be the driving force behind future economic development, and that's the crucial point that I want to make."[152]

In reviewing the changes in Alberta's economy over the 1980s, Power found that the contribution of primary industries such as mining, forestry and agriculture had declined significantly over that decade. Yet, in spite of hard economic times, there was not a concurrent decline in the provincial economy, rather "the overall economy of Alberta had expanded modestly during this

period."[153] Power attributes the increase to the expansion of services-producing industries. As he explains, Alberta's economy was undergoing a transformation from an almost exclusive reliance upon a few export-oriented industries and the importation of products to the provision of goods and services to meet its own local needs. Faced by stiff international competition and limited markets, agriculture has and will continue to represent a destablising and downward force on the economy and the development of a far more diverse set of industries.

Power's conclusions are echoed by research conducted by Ray Rasker and Ben Alexander on the Yukon to Yellowstone (Y2Y) corridor (which includes the Upper Oldman River basin) demonstrating that the fastest growing employment category in Alberta's eastern slopes, is service-related occupations (see Figure 7, page 121). From 1986 to 1991 over 99% of new jobs were in industries not related to resource extraction or agriculture,[154] indicating that while resource industries like agriculture are contributing little to employment growth, the rest of the economy is growing and diversifying. More than 33,000 jobs were created in service industries like business, education, and health, and the accommodation and food and beverage services, and an additional 12,000 jobs developed in wholesale and retail trade.[155] As well, a significant portion of personal income of residents in the communities of the Eastern Slopes derives from non-labour sources, up to 19% in 1991 from 17% in 1986.[156] The development of public and private retirement programs has provided a significant part of the population with footloose income that allows these people to live in the location of their choice.[157]

Statistics Canada data demonstrates that the trend across the Eastern Slopes of a steady decrease in the economic role of agriculture is also occurring within the Upper Oldman River basin. According to 1986 census data, in the Upper Oldman River basin, of those 15 years of age or older 33% were employed in agriculture or other resource-based industries, 34% in construction and manufacturing and 33% in service industries.[158] In 1996 the number of people who worked in agriculture or primary industries had dropped to 29% and in manufacturing and construction to 12%, whereas those employed in the tertiary sector rose to 59%.[159] While more people in the area are employed in agriculture than any other single occupation, over the past several decades the contribution of agriculture to the economy of the region has been slowly, but steadily shrinking. Today agriculture constitutes only one fifth of the economic base of the community.

So does this mean that the future of rural communities like the Upper Oldman River basin will be reliant on tourism to remain economically viable? Rasker and Alexander answer this question by discussing the confusion that the growth in the services sector has caused. When many people conceptualise a service-based economy they think of people employed in food, beverage and hotel industries. However, labour force categories combine a strange mix of industries under services including chambermaids, health care workers, computer programmers, teachers, entertainers and architects.[160] Services are a conglomeration of low-paying and high-paying jobs and include both the provision and manufacture of goods. The globalisation of production often means

goods are no longer produced in one location. Instead the assembly line is spatially scattered with the accountant living in one place, the small components produced in another, and the engineering subcontracted from another location. Advances in telecommunications have transformed the lived spaces of some by creating new jobs such as desktop publishing and computer aided design that provide opportunities for people to live in the location of their choice while maintaining their careers.

The contribution of agriculture to the future Upper Oldman basin economy and the impact of irrigation on this contribution, became a central point of debate within the Oldman River Dam hearings. John Weing, a farmer from Magrath, articulated some of his disbelief about this matter in questioning Power's conclusions:

> I'm a farmer and I've been a farmer all my life, and I think I know a little bit about farming....And I'm not an economist, but there certainly are come statements that Mr. Power has made that have to be questioned. He doesn't seem to comprehend the [impact of the] livestock or the cattle industry [on the viability of communities]...I think if he would take a real hard look at what's happened in the last 10 years to all of the towns on dryland in southern Alberta, throughout all of Saskatchewan nearly, where there is irrigation, he would see a totally different picture...I was in the Town of Picture Butte only a few days ago and was talking with a couple of businessmen who said they never had it so good. Towns like Taber and Coaldale and all those towns are similar, where others are literally dying. We know what [good] irrigation does to those communities.[161]

In response Power repeated that he too thought "agriculture was important and will remain important" but "[i]t will not, however, be the source of growth in the Alberta economy any more than it was in the 1980s, yet Alberta will have substantial growth."[162] Weing and many other residents at the hearings remained unconvinced that the future economy for most southern Alberta communities would not be dominated by agriculture.

The transformation of rural areas

According to Rasker and Alexander, the failure to acknowledge the diversified nature of the new economy in the West is not an uncommon response, rather in many ways it is to be expected. There are two reasons for this that they highlight. First, the dominance of economic base theory as an explanation of development stipulates that in order for an economy to grow it must export commodities to bring in new dollars. In rural communities, those activities thought to contribute to the economy in this way are termed basic and include industries such as mining and agriculture. Service-related activities are considered non-basic and seen to only circulate the money already in the community. So although service industries may be a growing component of the economy, because they are not basic they are not perceived to be export-oriented and bring in new wealth. Yet, as Rasker and Alexander point out, "[t]he products

of a research firm, a law office, a scientific and educational institution, a mail-order catalogue store, or advice given by a financial analyst over the phone to an overseas client may be more difficult to recognize as exports, but they can and do bring outside dollars into the local economy and, therefore, are by definition, "basic".[163]

The second problem is that the terminology currently used to describe regional and national economies is inadequate. It is a discursive construction that ides and even erases from view the production and exporting of goods by 'non-basic' activities directing the focus instead to activities which are no longer dominant in many Rocky Mountain communities. For example, Statistics Canada categorises economic activities into primary, secondary and tertiary industries. Primary industries include mining, oil and gas, agriculture and timber which are seen as basic economic activities and therefore wealth-producing. The secondary and tertiary industries such as finance, real estate and computer software development are non-basic and pulled along by the primary sector and so the health of an economy depends primarily on the health of sectors like oil and gas and agriculture. As Hailey points out, this is certainly the kind of thinking of many within the Basin:

> ...the Chamber of Commerce, Council, Municipal Council and some others that promoted the drilling of that well in the Whaleback, they saw it as possibly finding gas that would be shipped to the Shell plant, keep the plant going longer. You see we're kinda a one industry town in Pincher Creek, there's a lot of fear that the industry is, when that industry is gone that that's it for Pincher Creek. Pincher Creek is going to die which is nonsense because so many people want to live in this area, they are the important part of the community and the economy, but that's not appreciated and realized. The Chamber of Commerce and the others supported these developments and you know there was no sympathy for the protection of the view or anything like that.[164]

While Michael Troughton does not directly address globalisation, in many ways his discussion of the transformation of rural communities suggests a systematic break between traditional rural communities and their contemporary manifestations brought about through the international restructuring of capitalist economies.[165] As critics of globalisation point out though, the perpetual quest to maximise accumulation has existed for many centuries, acting as the impetus behind geographical expansion in search of new markets, raw resources and cheap labour.[166] As well, while there is little doubt that there are current processes and developments that increasingly bind the histories of nation states and regions together and divorce our experiences and perceptions from the physical locations in which we live, the reaction and adaptation to and the effect on localised communities is not homogenous.

While Troughton's model suffers from a totalising impulse that idealises traditional rural communities, at the same time his discussions of rural restructuring highlight the fragmentation of certain sectors of society brought

about by globalisation. As well, his model is useful for inserting into a discussion of globalisation an overtly spatialised conceptualisation of the contemporary plight of many rural Canadian communities. In the diversification and decline of Canada's rural regions we are provided a view of competing spatialities within a global context out of which arise attendant tensions and new alliances. With respect to the Upper Oldman River basin, a modified version of Troughton's model is helpful in understanding the effect of globalisation in not just creating abstract, commodified space, but in trying to understand its effects on the concrete spaces Lefebvre speaks of, the lived spaces of everyday life (see pages 56 and 162).

Recall that the Prairies for Troughton are largely characterised as rural agricultural hinterlands with lower population densities, the restructuring of grain production and handling, and a reduction in the provision of services. Consequently, such agricultural communities face problems of a narrow range of employment, especially in the non-farm sector and for women, as well as a stagnant and/or ageing population. In the Municipality of Pincher Creek there is a sense that it has become an agriculture hinterland with the young adults leaving and not returning largely because of the lack of jobs and the narrow range of employment opportunities outside of the agricultural sector. Consider Watson's reading of the situation:

> Oh, the community has changed because it's much more of a retirement community than it was back in the 60s. The population has aged in Pincher Creek quite a bit. It's perceived to be a retirement community now...it's a much of an older community now in terms of its population....[Because t]here's nothing here unless you have a connection to the agricultural industry and have been a farmer/rancher in your family for five generations and that's the type of work you do, or you are fortunate enough to get on with the gas industry, or with some of the small industries like with logging or the business sector in town, there's not a lot of work for you in this community.[167]

The loss of the grain elevator at Pincher Station also suggests that the Basin is a rural-agricultural hinterland. Furthermore, when you talk to people in the community, they often speak of their fears of the community dying. As the following comments reveal, some residents feel that their community is in the midst or on the edge of economic decline:

> Lana Sturby: I know there are a lot of businesses in trouble. I hope the community doesn't sort of shrink and start dying down, but that probably could happen too depending on what the future holds there with the wind project for example and some of those things.[168]
>
> ---
>
> Wayne Hailey: You see we're kinda a one industry town in Pincher Creek, there's a lot of fear that the industry is, when that industry is gone that that's it for Pincher Creek, Pincher Creek is going to die...[169]

Peggy Walsh: Well, they're really worried about the plant shutting down in the end. You know going down to practically nothing because there would be very little money flying through the community then from Shell. And they've come to depend on that...they are trying to get some development in the community so there will be money brought into the community...[170]

Despite these fears, many of the socio-economic indicators often used to gain a quick sense of the economic climate of a community reveal the Upper Oldman River basin to be far from declining. For example, the unemployment rate for the region in 1996 was 7.2, which was the rate for Alberta as a whole.[171] The average family income within the Upper Oldman River region in 1996 was $41,165.00 and the average selling price of a family home in the region $68,536.00. However, there is great variation amongst the different areas in the price of homes, from Cowley where the average selling price is $43,147.00 to the municipal district where the average selling price of a home is $90,508.00.[172] Overall, the population of the Upper Oldman River region is well educated with 47% of the population with some post-secondary education. The remainder of the population includes 11% with a high school diploma and 42% who have some high school education but never received a diploma.[173]

In addition the residential centres within the Basin such as Pincher Creek, Lundbreck or Cowley are not dead or dying but offer a great variety of services to the residents. Shopping facilities include those that supply basic amenities such as garages, hardware stores and pharmacies but the area also has a number of specialty clothing, hardware and craft stores. Business services range from accounting firms and massage therapists to courier services and travel agents. Other consumer services utilised by the residents of and visitors to the Upper Oldman River region include everything from dry cleaners to tanning salons, and snowmobile and auto dealers. Industrial and agricultural services offered include an auction market, farm supply dealers, two concrete plants and veterinarians. As well the region has a number of entertainment and recreational facilities such as a movie theatre, indoor swimming pool, white water canoe and kayak course and boat club. There is also a minimum security facility located near the Castle Forest reserve, which is probably a service not too many people would be interested in utilising, but which does provide employment for some and is an indication of the diversity of labour opportunities offered in the region. This variety of amenities and services suggests that the Upper Oldman River basin is not a rural fringe area.

In spite of the diversity of services the Oldman River region offers, certain industries and businesses have experienced some of the economic and social marginalisation processes that typify rural agricultural hinterlands and the rural margins. As but one example, increases in the world price of oil and gas have resulted in renewed activity in the Basin in gas exploration and drilling, and servicing of gas pipelines. Secondary services and businesses such as hotels, restaurants and welding firms have in turn benefited from this upturn in the

industrial economy. However, agriculturists and transportation companies have been adversely affected by this economic trend.

A more obvious example of the marginalisation Troughton describes can be seen on the Peigan Reserve. Recall that while the official unemployment rate for the Peigan Reserve in 1996 was officially reported at 21.9, according to residents of the Reserve, close to 85% of them are dependent upon the government for income assistance, which would mean a much higher unemployment rate than that reported by the government. Yet, in spite of the narrow range of employment, the human population is not decreasing on the reserve, but rather is on a steady incline. To some extent this growth in population can be explained by the increased rate of teenage pregnancy, yet it also seems that the long-term out-migration of youth and adults is not as high as some might expect for a community with so few jobs. Sarah Wounded Knee speaks to this matter, and in so doing offers a view of the sense of place she and many Peigans feel for and within the Upper Oldman River basin:

> Sarah Wounded Knee: Like I live in Coalhurst for six years now but home is always Brocket, home is always the Peigan Reserve where I go. Like we went to a conference in San Diego and in a couple years back in Loon Lake and we were already living off the Reserve, and that was home. Like where are you from? Peigan. I am Peigan. And that's the first thing that you say. A lot of people acknowledge that first. But this is where I am from but them they say but I live in Coaldale or whatever. But I think in that sense there's that sense of connection to home, to the Reserve.
>
> Lori Hanson: And is it to the Reserve?
>
> Sarah Wounded Knee: It's probably more to the land. Like what happened to me on the Reserve, it should be negative, it should be a place that is really negative you know. But I think it's not so much the place but I think that's it more the home, the land, the structure. I want to go home one day. One of these days, one of these years, I want to go home and I want to make that my home again. I have that connection and I think other people do because you see. There's people on the reserve who, there was one lady who moved to California for 22 years and then she, now she is back home. And that's what she said, "I wanted to come back home." She was working in a hospital there and she wanted to come back home and be with her family. And you hear it, you hear different stories like that. Even people who were adopted off the reserve, they go back home, even though that's never been their home. That's what they are drawn to, that's their connection.[174]

As the above examples, as well as the stories from chapter four illustrate, in many respects there are global developments and processes that increasingly bind together individual histories of industries and residents within the region. Perhaps one of the more pronounced expressions of this integration is the degree

of homogenisation in the procedures, working practices and organisation of many businesses and organisations that have been produced by the deregulation of markets and capital flows. As well, the globalisation of food production has resulted in a reorganisation of food operations that has transformed the extent and kind of food production occurring across the Basin and much of the globe, and impacted the numbers who earn a livelihood from agriculture. Troughton's rural margins and rural agricultural hinterlands are indications of the new territorial configurations emerging in the era of the greater integration of nation states and regions. Yet, as many social and spatial theorists explain, the effects of globalisation are contradictory and uneven, not just socially and economically but also spatially, and in Troughton's description of rural-urban fringe zones we are presented with a clear case of the discontinuous possibilities global processes cause.

Again, Troughton defines the rural fringe as zones of varying size located around every town and city in Canada. Some of the land in the rural-rural fringes is still in rural or quasi-rural production and use, but the ownership or occupants are largely urban-oriented. Many of these rural residents are commuters who while seeking rural amenities (symbolic or material) also seek access to their urban jobs or urban-type services. Others are searching for alternatives to city-life and correspondingly, often seek out the rural idyll. Be they in search of place as playground or place as sanctuary/Eden, these two groups of newcomers are significantly altering the socio-economic and political dynamic of the former 'traditional' rural community, being both creators and consumers of a new rural landscape.

In the Oldman basin these new rural residents do not occupy a zone around the Town of Pincher Creek but rather are found in four corridors: along Highway 6 to Waterton; in the Beaver Mines area which borders the Forestry reserve; along the Burmis/Lundbreck Corridor on Highway 22; and in the upper elevations of the Porcupine Hills (see Figure 4, page 124). Their presence in the Basin has had a significant impact on the region not just in terms of the subdivision and dotting of the landscape with homes but also, as Masterson notes, in the socio-economic transformations they are fuelling:

> Any way during this time, when I first started [selling real estate], the taxes and land values had to do with productivity of land, and they still to a degree do that. But that was the only the value that was placed on them for the most part. There was the odd person who would come here from some large city in the States or something who would say "Your land is cheap here. I wouldn't mind paying something like double." But by in large, everything that made the thing go around was based on the productivity of the land. And for ten years now, it's a-a- particularly in quarter sections, but even in larger parcels, you'll find it's more on the environmental aspects of land - trees and streams and how close it is to the Forest Reserve and the Mountains, and things of that nature affect the land, and so. There's a strip of land oh, way down Highway 22 and right down to Waterton on the west side, that always seems to be selling for

more than the productive land which is on the east side. And in the Porcupines too, all the high ground sells for more than where it's really more productive for grain. Anyways it's not entirely a rule but it seems to be a governing thing.[175]

It is the location, the particularities of the landscape that are attracting people to these corridors. As Rasker and Alexander noted in their study of the Y2Y region, it is the amenities of places like Bozeman, Montana and Canmore, Alberta with their mountains, trout streams and hiking trials, that are enticing many of the new residents and businesses to come there. As Powers pointed out to the Oldman Dam EIA panel, "[s]ince the end of the Second World War, new economic force has had a profound impact on the location of economic activity in North America. It is simply stated, people care where they live."[176] Communities that are socially and environmentally appealing places to live will attract newcomers and "capitalize on the growth in services and 'footloose' businesses, attracting migrants who open sophisticated businesses with high wages."[177] Timms noted this trend starting in the Basin:

> People will live [here] just because of the job description, more and more people living out of the home and they are actually literally working out of their homes through their computers. If you had a choice of living in downtown Calgary or on an acreage in the middle of the mountains with nothing but the deer and the wind and the trees between you and the next neighbour [wouldn't you choose the latter?][178]

Globalisation as a cultural force for manipulating and protecting the natural world

The reorganisation of the economy and landscape is not only about greater mobility of capital but is associated with a wave of cultural transformation. At one level this is about the manufacture of global products and tastes – a convergence of lifestyles, behaviours and values from across the world. "Cultural products are assembled from all over the world and turned into commodities for a new 'cosmopolitan market-place': world music and tourism, ethnic arts, fashion and cuisine, Third World writing and cinema."[179] It is also about a global culture as formed through the economic and political domination of the United States. American hegemony finding form through homogeneous tastes, products and activities. As Hailey describes, this sort of Americanisation is evident in shifts in local traditions and changing of routines of many Basin residents:

> Wayne Hailey: Well I think where they organised their own entertainment, dances, socials, you know then the visiting. When we first came here there was a tradition of visiting. Neighbours dropped in to visit, just kind of welcome us to the area. And I don't think that's really as pronounced now. For one thing there's a, far more people from the outside world that have come in here to live on acreages and so on than when we first moved in here. And I think that tradition is not as strong as when we first moved here in '77.

Lori Hanson: And a large part of that is because of television, you mentioned that before?

Wayne Hailey: I think that's part of it. I think that's led to the breakdown of the, of the rural community, the rural community social life. But another thing that has is the ease of transportation. It's far easier to drive into Pincher, which used to be a big deal back even in the fifties, it would have been a big deal to go to Pincher. Now they go to Lethbridge for a movie and it's nothing you know. All those, plus the fact that people don't go any where cause they are at home watching television. I think it's led to the decline of those social events that brought the community together earlier.[180]

The process of globalisation is not only about mixing of cultures across the boundaries of nation-states but within them too.[181] Within the Basin there is a sense of an erasing of the differences between the rural and urban areas as improvements in highways and automobiles allow people easier access and increased contact with urban centres and create a cosmopolitan orientation. Despite the fact that the Upper Oldman River basin is more than a two hours drive south of Calgary and one hour drive west of Lethbridge, many residents drive into the city to get groceries or spend an evening out. As Sturby and Torrington's recollections reveal, this ease and frequency of transportation to Lethbridge is a relatively new development for residents of the Oldman basin:

Lana Sturby: You know like way back you stayed more in your small communities, you know there was a grocery store, post office and you know only needed to come to town once or twice a month which my folks did a way back then. Going to town was an event in the winter time. Going to Lethbridge was something we did maybe three times a year.[182]

Paul Torrington: It used to be the cars weren't as good, they never seemed to keep the highways cleaned in the winter, so people weren't travelling. People travel more now for whatever reason. You know I can remember coming to Lethbridge maybe once or twice a year for a dental appointments or something you know and now my parents are in three or four times a month now (Vera says, 'A week,' and she laughs).[183]

The increased travel of the Basin residents to points outside of the region is one of the ways in which the time-space compression so often associated with globalisation finds form in people's daily lives.

The symbolic homogenisation of space and culture is also the logic that underlies the landscape being treated as a singular surface in which the proper application of technologies (pesticides, irrigation, genetic engineering of species, etc.) can overcome the particularities of place. This is the post-Fordist regime's impact on the rural landscape of which Vanclay and Lawrence speak: globalised

economics and technological culture merging into an eclipse of the limits of the topography. If human time and the quantity of food products produced are used as criteria for evaluation, modern industrialised agriculture has been hugely successful. To a large degree, this is the rationale that supported the construction of the Oldman River Dam as we can see here in an excerpt from the presentation by John Nikkel of the Alberta Soft Wheat Producers Commission to the EIA Panel for the Oldman River Dam:

> The significance of irrigation is often overlooked. It is interesting to note, irrigation in Alberta represents 1.3 million acres and is four percent of the arable land base in the province. This four percent produces 20 percent of the total production in the province. Average yield for soft wheat on irrigation – this information is gathered from the Alberta Agriculture Department of Economics in 1990 - was 75.96 bushels per acre while average yields for spring wheat on dryland was 28.42 bushels per acre. The production on irrigation represents a 267 increase over dryland production. The need for the dam has been amply proven to farmers who have had to deal repeatedly with water rotations.[184]

Also, it is this logic of uniformity through human manipulation that environmentalists and a number of others opposed to the Oldman Dam were contesting, as Kevin Van Tighem illustrates in this passage:

> As long as God regulates the Oldman River, we need only adapt ourselves and our economy to a predictable, unique, natural environment. As soon as we fire God, and take over the job of running the river ourselves, we start to discover more and more complication[s] and permutations that require us to either sacrifice economic opportunities, by for example, surrendering bio-diversity and downstream riparian environments or fish populations in the river...[185]

Yet, at the level of conceived space, globalisation also is about planetary consciousness. As a process whereby individuals increasingly see the world as one place, globalisation acts as a catalyst for the recognition of the planet as a finite and bounded space. This is a paradoxical discourse of on the one hand, limits that compete against the hegemonic discourse of modernity as progress. On the other hand, rather than humans being cast as ingenious, resourceful and capable, this global discourse is about human ignorance, ineptitude and greed that has fuelled indiscriminate damage to the planet by creating homogenised space. The following extensive passage quoted from an interview with Rex Gibson provides a stark example of this type of environmental thinking, particularly as it relates to an assessment of agriculture:

> Rex Gibson: I don't think we should screw around with [nature] and make it into a farm. I know what a farm is, I don't want the whole fucking planet to be a farm. I know what a herd of Herefords is versus a herd of buffalo and I want there to be a herd of buffalo and a herd of cows if we need to eat cows. But I don't want Herefords everywhere. I know how

stupid and dumb they are, and gross they are. I don't want chickens every where I want wild grouse. And I don't want to walk in an alfalfa field or a barley field all the time. I want some wild meadows and lots of them. And I think we would have a better quality of life as humans, you know I feel a whole bunch less stressed and saner when I am out in the bush than I do in the city ... I do buy the arguments that say that there's a certain connection to wild things and golf courses don't cut it ... [if we'd leave things alone] we'd have tigers out there doing their thing and evolving and maybe, maybe we'll - we won't wink out ... we could be the spruce bud worm and just wink right out. If we end up dominating the planet it's riskier than if we stay in a third of it or half of it. There's no redundancies left if you've got the whole thing. And the net primary productivity stuff, you know the terrestrial productivity, that we're taking 30 or 40 percent of it, we'd live so much better if there were fewer of us and there was more space ... Just go out in the bush and whatever ...The freedom, just the ability to interact naturally ... I mean more physical, the unintellectual ways that humans [act] when they are acting like animals you know?...

Lori Hanson: Isn't that what a lot of these rural communities are arguing for is freedom? Isn't that why they are saying stay out of here, we don't want your regulations? You have no right here?

Rex Gibson: Ahh, okay. The kind of freedom they imply though is the freedom to, that that perspective, the freedom to use the planet in their way, right?... I would argue, none of us has the right to turn the planet into a cow pasture nor to turn any given area entirely into a cow pasture. And we need to find a way to balance off our human needs in a way that we can leave a fair chunk native, or natural right? ... And in Alberta in the agricultural areas we have gone too far. The Parkland is the worst. My home, bioregion is the worst, and the grassland is the next. There's too much human domination. So freedom doesn't imply the right to, we accept constraints, restraints on our behaviour in society. To live together of all types, this is just another kind of restraint and it's, you know Leopold's Land Ethic.[186]

At the same time, this planetary perception is conceived space that, as John Urry points out, is a result of space-time compression. Actual and simulated travel allow for images of 'appropriate' environments to be much more easily conjured up, evaluated and compared.[187] Comparisons with locations across the globe are central to the discursive understandings of environmentalists' about the Oldman River region. The Basin's resemblance to other localities was used for predicting ecological impacts of the Dam and determining the significance of the resources at risk, that is whether species are endangered or threatened, crucial discursive indicators of environmental importance. Consider for example, the following assessments of the Basin:

Tim Abbe: Another concern is mercury contamination in fish. I found no discussion of this, and yet it's been clearly documents to be a problem in impoundments throughout much of Canada, as well as other places in the world... [188]

Phil Handcock: The trout fishery [in the Crowsnest River] is among the best in the world.[189]

Rex Gibson: I can look at a small section of that river and still consider it wild of course. But if you pull back your focus big enough and start looking across its full length, you go on balance is this river more domesticated than that river of the same length and if one has more dams on it than the other, you know which one is more domesticated?[190]

In the context of environmental concerns, globalisation is also about dislocation, not just of human cultures and communities but also animal and plant communities. The reorganisation of the international economic order is about overcoming boundaries and time in order to achieve world-scale advantage. Unless commodified as a tourist destination or natural resource, there is little room in this scheme for nature. As Hailey notes, this is why a new road through a wilderness area gets seen as progress rather than viewed as a devastating horrible loss:

> To me I see these things vanishing and I don't think the ranching community does so much. The fact that we build a new road into the mountains doesn't disturb them all that much you know. But I see it as a major loss of wildness and wild things and wild country, when we've already lost a whole lot in this area because of what I would say is careless development and not bothering to restore disturbed areas as well as having to have development in every square mile of land, in the mountains and foothills.[191]

From Hailey and other wilderness activists' perspectives, these fingerprints of modern industrial civilisation are seen across the landscape, the only untouched places left being a few remnants of wilderness – wild places as Stacks calls them:

> ...I have a clearer sense of what wild is, of what a definition [of wild is] now... Species and ecosystems basically undefiled by man. And that would have to be on a continuum because as McKibben makes the point that there's no place that doesn't have some man made assault eating away at 'em...a restored wilderness is better than no wilderness at all. I understand there was a griz in there last year, someone sighted one. If griz can pass through it there's probably a bit of wild to it...[192]

And it is in these wild places where we can observe the antithesis of globalisation for they do not compress time and space but instead, "in our wild primeval places, we can find a sense of place and time."[193] In the discourse of environmentalists

can be read resistance to the logic of global standardisation and with this we are reminded of "the localization of globality, the perception of the finite and limited nature of our world."[194]

As globalisation has thrown cultures and economies into intense and immediate contact, there has been great surge of interest in locality and region. As Kevin Robins argues, while globalisation may be the prevailing force of our times, it is not an absolute tendency.[195] Global processes, be they economic, cultural or political, interact with and are integrated within local contexts and these in turn, affect global forms. As Miller, Lawrence, McKay and Rowe point out, there may be some synchronisation brought about by global flows but the effect is hybridised. "Cultural forms separate from current practices and are recombined in new ones, forming not a global whole but a mélange of sites and spaces."[196] In turn, the local is constituted in and through its relationship to the global. Where once the meaning of the local was determined in relation to the national sphere, now its meaning is recast more in terms of the global context.

So while globalisation is often conceived to be a homogenising force, we can see that the impact of these flows of goods, knowledge and ideologies on particular localities cannot be predetermined. Globalisation produces new relational contexts and configurations but it does not have a uniform effect. Broadly, we can say that globalisation has resulted in new configurations and meanings of the rural, but as we see from an analysis of the Upper Oldman River basin, even within the same region there is a plurality of forms this new rurality takes. Local struggles, differing abilities to exercise power, innovative strategies, all of these cultural and political techniques produce a range of responses to the global configuration. In the Oldman basin the transformation of the economy, changing social relations within the community and a renewed sense of rancher identity are evidence of the global-local nexus, new and intricate fluid relations between global and local space.

The global is shown to be a contested and discursive representation of space and culture that loads in favour of hegemonic power but can never completely suppress or anticipate resistance. New developments in travel and telecommunications technologies are thought to have reduced the spatial distances between people so immensely that we are now to be seen in each other's backyards. This incredible shrinking world suggested by the discourse of globalisation is thought to have either annihilated space or created a homogenous, bland ubiquity that has erased the particularities of local cultures, behaviours and economic systems. But while the global space of capital might cause fragmentation and diversity under the sign of global exchangeability, local spaces are always embedded in these new configurations. In bringing together new 'scapes' globalisation produces not just multiple permutations of space, but qualitatively different discursive constructions of place and space.

Chapter Seven
Conclusion: Connections to nature

Things apart, the centre cannot hold.
- W. B. Yeats, *The Second Coming*

The bond of memory and history when they share space and time. Every moment is two moments. Einstein: "...all our judgements in which time plays a part are always judgements of simultaneous events. If, for instance, I say the train arrived here at seven o'clock, I mean: the small hand of my watch pointing to seven and the arrival of the train are simultaneous events...the time of the event has no .operational meaning... ' The event is meaningful only if the coordination of time and place is witnessed.
- Anne Michaels, *Fugitive Pieces*

"What do we have in common? All of our differences."
- Hélène Cixous, June 1992

Place as a spatial configuration of social relations

The Upper Oldman River basin is a place composed of spaces each filled with sights, sounds and activities that are signifiers of its natural and cultural features. Chapters four, five and six reveal how this is a place that is not just one thing to all people. To some it is a timeless landscape, a place of perceived stasis, and to others it is a place undergoing rapid change. As many of the stories and quoted passages illustrate, it is a place valued by many, residents and non, but there are some significant differences in both how this place is represented, and what about this place is considered of value.

Comments by Oldman basin inhabitants such as Peggy Walsh and Brian Masterson suggest that this is a place of great beauty, vast natural resources and ever increasing productivity. The theme running through their discourse of place is one of abundance. The configuration of the discourse is produced across a number of texts and sites that reinforce certain notions of place and community and influence the inhabitants' actions and conceptions of themselves. For example, in the "Closing the Frontier" narrative in chapter four, I detailed how when the first European settlers arrived to the region they saw it as a 'Garden of Eden'. Their perceptions were in part the result of stories they heard about the opportunities the region provided. Some of these stories were spread by the Dominion government in hopes of populating the area quickly in order to protect it from falling into the hands of the United States, and others were offered by

Mounties and prospectors who shared tales about living in the region. But it wasn't just these stories that fed the newcomers' perceptions of this place. When the settlers arrived in the region, they discovered a mild climate and what seemed to be an unending expanse of stipa and wheat grasses. It was, they mistakenly believed, a lush landscape essentially theirs for the taking. Their perceptions were fed not only by having arrived at just the right time climatically, but as well these newcomers were a fortunate few who encountered little competition for the land as earlier the Blackfoot's population had been decimated. Believing strongly in the discourse about this area as bountiful, the agriculturists did little to ensure feed for their cattle until 1886-87 when they experienced the region's more common erratic and harsh weather. In response, ranchers began to bale or purchase hay to feed their stock, and started exploring the prospects for irrigation in the area.

Nonetheless, this discourse of natural abundance did not disappear, but over the decades became further fortified. Connected to a Western narrative about independence, self-reliance and individualism, this tale of abundance transformed into a regional narrative about belonging and identity. This is a story about self-reliant pioneers who struggled against the harsh natural environment and because of their tenacity and hard work prospered. This regional narrative is a lens for understanding contemporary representations of this place, but as I indicated in chapter five, it also provides a point of symbolic identification for many contemporary Oldman River basin residents. These claims of identification that celebrate the cowboy mystique and act as a persistently powerful individual and communal narrative, are also destabilised by contemporary social and spatial transformations such as the influx of new residents and the reorganisation of food production.

Intersecting trajectories of place, community and identity can similarly be traced through an analysis of the Peigan's characterisations of the Basin as stolen territory. In chapter four, I detailed how according to Henry Plains Hawk, the Dominion government acquired Blackfoot territory through deception, not negotiation. In the signing of Treaty Seven, Peigan Chief Sitting Eagle Tail believed that he was not giving away Blackfoot territory but striking a friendship or peace agreement with the Dominion government. This historical narrative supports a discourse of appropriation that has been the basis for decades of legal battles initiated by the Peigan against the federal government for compensation of all that was taken from them. Spatially their claims to territory disrupt the complacent landscape of white agriculturists and industrialists with reminders of the history of the land upon which they sow their seeds and build their dams.

The Peigan, like many Aboriginal peoples, have gained increased recognition for both their rights and the injustices committed against their communities, yet in the contemporary Oldman basin they remain both a spatially and socially marginalised group in many ways. In the discussion of community in chapter six, I discussed how the dominant construction of the Oldman basin as a friendly community by residents like Peggy Walsh, Vera Torrington and Alan Timms obscures view of the various ways in which the community is divisive and segregated. This homogenising discourse contributes to the immobility of

specific groups within the region, groups like the Peigan, through a representation of them in negative terms that are used as justification for enforcing clear boundaries and policing any transgressions of these spaces. Recall that the Peigan for years have been trying to purchase some land outside of the Reserve to replace land illegally confiscated from them. Several years ago they attempted to buy several sections of land located west of the reserve but their attempts were thwarted by the fears of their white neighbours. Masterson saw the white agriculturists' refusal to sell this land to the Peigan as not fuelled by racism, but rather an understandable response given that the land was intersected by a road that the Peigan might some day blockade and thereby disrupt the community.

The environmentalists share with the Peigan a feeling of being marginalised from the community, but the theme underlying their discourse is destruction not appropriation. The story environmentalists like Wayne Hailey, Rex Gibson and Dianne Pachal tell about this place focuses on the treasures of the region vanishing, unrelenting threats, and catastrophe. In this portrayal of the Upper Oldman River basin we are encouraged to see it as a place under siege. In the midst of this crisis, the environmentalists act to protect not only nature but also the community. As local environmental activist Judy Huntley describes, this is essentially the objective of her environmental group:

> ...the inception of the Bert Riggall Foundation was directly related to the social distress and community disruption caused by the Oldman River Dam planning process. That is, that personal pain and social dislocation actually produce, at least in the short run, an advantageous situation for those power wielding and power hungry interests who wish to advance their own agendas without regard for the integrity of other persons, places and species.[1]

As advocates for an ecologically healthy world, the environmentalists speak of the necessity of people learning to "live well in their places."[2] Their prescription for a better world is about individuals connecting simultaneously with each other and the land.

In the context of the experiences of many environmentalists in the Basin this discourse about community reads as paradoxical. While the environmentalists speak about the necessity of building and strengthening communal ties, as I discussed in chapter six, frequently they are considered to be a source of disruption in their own community. They don't contribute the way other residents do and they refuse to follow the codes of conduct that ensure civility. As Wayne Hailey indicates, he sees his neighbours' silences as doing nothing to protect wilderness and he cannot follow suit by just standing by and watching the destruction of the natural world. Yet many in his community perceive his vocalisations as creating unnecessary tension and commotion. In this context, it is not surprising that many of the environmentalists feel a strong sense of place but do not feel a part of the community. Clearly having a sense of place does not guarantee a sense of belonging and mutual feelings of connection to one's neighbours.

Yet, it is not the case that the activities of Wayne Hailey and other environmentalists are not valued in the Oldman basin community. Recall the comments by Alan Timms of the important watch dog role environmentalists play. This is a view reiterated by Kim O'Brien who believes it was good thing that the community included environmentalists because "they make sure that we are careful [and] that we consider some of the negative impacts of developments."[3] Although Ruth Melindy clearly articulates the ranchers' desire to distance themselves from the environmentalists, she also indicates that they share with people like Judy Huntley and Wayne Hailey a deep interest in the maintenance of heritage landscapes and were appreciative of attempts to stop the building of the Oldman River Dam. So how does one explain the environmentalists' marginalisation from the community?

Recall that traditional discursive constructions of community rest on a logic of 'organic wholeness' or universality that denies difference and therefore excludes those who don't seem to fit. The mutual identification and interdependence common to so many understandings of community provides the conditions for the flourishing of a 'unity of consciousness,' but in so doing, suppresses difference. Hence, within a traditional understanding of community, a hierarchical opposition is created of insiders and outsiders. Environmentalists like Wayne Hailey who act as the lone voice against developments articulate difference, and in so doing are positioned as the 'other', the excluded. Given the importance of closure and exclusion to traditional notions of community, it is curious that so many environmentalists continue to support uncritically traditional notions of community within their environmental strategies.

These themes of abundance, appropriation and devastation are in no way representative of the full slate of understandings of this place, nor of the experiences of those who reside there. However, collectively the spatial representations constructed by the agriculturists, Peigan and environmentalists illustrate well what Doreen Massey calls "the simultaneous multiplicity of spaces."[4] The view then is of a lived world composed of a diversity of places that are experienced differently and variously interpreted by those individuals holding different positions in relation to them.

To conceive of space as constituted by and a constituent of social processes demands attention be given to not only the historical, cultural and social specificity of all representations of space, but also to networks of power and knowledge. This idea returns us to a discussion of Foucault's concept of discourse as a "systematic set of relations,"[5] that governs how topics can be discussed, influences how ideas are put into action and is used to regulate the conduct of others. The meanings conveyed by spatial representations can both restrict and enable particular forms of social relations, ideas and place, be it because they contradict them or keep them in tact. Discourses determine the limits within which ideas and actions are considered natural. These limits are by no means fixed, but rather continually contested, redefined and negotiated, yet when considered natural or common-sense, they have great impact on what is considered intelligible, normal and correct. In this sense, we can see how the

"spatial is an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification,"[6] and attempts to arrest the flow of these spatial trajectories by establishing boundaries are efforts directed at stabilising the meaning of a place, and, in this sense, exercising power.

Conceptualising place within these spatial parameters offers a more dynamic understanding of place and community than that seen in more traditional understandings of these terms. In everyday speech it common that space is represented as a unified plane upon which we live out our lives. Space seems like a surface, something with continuity and permanency. Alternatively, the writings of new cultural geographers insist that space is created intersubjectively in various spatial and historical contexts. Social relations are inscribed within and constituted through spatial forms, and in turn space is a constitutive element of social relations that cut across all scales from the global through to the local. The particularity of any place is an articulation of those spatial relations, a snapshot in time of a point in the network of social relations and understandings. In this sense, we can see that place is always multiple, contested and unfixed.

As a constitutive element of the social, places are known through various sensibilities, but places in turn constitute the sentient individual. The massive spatial restructuring occurring internationally and intranationally as an integral part of economic and social relations often associated with globalisation make it easy to see how spatialities impact the constitution of subjectivities and community relations. The arrival of a new kind of resident to the Basin has changed the structural formation of that place, altered the community dynamics, and disrupted the seeming coherence of the identities of people and that place. Ranchers have been displaced both physically and symbolically from the area as increasing numbers of city dwellers take up residence in the foothills and become involved in local politics. Yet, it is not a case that these spatial and social relations form a coherent system. Residents are not equally and similarly impacted by these social, cultural and economic forces, but rather the social axes of power, privilege and subjectivity mean for some that their lives are stretched out, while others find themselves as locally place-bound as they ever were.

Thus, as poststructuralists remind us, it is necessary to declare problematic any stable or singular sense of place, identity and community. Just as many social and cultural theorists argue that identity is an always shifting and a multiple construct, so too are place and community. As Chantal Mouffe has written,

> many communitarians believe that we belong to only one community, defined empirically and even geographically, and that this community could be unified by a single idea of the common good. But we are in fact always multiple and contradictory subjects, inhabitants of a diversity of communities (as many, really, as the social relations in which we participate and the subject-positions they define), constructed by a variety of discourses and precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those positions.[7]

The concept of place advanced in this thesis is very similar to Mouffe's notion of subjectivity. As an articulation of social relations, place is not absolute, it is referential. Place is not a fixed spatial form that has specific, predictable effects, but a trajectory of social relations that cross-cuts, intersects, sits at right angles to, aligns with and exists in relations of paradox or antagonism to other spatial forms and social processes.

In regards to nature

In the introduction to this thesis, I indicated that in part my interest in place and space arose out of trying to respond to environmental historian William Cronon's invitation to rethink the 'naturalness' of nature and wilderness. In his essay, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature,"[8] he urges his readers to become critically self-conscious about the ways in which they employ the concept of wilderness, and be particularly mindful of the difficulties associated with using it as the standard against which the failings of our civilisation are measured. Wilderness as "the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilization that has lost its soul"[9] constructs a dualism that sets humanity apart from and against nature, and leaves little hope for any kind of reconciliation between the two. Cronon responded to his critics, who castigated his position as being anthropocentric and a rhetorical justification for further degradation of wild lands, by arguing that because it is human activity that threatens the sustainability of ecological systems, we must engage with and understand humans, not just nature.[10]

Aspects of this debate concern matters beyond the reach of this work, but nonetheless, I think cultural geography and my study of place, space, community and identity in the Upper Oldman River basin touch on some germane issues in this on-going dialogue, particularly as they relate to the recent interest by some environmentalists and wilderness activists for people to discover a sense of place or learn to live in place. As I indicated previously, the link between social and physical space has long been an interest in many disciplines, but with place often conceptualised as a passive backdrop or as an inert object of study. In contrast, conservationists' interest in wild places and developing a sense of place makes the case for nature as an entity and force that not only influences the activities of individuals, but is necessary for healthy human functioning. Daniel Berthold-Bond traces this interest in humans connecting to natural places within an environmental context back to the emergence of bioregional theory and the associated movement, bioregionalism.[11] He explains that in 1974, Peter Berg, a California counter-culturalist, and ecologist Raymond Dasman, founded the Planet Drum Foundation as a means of popularising the idea of 'living in place,' which they defined as:

> following the necessities and pleasures of life as they are uniquely presented by a particular site, and evolving ways to ensure long-term occupancy of that site...[the goal is to 'reinhabit' places by] becoming native to a place through becoming aware of the particular ecological relationships that operate within and around it."[12]

Elaborating on this definition, environmental educator Janet Pivnick explains that 'living in a place' requires a knowledge of the cultural and natural history of a place, and knowing your area in order that you can respond to the demands of that place.[13] Outside of the proponents of bioregionalism, such 'place narratives' can be found in the writings of environmental writers and even a few ecologists including Gary Snyder, E.O. Wilson and Stephanie Mills. A conference I attended in October 1997 focused on educating people about, and building support for the Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) Conservation Initiative included amongst the conference materials handed to each attendee an overview of the conference and Y2Y titled, " A Sense of Place: Issues, Attitudes and Resources in the Yellowstone to Yukon Bioregion". It wasn't just an attempt at a catchy title. Many within the conservation movement consider discovering a sense of place and living in place integral elements in people learning to understand, care about and protect nature.

While there is no denying that nature has a material existence quite apart from humans, like Cronon, new cultural geographers would be quick to point out that we cannot help but see natural places through the experiences, hungers, desires and expectations that we bring to them.[14] At any historical juncture, the specific definitions of ecologically important areas function as floating signifiers or naming devices that serve to signify not only natural features but various cultural practices. So while natural forces do change places, altering micro and macro biochemical processes, ultimately places, even wild ones, derive meaning, be that simply that they exist and so are deemed worthy of a label, through sociocultural interpretations. It is people who name, categorise, distinguish and characterise places. As Mary Douglas reminds us,

> All the problems that we have with metaphors raise their head in a new guise when we identify objects. We do not escape from the predicaments that language prepares us for by turning away from the semiotics of words to the semiotics of objects. It would be illusory to hope that objects present us with a more solid, unambiguous world.[15]

Viewing environmental place discourse and wilderness through the lenses of new cultural geography encourages us to see natural and wild places as cultural artefacts – that is, products of discursive systems of representation. These spatial, ecological and social representations are culturally and historically located, and exist in a state of continuous flux and contestation. If landscapes can survive relatively intact as functioning ecological systems with indigenous species from the past, this does not mean they have kept their primary or 'original' meaning intact. Nature is much too mutable a category to ensure the fixing of such meaning.

I am not trying to suggest that sense of place discourse is of no merit, for I recognise that it has been helpful to many people in encouraging them to think about their dynamic relationship with the natural world. In this respect, I concur with Berthold-Bond in his assessment of the focus on place within environmental

ethics as challenging the purely geographical description of place. In his words, it:

> give[s] greater specificity to the "space" of nature, with which environmental ethics is concerned, [and] extend[s] this subversive element to the consideration of the actual "placement" of humans in regions of environmental space...[As such] bioregionalism subverts the mathematical, topographic, literalistic definition of place as [an] objective geographic location – at least as a self sufficient definition – and develops a new geography of place as experiential, subjective and meaning-laden.[16]

However, like many humanistic geographers' understandings of place and space, the claims many conservationists make about natural or wild places are essentialised and people's experiences in them universalised. The invitation to see places as either wild or not is an attempt to fix the meaning of nature, to construct a singular and static identity for wild places with an enclosed security. But this stability and apparently reassuring boundedness are false. For while a place may have character if its own, and perhaps a wild character at that, it is absolutely not a seamless, coherent identity and there is no single experience of place that everyone shares about this place. In this context it would seem prudent to counter environmental appeals for developing a sense of place as a part of their ecological strategies with questions such as: What is this place these conservationists are summoning us to spend time in? And to whose representations of the natural world are we responding?

The case study of the Upper Oldman River basin illustrates that even in the same locale one can easily find a host of divergent understandings of place and a sense of place. Be it environmentalists like Dave Sheppard, farmers like John Weing, or Peigan Band member Henry Plains Hawk, each of these individuals articulated a deep and abiding connection to that place. Yet, each represents this place in distinctly different terms. For agriculturists, the land is seen in terms of its productive capability. Livelihood is key in their discursive representations of the land and this region. For Peigan members like Sarah Wounded Knee, it makes little sense to speak about the land as somehow distinct from her people, for they are one and the same. The western binary distinction between nature and culture isn't operational in her understanding of place. For conservationists though, their sense of place is diminished by culture. Emphasising the wild character of places, for them a sense of place arises from localities that have few if any noticeable signs of 'human interference'. In David Sheppard's words, "...a wild river is a natural setting...A chance to see wildlife. Peace, quiet ... and the absence of other fishermen."[17]

The failure of conservationists to account for these variable experiences of place in their conservation strategies, is not a 'mere abstract, spatial problem'. Rather, at least for the Upper Oldman River basin, I believe it has created a barrier to alliances being forged between groups like the ranchers and the environmentalists, even when, as was the case with the Oldman River Dam, they shared the same desired ends. The intersubjective constitution of places and

subjectivities encourages us to see that our responses to natural areas are enabled and restricted by our imagination and interpretation of them, as well as the subject-positions of the discursive regimes in which we are socially and historically constituted. So for example, defining nature as that which does not include humans has not only economic consequences for those who have an interest in the long term sustainability of natural areas but earn a livelihood from working the land, it also undermines their sense of self. A discourse about nature as not human is a discourse that denies these individuals a subject-position beyond being the 'other' - members of society who threaten the moral and social code.[18] It denies them a legitimised subject-position from which they can join a discussion about ecological protection and sustainability.

The variability of place and space advanced by new cultural geographers has massive implications for those who want to 'speak for nature.' Such an anti-essentialist position poses problems for conservationists because it rejects all claims to grasp nature in its pure and unmediated form. As Mick Smith asserts, "if we cannot claim to have a discourse which truly represents nature in itself, any claims that 'nature' might have intrinsic value are seemingly problematized."[19] Hence, as Cronon's critics demonstrate, social constructivist doctrines of nature and place are seen to undermine biocentrism (values which are based on the health of the biosphere rather than solely on human goals) and seen to bolster an anthropocentric viewpoint which sees nature solely in terms as resources to be utilised for human purposes. The fundamental impossibility of finding a nature to be spoken of that is devoid of human social construction does not suggest anthropocentrism, but points to the limits of identity, and the need for alternative political configurations upon which a transformative vision can be based.

In their analyses of the failings of Left-wing or socialist politics, social theorists including Sandilands,[20] Laurie Adkin,[21] Chantal Mouffe[22] and Ernesto Laclau[23] have variously articulated the need for social movements to abandon the notion of a universal subject that can represent everyone's interests if a broad social transformation is to occur. In the case of the Left, this has meant a rethinking of the working class actor as able to represent all claims of oppression, but this critique likewise can be environmental strategies premised on overcoming the domination of nature as a point of commonality for all who are unjustly treated by the modern industrial state. While a proliferation of political struggles have emerged that place increasing attention on self definition or identity in order to establish their legitimacy, visibility as political subjects and difference from the dominant group, nonetheless, no identity manages to capture the full slate of constitutive possibilities. Hence, there is a need for solidarity to arise through coalitions. As Sandilands argues, "Given that no set of objective interests encompasses the totality of social conflicts in need of transformation, the process of making connections among a variety of anatagonisms becomes crucial..."[24]

Many conservationists have long recognised the need for coalition building as an essential component of their strategies. For example, in the terms of the debate over the Oldman River Dam, the appeal by environmentalists Judy Huntley, Dianne Pachal and Kevin Van Tighem to the panel to expand the

parameters of their environmental assessment to consider community relations illustrates some recognition by these conservationists of the need to build alliances as a part of their environmental strategies. Of course, as I pointed out earlier, the reliance on an understanding of community built around a unity of consciousness can no better serve as a basis for solidarity than can a universalised experience of place. Instead, as Ian Urquhart indicates in his assessment of the Cheviot mine debate near Hinton, Alberta, what is required is for all sides to think creatively about how the other side's concerns might better be incorporated into another way of securing 'good' livings for all of those who value that place and community.[25]

The recognition of place as an articulation as a multiplicity of social trajectories likewise points to transformative social and political possibilities arising through dialogue about a better world rather than a reliance on the defence of an authentic, fixed notion of place. An understanding of spatial relations in natural landscapes as the momentary coexistence of trajectories directs one to consider those points of intersection, alignment, paradox and antagonism between various groups. To this end, a definition of nature that doesn't rely on the binary distinction of nature/culture, and that doesn't essentialise a sense of place, might better open up for discussion the modification of social relations required within radical democratic politics to ensure the protection of natural areas.

The 'constructedness' of nature and place makes them no less a guide to our prescriptions for a better world than we choose them to be. As long as we agree to live by certain principles, constructed or not, they provide a framework for our actions. The process of construction does not preclude us from making moral choices about the world as we understand it, but it does always imply the negotiation of relationships between many different actors, not all of them human. The effort to make visible the social construction of place and nature provides us with the means to move beyond essentialisms and to evaluate competing accounts of the world. It directs us not to search for truths or falsehoods about the natural world and wild places, but to critically examine the likelihood of different proposals creating the kind of place and communities we want to live in and leave behind.

Chapter one

[1] William Cronon, "Introduction: In Search of Nature," *Uncommon Ground – Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995) 25.

[2]Jean Francois-Lyotard as quoted in Nancy Fraser and Linda J. Nicholson, "Social Criticism Without Philosophy: An Encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism," *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1990) 22.

[3]Within the field of environmental studies in Canada, there exists a loosely defined area of writing and thought called environmental thought. Broadly this term refers to environmental work (visual, oral, written prose and poetry, etc.) that addresses questions about the values underlying or philosophical dimensions of environmental issues. I think this is an accurate descriptor of much of my own research including that which forms the basis of this thesis, as well as most of the environmental writing I refer to throughout this thesis.

[4]Wendell Berry, *What Are People For?* (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1990); *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community* (New York/ San Francisco, CA: Pantheon Books, 1992, 1993); *Standing by Words* (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1983).

[5]Gene Logsdon, "The Importance of Traditional Farming Practices," *Meeting the Expectations of the Land*, ed. Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry and Bruce Coleman (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984); *At Nature's Pace – Farming and the American Dream* (New York/San Francisco: Pantheon Books, 1994).

[6]Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry and Bruce Coleman, eds. *Meeting the Expectations of the Land* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984).

[7]Stephanie Mills, *Whatever Happened to Ecology?* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1989); "The Wild and the Tame," *Place of the Wild*, ed. David Clarke Burks (Washington D.C./Covelo, CA: Island Press, 1994).

[8] Stan Rowe, *Home Place – Essays on Ecology* (Edmonton, AB: NeWest, 1990).

[9] One of the more recent explicit expressions of this quest for the real as key in discovering the solution to many of western society's environmental problems can be found in Charlene Spretnak's *The Resurgence of the Real – Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World* (New York: Routledge, 1999). She begins her book by stating: "My main assertion is not that it would be a good idea if we were to pay more attention to body, nature and place, but, rather, that the actual presence and power of body, nature and place *are* now asserting themselves and poking large holes through the modern ideologies of denial. In doing so, they challenge the assumptions of the modern worldview as never before. It is because that worldview is so abstract – favoring the projections of mind over the

'constraints' of the body, technological 'progress' over dumb nature, and cosmopolitan sophistication over 'backward' attachment to place – that I have emphasized the concrete. By 'body' I mean the unified bodymind; by 'nature' I mean not a scientifically theorized system or a culturally perceived looming threat, but our physical context, from which our bodies are not separate; by 'place' I mean the bioregion, the physical site of community and personal unfolding ... the rippling effects of the fifteen - year grip of deconstructionist postmodernism on academia has framed an attack on modernity that has been oblivious to the core problem: the repression of the real." 4 -5. My concern with Spretnak's position and that of others who criticise a social constructionist perspective of nature is that in searching for some 'real' nature, they are emphasising a physical nature known through science that they divorce from any social and cultural context. Not only would I argue that this is impossible, (all concepts, be they defined by natural science or something else, are social constructions) but it's also potentially dangerous and misguided. For example, understanding nature as that which is divorced from humanity leads one to ignore crucial differences amongst social groups in how they interact with the natural world, and the complex social and cultural reasons why humans might interact with nature in way that is ecologically destructive.

[10] Bill Willers, "The Trouble with Cronon," *Wild Earth*, 6, 4 (1996/97): 59.

[11] Stephanie Mills, "The Wild and the Tame," 47.

[12] Robert Fulford, "The Lesson of Canadian Geography," *The Canadian Essay*, ed. Gerald Lynch and David Rampton (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991) 277.

[13] Gerald W. Creed and Barbara Ching, "Recognizing Rusticity: Identity and the Power of Place" *Knowing Your Place – Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy*, ed. Barbara Ching and Gerald W. Creed (New York: Routledge, 1997) 6-12; Doreen Massey, "Introduction," *Geography Matters!* ed. Doreen Massey and John Allen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 3.

[14] Creed and Ching, 6.

[15] David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion - Society and Difference in the West* (New York: Routledge, 1995) xv.

[16] Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, Introduction," *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992) xiv.

[17] A good environmental example of such a critique can be found in some of the papers found in *Reinventing Nature? – Responses to Postmodern Deconstruction*, ed., Michael E. Soulé and Gary Lease (Washington, D.C./Covelo CA: Island Press, 1995).

Endnotes, pages 5 to 17

[18] Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987) 24.

[19] Derek Gregory and Rex Walford, "Introduction: Making Geography," *Horizons in New Geography* ed. Derek Gregory and Rex Walford (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1989) 2.

[20]bell hooks, *Outlaw Cultures - Resisting Representations* (New York: Routledge, 1994) 1 – 8.

[21]Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren as quoted by bell hooks, *Outlaw Cultures*, 3.

[22]Gerald Pocius, *A Place to Belong – Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert Newfoundland* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1991).

[23]James C. Faris, *Cat Harbour – A Newfoundland Fishing Settlement* (St. John's, NF: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1973).

[24]Paul Voisey, *Vulcan – The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

[25]See for example William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983); *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991); "Kennecott Journey – The Paths Out of Town," *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past*, ed. William Cronon, George Miles and Jay Gitlin (New York : W.W. Norton, 1992).

[26] This phrase comes from Lorraine Code, *Rhetorical Spaces- Essays on Gendered Locations* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[27]Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "Introduction Part I: The Politics of Place," *Place and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993) 5.

[28] Doreen Massey, "Travelling Thoughts," *Without Guarantees – In Honour of Stuart Hall*, ed. Paul Gilroy, Lawrence Grossberg and Angela McRobbie (New York: Verso, 2000) 229.

[29] Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory, "Agents, Subjects and Human Geography," *Reading Human Geography – The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*, ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1997) 356.

Chapter two

[1] Jennifer Platt, "Cases of cases...of cases," *What is a Case?- Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*, ed. Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 21.

Endnotes, pages 17 to 22

[2] Charles C. Ragin, "Introduction: Cases of 'What is a Case?'," *What is a Case?- Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*, ed. Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 11.
[3] Ragin, 6.
[4] William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey - The Paths out of Town," *Under an Open Sky - Rethinking America's Western Past*, ed. William Cronon, George Miles and Jay Gitlin (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 1992) 33.
[5] Cronon, 32.
[6] Edgar Borgatta and Marie Borgatta, *Encyclopaedia of Sociology* (Toronto: MacMillian Canada, 1992) 1577.
[7] Frank Parkin, *Max Weber* (1982: New York: Routledge, 1991).
[8] John Creswell, *Research Design – Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994) 145.
[9] Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research," *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).
[10] Denzin and Lincoln, "Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research," Handbook of Qualitative Research, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994) 2; Cary Nelson, Paula A. Treichler and Lawrence Grossberg, "Cultural Studies," Cultural Studies, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula A. Treichler (New York: Routledge: 1992); Claude Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); and, Deanna Weinstein and Michael A. Weinstein "Georg Simmel: Sociological (Flaneur) Bricoleur," *Theory, Culture & Society*, 8 (1991): 151-168.
[11] Raymond A. Morrow with David D. Brown, *Critical Theory and Methodology* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994) xiv.
[12] Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3.
[13] Denzin and Lincoln, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*.
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[15] Jane Flax, "The End of Innocence," *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992) 460.
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[19] Weedon, 10.
[20] Weedon, 32.

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[22] Guba and Lincoln, 109.
[23] Thomas A. Schwandt, "Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry," *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994) 118.
[18] Joe L. Kincheloe and Peter McLaren, "Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research," *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994) 139-140
[25] Kincheloe and McLaren, 146
[26] Guba and Lincoln, 110 – 111.
[27] Schwandt, 125.
[28] Schwandt, 119.
[29] Guba and Lincoln, 111.
[30] Alvin Ward Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Society* (New York: Basic, 1970).
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[32] Gordon Marshall, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 114.
[33] Schwandt, 127.
[34] This may seem like too obvious a statement to make, or as if I am substantiating caricatures of poststructuralism. However, given that many in the environmental and wilderness community often conflate poststructuralism, social constructionism and postmodernism and see these theoretical perspectives as 'deconstructionist' analyses in which "there is no 'real' - only 'social construction'", I think it bears repeating that to believe reality to be socially constructed does not mean that you argue against the existence of the material world. See for example, Charlene Spretnak, *The Resurgence of the Real – Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World* (New York: Routledge, 1999) and Michael Soulé and Gary Lease, eds. *Reinventing Nature? - Responses to Postmodern Deconstruction* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1995).
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[37] Layder, 44.
[38] Layder, 45.
[39] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) 3.
[40] Lakoff and Johnson, 4 - 5.

[41] Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 1979) 12.

[42] For example, in the first pages of their book, *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson discuss the metaphor of an argument is war. Some of the common expressions that illustrate this idea include: "Your claims are *indefensible*"; "I've never *won* an argument with him"; and, "He *shot* down all my arguments". They further elaborate that we don't just talk about arguments as war, we also win or lose arguments, we see those we are arguing against as opponents and attack positions and lose ground. They explain that many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war and this has a number of implications for how we think about arguing. In this sense, the concept of an argument as war is not just a matter of language but more broadly, human thought processes are largely metaphorical. 4-6.

[43] Geraldine Pratt, "Spatial Metaphors and Speaking Positions," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 10 (1992): 241-244.

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[45] Pratt, 241.

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Chapter three

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[3] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers. (Toronto, ON: Paladin Grafton Books, 1973) 123.

[4] Henrietta Lidchi, "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London, Sage, 1997) 182

[5] John Frow and Meaghan Morris, "Australian Cultural Studies," *What is Cultural Studies? - A Reader*, ed. John Storey (London: Arnold, 1996) 355.

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[7] Steven Seidman, *Contested Knowledge - Social Theory in the Postmodern Era* (Oxford, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994) 202.

[8] Seidman, 206 –7.

[9] Seidman, 207.

[10] Peter Berger, "Towards a Sociological Understanding of Psychoanalysis, "*Social Research* 32 (1965) as quoted in Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (1981: Toronto, ON: Bantam Books, 1989) 35.

[11] Jane Flax, "The End of Innocence," *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992) 447.

[12] Flax, 453.

[13] Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Times*, trans. Jon Barnes. (New York: Verso, 1990) 100.

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[15] Mark Cousins and Athar Hussain, *Michel Foucault* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984) 84 - 5.

[16] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (Harmondsworth, UK: Allen Lane/Penguin Books, 1978) 100-102.

[17] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge - Selected Interviews & Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans.Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980) 131.

[18] Chris Weedon, 23.

[19] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. and trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall John Mepham and Kate Soper (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

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[21] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 119.

[22] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish – The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[23] The Panopticon is an architectural structure designed by Jeremy Bentham composed of an internal central tower enclosed by an outerlying ring divided into separate cells. Each cell has two windows, one on the inside facing the tower and the other on the outside, allowing natural light to illuminate the cells entire space. The structure allows for constant surveillance but in such a way that the individuals in each cell never know when they are being observed. The effect is an automising and disindividualisation of power as each cell resident is never sure when they are actually being watched but is aware of the constant possibility and

hence self disciplines their own actions.

[24] Hall,"The Work of Representation," 51.

[25] Hall,"The Work of Representation," 56.

[26] Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, "New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time," 100 as quoted in Hall, The Work of Representation," 71.

[27] Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984) 369.

[28] Butler, 7, 14, 17.

[29] Elaine Baldwin, Brian Longhurst, Scott McCracken, Miles Ogborn and Greg Smith *Introducing Cultural Studies* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1999) 147.

[30] Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory, "Place and Landscape," *Reading Human Geography - The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*, ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: Arnold, 1997) 292.

[31] Barnes and Gregory, 293.

[32] Barnes and Gregory, "Introduction: Reading Human Geography – The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry," *Reading Human Geography – The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*, ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: Arnold, 1997) 2.

[33] According to Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory, new cultural geography is an approach to human geography that emerged in the 1980s in Britain and North America and makes explicit use of social, cultural and increasingly psychoanalytical theory to understand places and landscapes. New cultural geographers often discuss relations between power, identity and representation and like cultural studies has been influenced by postmodernism, poststructuralism and postcolonialism. "Glossary", *Reading Human Geography - The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*, ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: Arnold, 1997) 511.

[34] David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*. 1973 (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1988).

[35] Barnes and Gregory, "Grand Theory and Geographical Practice," *Reading Human Geography – The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*, ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: Arnold, 1997) 85.

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[38] Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography – The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) 43.

[39] Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).

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[41] Rose, 46.
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[44] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 6.
[45] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 147.
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[47] David Harvey, "From Space to Place and Back Again: Reflections on the Condition of Postmodernity," *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures. Global Change*, ed. Jon Bird et. al. (London: Routledge, 1993) 11.
[48] Tuan, "Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective," *Progress in Human Geography*, 6 (1974): 218.
[49] David Seamon, *A Geography of Lifeworld: Movement, Rest, Encounter* (London: Croom , 1979).
[50] Rose, 49.
[51] Daniel Williams, M. Patterson and J. Roggenbuck, "Beyond the Commodity Metaphor: Examining Emotional and Symbolic Attachment to Place" *Leisure Sciences*, 14: 29-46; Williams, "Environment, Modernity and Ecosystem Management: A Place for Sense of Place Research", Sixth International Symposium on Society and Resource Management, Pennsylvania State University, May, 1996.
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[53] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 154.
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[55] I use the word geographer hesitantly here for while many of the scholars of space whose ideas I have borrowed and integrated as part of my own thinking about space and place are geographers, there are some who are not. For example, John Urry commonly discusses space and spatial theory in his research and would be included by many as contributing to the broad domain of new cultural geography, yet he is a sociologist.

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[69] Massey, "Travelling Thoughts," 228.
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[73] Said, 322.
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[77] Sibley, 76.

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[79] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) 300.

[80] Paul Cloke and Jo Little, "Introduction: Other Countrysides?" *Contested Countryside Cultures: Otherness, Marginalisation and Rurality*, ed. Paul Cloke and Jo Little (New York: Routledge, 1997); Andy C. Pratt, "Discourses of Rurality: Loose Talk or Social Struggle," *Journal of Rural Studies, 12*,1 (1996): 69- 78.

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[83] Chris Philo, "Postmodern Rural Geography?: A Reply to Murdoch and Pratt," *Journal of Rural Studies, 9*, 4 (1993): 428-436.

[84] Note that while wilderness areas are broadly located in rural zones, most environmentalists would make a clear distinction between rural areas and wilderness. Although a highly contested term, generally wilderness is associated with areas of land and water that have no or very little evidence of human disturbance.

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[90] Ellen Wall and Barbara Beardwood, "Standardizing Globally, Responding Locally: The New Infrastructure, ISO 14000, and Canadian Agriculture," *Studies in Political Economy, 64* (Spring 2001): 38.

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[103] Zygmunt Bauman, *Community - Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001).

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[116] Iris Marion Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *Feminism and Community*, ed, Penny A. Weiss and Marilyn Friedman (Philadephia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995) 233-257.

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[122] Some might argue that early NSMs such as the civil rights movement, antiwar movement and even the early environmental movement were contesting political power structures and practices, and not in their eyes, systems of representation. As many NSM theorists have pointed out, what makes these movements new is in part that they not only direct their demands to the state and political institutions but also deal with symbolic production

and the constitution of new identities. While many of these groups likely do not speak of their activities as focused on challenging systems of representation, certainly in challenging hegemonic discourses that was what they were doing. For a fuller examination of the focus of NSMs contestations, see: Eduardo Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization: The Need for Integration," *Organizing Dissent – Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice*, ed. William Carroll (Garamond Press, 1992) 22 – 51; William K. Carroll, "Introduction: Social Movements and Counter-Hegemony in a Canadian Context," *Organizing Dissent – Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice*, ed. William Carroll (Garamond Press, 1992) 1- 19; and, Russell J. Dalton, Manfred Kuechler and Wilhelm Bürklin, "The Challenge of New Movements, *Challenging the Political Order – New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*, ed. Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 3-20.

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[126] Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," *Social Research, 52*, 4 (1985): 810, as quoted in Laurie Adkin, "Ecology and Labour," 76.

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[128] Offe, "New Social Movements".

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[2] Donald Worster, *Under Western Skies – Nature and History in the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 232.

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[43] Brian Masterson, personal interview, March 5, 1997.
[44] Potyondi, 104.
[45] Ruth Melindy for example talks about the lines still visible on the steep slopes of her family's ranch. "So I think they probably, they farmed just about everything they could possibly farm. You can see on the hill sides, really steep hills, you can see the lines still from how far up they farmed. So I think they farmed just whatever they could. And they had such a small piece of land they had to farm, grow whatever they could wherever they could grow it."

[46] "Morden," *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass - History of the Pioneers of Pincher Creek and District* (Pincher Creek, AB, Pincher Creek Historical Society, 1974) 124-129.
[47] Potyondi, 126.
[48] Albert Milton Morden, for example, won a medal and diploma for grain grown on fallow ground without irrigation at the Chicago World's Exposition in 1892-93, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass - History of the Pioneers of Pincher Creek and District* (Pincher Creek, AB: Pincher Creek Historical Society, 1974) 128.
[49] Potyondi, 120.
[50] Barry Watson, personal interview, March 5, 1997.
[51] Watson.
[52] Michael Troughton, "Redefining Rural for the Twenty-First Century," Health in Rural Settings: From the Ground Up Conference, Lethbridge, AB, Sept. 9 – 12.
[53] Lana Sturby, personal interview, April 15, 1997.
[54] Ruth Melindy, personal interview, March 21, 1997.
[55] Alan Timms, personal interview, Sept. 3, 1998.
[56] B.O.K. Reeves, "Prehistoric Peoples of the Crowsnest Pass," in *Crowsnest and Its People* (Coleman, AB: Crowsnest Pass Historical Society, 1979) 13 - 19.
[57] Russell, 36.
[58] Russell, 37.
[59] Reeves, 13-19.
[60] Consider for example the origin stories told by Clarise Nicholls and Robert Stacks as discussed on p. 110.
[61] Piikani Nation is the name anthropologists use, but commonly, even amongst Native peoples, they are known as Peigan, and hence, I have used the latter name.
[62] Henry Plains Hawk, personal interview, Aug. 19, 1997.
[63] Jack Glenn, *Once Upon an Oldman – Special Interest Politics and the Oldman River Dam* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1999) 17.
[64] Plains Hawk.
[65] North and South America were organised around basically four social formations in pre-commercial times (pre-commercial fur trade & slave trade). The most basic social formation was the communal "band" societies. People lived in extended family groups and had pretty healthy economies that required seasonal migration patterns. Seasonal migration on the prairies involved following the bison to winter (to the winter camp) in the forest and then follow them to the grasslands in the spring and summer. So they had seasonal camps which would include locations where the fish ran and the birds arrived or departed in abundance. There

was also times where people met in larger group gatherings for social purposes where trade or gift exchange was carried out in a non-commercial way. This kind of economy fostered a sharing and caring culture as people depended on co-operation, commitment to group well-being, and values that were non-materialistic. It seems that people moved from communal band societies to "tribal" societies depending on their resource base. The tribal societies had agriculture/ horticulture and built year round structures. Also they held on to most of the communal band societies' values of sharing and caring but had more organised distribution of resources. "Confederacy" is basically a war-like formation, a survival response to an overwhelming enemy, intense commercial competition. It was in the geographic regions where the tribal societies existed that the confederacy formation emerged. The third formation is "chiefdoms" which seems to have emerged in areas with lots of natural resources like the west coast and included the emergence of male heads of families and much more privitisation of wealth. The fourth stage was full-blown class structured societies that you find among the Aztecs and Mayans in Mexico and central American areas. These societies had a ruling class and a religious class that was supported by slave labour. The term "nation" is a modern political definition. Sometimes these terms are used on the level of "high politics"- the aboriginal political leadership speaking to the "Canadian/USA political leadership" on modern-day talk about self-determination/sovereign nationhood. Louise Champagne, University of Manitoba, personal e-mail October 18, 2001.

[66] Gibbard and Sheppard, 5.

[67] Plains Hawk.

[68] Marty, 44.

[69] Don Gayton, The Wheatgrass Mechanism - Science and Imagination in the Western Canadian Landscape (Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House Publishers, 1990) 13.

[70] Russell, 63; Alberta Environmental Protection et. al., *The Grassland Natural Region of Alberta*, report prepared for the Special Places 2000 Provincial Co-ordinating Committee, (n.p., March 1997).

[71] Plains Hawk.

[72] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest - the Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York/London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987) 26.

[73] Plains Hawk.

[74] Plains Hawk.

[75] Potyondi, i.

[76] Chester B. Beaty, *The Landscapes of Southern Alberta – A Geomorphology*, maps and diagrams, G. Stanley Young (Lethbridge, AB: University of Lethbridge, 1975).

[77] Willock, 18.
[78] Marty, 42
[79] Plains Hawk.
[80] Gibbard and Sheppard, 32
[81] Russell, 55.
[82] Marty, 43.
[83] Marty, 43.
[84] Marty, 43.
[85] Russell, 60.
[86] I use the word 'Indian' quite purposefully here and throughout this section but also with some hesitancy. I recognise that the term Indian is often used in a derogatory way or out of ignorance to speak about many of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. However, in putting together this section most of the authors I quote and utilised to understand the history of the Peigan spoke of this group as Indians. As well, in interviewing a number of Peigan, they too used the term Indian to refer to themselves and their fellow Peigan.
[87] Farley Wuth, "Historical Contributions of the Palliser Expedition, 1857-60," *Pincher Creek Echo*, 22, Oct. 1996, 17.
[88] Marty, 44.
[89] Gibbard and Sheppard, 6.
[90] Potyondi, 3.
[91] Potyondi, 6.
[92] Potyondi, 4.
[93] Plains Hawk.
[94] Potyondi, 3.
[95] Brado, 36.
[96] Russell, 99.
[97] Potyondi, 15.
[98] Marty, 47.
[99] Cottonwood Consultants, *Environmentally Significant Areas in the Oldman River Region - Municipal District of Pincher Creek* (Lethbridge, AB: Resource Evaluation and Planning, Alberta Forestry Lands and Wildlife and Oldman River Planning Commission, 1987) 7.
[100] Cottonwood Consultants, 7.
[101] Marty, 39-49; Potyondi, 17.
[102] Marty, 56.
[103] Marty, 56.
[104] Nicholls.
[105] Plains Hawk
[106] John Palliser as quoted in Marty, 60.
[107] Marty, 60.

[108] Marty, 60.
[109] Potyondi, 19.
[110] Plains Hawk.
[111] Gibbard and Sheppard, 8.
[112] Plains Hawk.
[113] E.G. Jacker et. al., *Pincher Creek Oldtimer's Souvenir Album* (Pincher Creek, AB: The Oldtimer's Association, 1958).
[114] Nelson Limerick,191
[115] Plains Hawk.
[116] Plains Hawk.
[117] Plains Hawk.
[118] Plains Hawk.
[119] Plains Hawk.
[120] Sarah Wounded Knee, personal interview, Feb. 26, 1998.
[121] Plains Hawk.
[122] Lana Sturby, personal interview, April 15, 1997.
[123] Wounded Knee.
[124] Wounded Knee.
[125] Willock, 18.
[126] Gibbard and Sheppard, 4.
[127] Gibbard and Sheppard, 4.
[128] Gibbard and Sheppard, 4.
[129] Gibbard and Sheppard, 8.
[130] Watson.
[131] Fred M. Huddleston, *A History of the Settlement and Building Up of the Area in S.W. Alberta Bordering Waterton Park on the North - From 1889* (np. 1968) 22.
[132] Huddleston, 36
[133] Huddleston, 97.
[134] Huddleston, 19.
[135] Gibbard and Sheppard, 8.
[136] Freebairn, 7.
[137] Gibbard and Sheppard, 25, 28.
[138] Gibbard and Shepherd, 25.
[139] Potyondi, 132.
[140] Huddleston, 44. The Bosporous Straits originate in Waterton Lakes National Park, their tributaries reaching back into a mountainous area just east of the Waterton Lakes.
[141] A.A. den Otter, *Irrigation in Southern Alberta, 1882 - 1901*, Occasional Paper No. 5 (Lethbridge, AB: Whoop Up County Chapter Historical Society, 1975) 7.
[142] den Otter, 7

[143] den Otter, 7.
[144] den Otter, 8
[145] Alberta Environment, 9.
[146] Huddleston, 43.
[147] Charles Russell, Beth Russell, John Russell and Valerie Haig-Brown, *Waqterton and Northern Glacier Trails for Hikers and Riders* (Waterton Park, AB: Waterton Natural History Association, 1995),7.
[148] Pincher Creek and District Economic Development Board, *Pincher Creek and Area – Community and Industrial Profile* (np, March 1986).
[149] Watson.
[150] Watson.
[151] Gibbard and Sheppard, 17.
[152] Gibbard and Sheppard, 77.
[153] Gibbard and Sheppard, 17.
[154] Southwest Alberta Business Development Centre, *Pincher Creek Community Profile*, (photocopied) 3.1, 3.5.
[155] *Survey of Pincher Creek* (Alberta Government and Publicity Bureau - Department of Tourism) 6
[156] "The British American Oil Plant Opens," editorial, *Pincher Creek Echo*, 16 October, 1957: 2.
[157] "The British American Oil Plant Opens".
[158] Rose Saunders, "Shell Well Celebrates 40 Years," *Pincher Creek Echo*, 22, April, 1997: 6.
[159] *Survey of Pincher Creek*, 6.
[160] Watson.
[161] Watson.
[162] Alberta Environment, *South Saskatchewan River Basin Planning Program* (np: July 1984) 10.
[163] Alberta Environment, 10.
[164] Alberta Environment, 3.1.3.4.
[165] Oldman River Regional Planning Commission, *Oldman River Region: Regional Plan* (n.p. Lethbridge, AB, Sept. 1984) 50.
[166] Wayne Hailey, personal interview, July 17, 1997.
[167] Alberta Wilderness Association, *Map of Protected Areas in Alberta* (Calgary, AB: Alberta Wilderness Association, 1991).
[168] Alberta Environmental Protection et. al, 5.
[169] Willock, 73.
[170] Alberta Environmental Protection et. al, 4.
[171] Willock, 44,74.
[172] Gibbard and Sheppard, 25, 28.
[173] Gibbard and Shepherd, 28.
[174] Gibbard and Sheppard, 28.

[175] Gibbard and Shepherd, 25.
[176] Salt sage isn't sage at all but a member of the Goosefoot family.
[177] Willock, 30-33.
[178] Gibbard and Sheppard,.31 - 35.
[179] Gibbard and Sheppard, 34.
[180] Gibbard and Sheppard, 146-149.
[181] Willock, 33.
[182] Hailey.
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[184] William Michalsky, letter to Dick Pharis (both associated with the Alberta Wilderness Association), Jan. 20, 1977.
[185] Ed Connors, personal interview, October 3, 1997.
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[187] Hailey.
[188] Kevin Van Tighem, *Coming West - A Natural History of Home* (Canmore, AB: Altitude Publishing, 1997) 154.
[189] Glenn, 25.
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[191] Glenn, 44.
[192] Glenn, 49.
[193] Glenn, 56.
[194] Canada, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, *Oldman River Dam - Report of the Environmental Assessment Panel*, (Hull, PQ; Minister of the Environment) i.
[195] Canada, appendices E and F.
[196] Cliff Wallis, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*, diskette, Lethbridge, AB, November 5, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) no p.
[197] Glenn, chapter 25.
[198] Natural Resources Conservation Board, *Application to Construct Recreational and Tourism Facilities in the West Castle Valley, near Pincher Creek, Alberta* (n.p. December, 1993).
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[201] Gibbard and Sheppard, 10.
[202] Gibbard and Sheppard, 10.
[203] Natural Resources Conservation Board, 3-2.
[204] Natural Resources Conservation Board, 12-13.
[205] Alberta, Ministry of the Environment: http: www3.gov.ab.ca/env/parks sp_places/regional.html#rocky
[206] Friends of the Whaleback brochure (u.p. n.d.).
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Chapter five

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[3] Leonard Bougerolle, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on Management of the Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin, Vol. 8*, Cowley, AB, Nov. 6, 29, 1978, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 123-4.
[4] Susan Hall, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on Management of the Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin, Vol. 8*, Cowley, AB, Nov. 6, 29, 1978, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 239.
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[16] Joe Thibert, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on Management of the Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin, Vol. 8*, Cowley, AB, Nov. 6, 29, 1978, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 100 –101.

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[24] Hall, "The Work of Representation," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London/Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1997) 49-50.

[25] Weedon, 31.

[26] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power, *Critical Inquiry, 8* (1982) 789-790.

[27] Scott: 34.

[28] Scott, 31.

[29] Study Group on Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures, *Public Review: Neither Judicial, Nor Political, But an Essential Forum for the Future of the Environment, A Report Concerning the Reform of Public Hearing Procedures for Federal Environmental Assessment and Reviews* (Ottawa, ON: Supply and Services Canada, 1988) 2-3 as quoted in Richardson, Sherman and Gismondi, 9.

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[32] Scott Hammond, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on Management of the Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin, Vol. 7*, Pincher Creek, AB, Nov. 6, 29, 1978, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 65.

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[40] Ian Urquhart, "Blind Spots in the Rearview Mirrors: Livelihood and the Cheviot Debate," *Writing off the Rural West – Globalization, Governments, and the Transformation of Rural Communities*, ed. Roger Epp and Dave Whitson (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 2001), 127.

[41] Catriona Sandilands, *The Good-Natured Feminist – Ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999) 38.

[42] Alan Timms, personal interview, Sept. 3, 1998.

[43] Robert Stacks, personal interview, June 22, 1997.

[44] Stuart Hall, "The Global, The Local and the Return of Ethnicity," *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*, ed. C. Lemert (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999) 626 – 633.

[45] Hall, "The Global, The Local and the Return of Ethnicity," 629-630.

[46] Not all people use the term Old Stock but most of the people of European descent I talked to and read about do consider ranchers the original settlers of the Oldman River basin.

[47] Robert Stacks, personal interview, June 22, 1997.

[48] See for example the introduction to chapter four, pages 94 to 96.

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[50] White, 615.

[51] White, 616.

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[55] Lana Sturby, personal interview, April 15, 1997.
[56] Mary Walsh, February 21, 1997.
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[58] Creed and Ching, 3.
[59] Pierre Bordieu, *Homo Academicus* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1984) 327 as quoted in Ching and Creed, 18.
[60] Brian Masterson, personal interview, 2.
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[65] Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "Introduction Part 1: The Politics of Place...", *Place and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (London/New York: Routledge: 1990) 20.
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[71] Melindy.
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[73] Wayne Hailey, personal interview, July 17, 1997.
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[75] *A Report on Alberta Elections, 1905- 1982* (Edmonton, AB: n.p., 1983).
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Chapter six

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[3] Field notes, August 16, 1996.
[4] Field notes, August, 1996.
[5] Peggy Walsh, personal interview, February 21, 1997.
[6] Brian Masterson, personal interview, March 5, 1997.
[7] Kim O'Brien, personal interview, Sept. 25, 1997.
[8] Rex Gibson, personal interview, June 22, 1997.
[9] Audrey Westrop, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam.* diskette, Pincher Creek, November 19, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.
[10] Field notes, July 11, 1996.
[11] Vera Torrington, personal interview, August 8, 1998.
[12] Zygmunt Bauman, *Community - Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2001) 14.
[13] Field notes, Sept. 3, 1998.
[14] Field notes, June 12, 1996.
[15] Walsh.
[16] Masterson. When he speaks about Napi he is referring to the Napi Friendship Centre. Through educational, social, cultural and recreational activities and programs (the most well-known of which is a Christmas Pow Wow) they attempt to create better understanding and communication between the communities of Pincher Creek and the Peigan Nation.
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[18] Henry Plains Hawk, personal interview, August 19, 1997.
[19] Plains Hawk.
[20] Masterson.
[21] Edna Graves, personal interview, November 1996.
[22] Paul Torrington, personal interview, August 8, 1998.
[23] David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion* (New York: Routledge, 1995) 14.
[24] Masterson.
[25] Elspeth Probyn, *Outside Belongings* (New York/London: Routledge, 1996): 11.
[26] Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace, *A Foucault Primer – Discourse, Power and the Subject* (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1997) 69.
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293, as quoted in Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994) 204.

[28] Eugene J. McCann, "Race, Protest, and Public Space: Contextualizing Lefebvre in the U.S. City," *Antipode, 31*, 2 (1999): 171.

[29] Field notes, August 16, 1996.

[30] McCann, 171.

[31] Bauman, 17.

[32] Masterson.

[33] Almost all those I spoke to about the Oldman River Dam spoke of how it divided the community. It wasn't just the Oldman Dam though that was pointed out as dividing or fragmenting the community. As Selena Cartwright explained, "there had been a lot of divisiveness in the community...a lot of divisiveness in the community around health and the environment." Personal interview, June 20, 1997.

[34] Ruth Melindy, personal interview, March 21, 1997.

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[39] Mayor and Council, Village of Cowley, *Welcome to Cowley* (N.P., n.p. January 1996) 4.

[40] Alan Timms, personal interview, Sept. 3, 1998.

[41] Statistics Canada.

[42] Carolyn Abraham, "Hutterites Embrace Wealth," Calgary Hearld, October 13, 1997: A5.

[43] Abraham.

[44] Alberta Community Development, public road plaque found on Highway 3, one kilometre west of Cowley.

[45] Field notes April 17, 1996.

[46] Field notes, May 3, 1996.

[47] Stacks.

[48] Field notes, Pincher Creek, July 1996. Focus group meeting with environmentalists for the Development for Community-Appropriate Health Promotion Models in Southern Alberta study.

[49] Robert Stacks, personal interview, June 22, 1997.

[50] Lana Sturby, personal interview, April 15, 1997.

[51] Field notes, May 17, 1996.

[52] Field notes, May 3, 1996.

[53] Field notes, May 3, 1996.

[54] Watson.

[55] Iris Marion Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *Feminism and Community*, ed. Penny A. Weiss and Marilyn Friedman (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995) 233 - 257.
[56] Sarah Wounded Knee, personal interview, February 26, 1998.
[57] Melindy.
[58] Hailey.
[59] Kevin Van Tighem, presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam.* diskette, Pincher Creek, Alberta, November 19, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.
[60] Stacks.
[61] Field notes, Pincher Creek, Environmental Focus Group for The Development of Community-Appropriate Health Promotion Models in Southern Alberta Study, July 1996.
[62] David Sheppard, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on Management of the Water Resources within the Oldman River Basin, Vol. 7*, Pincher Creek, AB, Nov. 6, 29, 1978, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 294.
[63] Field notes, Pincher Creek, Mental Health Workers Focus Group, The Development of Community-Appropriate Health Promotion Models in Southern Alberta Study, September 1996.
[64] Sturby.
[65] David Guterson, *Snow Falling on Cedars* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 439.
[66] For a fuller description of the effect of the panopticon see chapter three, endnote, 23, page 309 and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish - The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979): chapter 3.
[67] Field notes, July 27, 1996.
[68] Walsh.
[69] Timms.
[70] Hailey.
[71] Young, 233.
[72] Walsh.
[73] Melindy.
[74] Hailey.
[75] Harvey Locke, " The Yellowstone to Yukon Vision," in *Connections: Proceedings from the First Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative*, 45.
[76] Statistics Canada.
[77] Statistics Canada.
[78] Statistics Canada.

[79] Statistics Canada, "Welcome to Statistical Profiles of Canadian Communities. Census 96."Database on line. http://ceps.statscan.ca/english/profil/PlacesSearchForm1.ctm.

[80] Allan Pred, *Place, Practice and Structure – Social and Spatial Transformation in Southern Sweden: 1750-1850* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1986) 6.

[81] Plains Hawk.

[82] Dr. Brian Reeves, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*, diskette,. Pincher Creek, November 19, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[83] Jack Glenn, *Once Upon an Oldman – Special Interest Politics and the Oldman River Dam* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press) 157.

[84] Nick Smith, presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*, diskette, Brocket, Alberta, November 16, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[85] Clarise Nicholls, personal interview, February 5, 1997.

[86] Barry Potyondi, *Where the Rivers Meet – A History of the Upper Oldman River Basin* (Lethbridge, AB: Robins Southern Printing, 1992) 70.

[87] Potyondi, 86-87.

[88] Devalon Small Legs, presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*, diskette, Brocket, Alberta, November 19, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[89] Plains Hawk.

[90] Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," *Marxism Today* (June 1991): 24-29; "Travelling Thoughts," *Without Guarantees – In Honour of Stuart Hall*, ed. Paul Gilroy, Lawrence Grossberg and Angela McRobbie (New York: Verso, 2000) 225 – 232; " *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[91] David Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 80 (1990): 418.

[92] Allan Pred, *Place, Practice and Structure – Social and Spatial Transformation in Southern Sweden: 1750-1850* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1986).

[93] David Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 80 (1990), 418.

[94] Doreen Massey, "General Introduction," *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994) 1- 16.

[95] Potyondi, 56.

[96] Pincher Creek had a row of brothels quite prominently located across the street from Fred Kanouse's hotel. Hugh A. Dempsey, *The Golden Age of the Canadian Cowboy* (Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House, 1995) 56.

[97] Although I heard this from Clarise Nicholls, I likewise found references that seem to support Clarise's position that in the late 1800s women, unlike their male counterparts, did not journey West alone. For example, Potyondi tells a story about Mary Ella Lees, the half-sister of William Lees the resident manager of a local lumber mill, who was eager to accept an invitation from her brother to leave Ontario for the adventures of the West. In trying to convince her father to allow her to join her brother, Mary convinced her maid Lizzie to accompany her, certain that this factor would make all the difference in his position, p.39. Similarly, Doris Burton recounts the arrival of her mother Dora and Aunt Anna sailing across the Atlantic from Ireland and car journey to Calgary together. *Bert Riggall: Mountain Guide Extraordinary* (Hanna, AB: Gorman & Gorman, 1990) 10.

[98] Blunt and Rose; Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*; Linda McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place- Understanding Feminist Geographies* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography - The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

[99] Blunt and Rose, 3.

[100] Blunt and Rose, 3.

[101] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest – the Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York/London: W.W Norton & Company, 1987) 53.

[102] Clairise Nicholls, person interview, February 5, 1997.

[103] Doris A. Burton, *Bert Riggall - Mountain Guide Extraordinary* (Hanna, AB: Gorman & Gorman, 1990).

[104] Burton, *Babe's Sunshine: I Made My Own* (Lethbridge, AB: Robins Southern Printing, 1990) 30.

[105] Ruth Melindy, for example, talks about her father and uncle not getting along with him her grandfather very well because her grandfather was a "jerk". In the community he was perceived as charming, an upstanding man and well respected cowboy. But in his home life he didn't treat his children, and particularly, his wife very well.

[106] Kenneth L. Holmes, *Covered Wagon Women – Dairies and Letters from the Western Trails, 1840 – 1849, Volume 1.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983) 3-4.

[107] *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass: History of the Mountain Pioneers of Pincher Creek and District*, 110.

[108] Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, "Introduction: Women's Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies," *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and*

Postcolonial Geographies, ed. Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (New York: The Guilford Press, 1994) 1-25.

[109] Melindy.

[110] Kathleen M. Kirby, *Indifferent Boundaries - Spatial Concepts of Human Subjectivity* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1996) 123.

[111] Melindy.

[112] Massey, "Travelling Thoughts," 228.

[113] Massey, "General Introduction," *Space, Place and Gender*, 3-4. The quotation is cited from R. Flood and M. Lockwood, eds., *The Nature of Time* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) 4.

[114] This phrase is borrowed from Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979).

[115] John Pickles, "Texts, Hermeneutics and Propaganda Maps," *Writing Worlds - Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, eds. Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan (New York: Routledge, 1992) 193.

[116] J. B. Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Writing Worlds - Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, ed. Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan (New York: Routledge, 1992) 233.

[117] Blunt and Rose, 10.

[118] Harley, 236 - 237.

[119] Harley, 238.

[120] Limerick, 55.

[121] Potyondi, 21.

[122] M.L. Fellows and S. Razack, The Race to Innocence: Confronting Hierarchical Relations Among Women, *The Journal of Gender, Race and Justice*, 1 (1998): 43.

[123] Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994) 29.

[124] Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*: 30.

[125] Harley, 244.

[126] Blunt and Rose, 10.

[127] Potyondi, 58.

[128] Plains Hawk.

[129] G.L. Pocius, *A Place to Belong - Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert Newfoundland* (Athens, GA/London: The University of Georgia Press, 1991).

[130] Pocius, 5.

[131] Watson.

[132] Ed Conners, personal interview, October 17, 1997.

[133] Torrington.

[134] Hailey.

[135] Dianne Pachal, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam.* Pincher Creek, November 20, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[136] Cartwright.

[137] Stacks.

[138] Gibson.

[139] James Duncan, *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 184.

[140] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things – An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970).

[141] Denis Cosgrove, "Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea," *Reading Human Geography – The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry,* ed. Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1997) 333.

[142] Paul Cloke and Nigel Thrift, "Introduction: Refiguring the 'Rural,'" *Writing the Rural: Five Cultural Geographies,* ed. Paul Cloke, Marcus Doel, David Maless, Martin Phillips and Nigel Thrift (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1994) 1 – 5.

[143] Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998) 1.

[144] Mike Featherstone, *Undoing Culture – Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995) 81.

[145] See for example Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991) and *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990); or Sharon Zukin, *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

[146] For example: Mike Featherstone, *Undoing Culture – Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995; Featherstone and Scott Lash, "Introduction." *Spaces of Culture- City, Nation, World.* Ed. Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999. 1- 13; Massey, "Travelling Thoughts"; Kevin Robins "Tradition and Translation: National Culture in Its Global Context," *Enterprise and Heritage,* ed. J. Corner and Sylvia Harvey (Thousand Oaks: Routledge, 1991) 21- 37.

[147] Christopher Lind, *Something's Wrong Somewhere – Globalization, Community and the Moral Economy of the Farm Crisis* (Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 1995) 37.

[148] Timms.

[149] Frank Vanclay and Geoffrey Lawrence, *The Environmental Imperative – Eco-Social Concerns for Australian Agriculture* (Rockhampton, Q: Central Queensland University Press, 1995) 5.

[150] H.Friedmann, "Changes in the International Division of Labor- Agrifood Complexes and Export Agriculture," *Towards a New Political Economy of Agriculture*, ed. W. Friedland, L. Busch, F. Buttel and A. Rudy (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991) 65- 93 .as quoted in Vanclay and Lawrence, 5.

[151] Timms, 13.

[152] Thomas Michael Power, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam.* Lethbridge, AB, November 5, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[153] Power.

[154] Ray Rasker and Ben Alexander, *The New Challenge: People, Commerce and the Environment in the Yellowstone to Yukon Region.* (Bozeman, MT: The Wilderness Society, 1988) 26. Available on line at: www.wilderness.org/ccc/northrockies/y2y_report.pdf.

[155] Rasker and Alexander, 25.

[156] Rasker and Alexander, 26.

[157] Power.

[158] *1986 Census of Canada*, Ottawa, ON Statistics Canada.

[159] *1996 Census of Canada*, Ottawa, ON Statistics Canada.

[160] Rasker and Alexander, 36.

[161] John Weing, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam.* Calgary, AB, November 7, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.

[162] Power.

[163] Rasker and Alexander, 37.

[164] Hailey, 10.

[165] Michael Troughton, "Presidential Address: Rural Canada and Canadian Rural Geography- An Appraisal." *The Canadian Geographer* 39.4 (1995): 290-305; "Redefining Rural for the Twenty-First Century." Health in Rural Settings: From the Ground Up Conference. Lethbridge, AB. Sept. 9 – 12; "Scale Change, Discontinuity and Polarization on Canadian Farm-based Rural Systems." *Agricultural Restructuring and Sustainability.* Ed. B. Ilbery, Q. Chiotti and T. Rickard. N.P CAB International, 1997. 279 – 291.

[166] See for example, Kevin Robins, "Tradition and Translation: National Culture in Its Global Context," Eds. J. Corner and Sylvia Harvey, *Enterprise and Heritage.* (Thousand Oaks: Routledge, 1991) 21- 37.

[167] Watson, 33-34.

[168] Sturby, 13
[169] Hailey, 10.
[170] Walsh, 22.
[171] Statistics Canada, 1996.
[172] Statistics Canada, 1996.
[173] Statistics Canada, 1996.
[174] Wounded Knee, 7- 8.
[175] Masterson.
[176] Power.
[177] Rasker and Alexander, 39.
[178] Timms, 7.
[179] Kevin Robins "Tradition and Translation: National Culture in Its Global Context," *Enterprise and Heritage*, ed. J. Corner and Sylvia Harvey (Thousand Oaks: Routledge, 1991), 31.
[180] Haily, 3.
[181] Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, "Introduction," *Spaces of Culture- City, Nation, World*, ed., Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1999) 1.
[182] Sturby, 7.
[183] Paul and Vera Torrington.
[184] John Nikkel, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*.diskette, Lethbridge, AB, November 5, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.
[185] Kevin Van Tighem, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*.diskette, Lethbridge, AB, November 5, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p., 1992) n. p.
[186] "Leopold's Land Ethic" which Gibson mentions refers to an often quoted passage from an environmental favourite, *A Sand County Almanac*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966) by Aldo Leopold in which he stated: "a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the natural environment. And it's wrong when it tends otherwise."
[187] John Urry, "The Tourist Gaze and the Environment," *Consuming Places* (New York: Routledge, 1995) 179.
[188] Tim Abbe, public presentation, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental Assessment on the Oldman River Dam*. Calgary, AB, November 7, 1991. Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (Vancouver, BC: n.p, 1992) n. p.
[189] Phil Handcock, public presentation quoting from a report by Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife for the Crowsnest Corridor Local Resource Plan, *Proceedings of the Public Hearings on the Federal Environmental*

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[190] Gibson, 13.

[191] Hailey.

[192] Stacks, 3. In this quote Stacks refers to wilderness writer Bill McKibben who in a book titled, *The End of Nature*, argues that human manipulation of nature has caused global climate change and subsequently the nature we once knew no longer exists. In short, nature has effectively been killed and we as humans are responsible for killing it.

[193] Pachal.

[194] Featherstone, *Undoing Culture*, 92.

[195] Robins, 34.

[196] Toby Miller et.al., *Globalization and Sport: Playing the World* (London: Sage, 2001).

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[2] David W. Orr, *Earth in Mind – On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (Washington, DC/Covelo, CA: Island Press, 1994) 12.
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[3] Fieldnotes, Sept. 25, 1997.

[4] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994) 3.

[5] Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Times*, trans. Jon Barnes. (New York: Verso, 1990) 100.

[6] Massey, 3.

[7] Chantal Mouffe as quoted in Massey, 7.

[8] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Uncommon Ground – Toward Reinventing Nature.* Ed. William Cronon. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995) 69 – 90.

[9] Cronon, 80.

[10] Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: A Response," *Environmental History*, 1, 1: 53.

[11] Daniel Berthold-Bond, "The Ethics of 'Place': Reflections on Bioregionalism," *Environmental Ethics*, 22 (2000) 5- 24.

[12] Peter Berg and Raymond Dasman, "Reinhabiting California," *Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California*, ed. Peter Berg (San Francisco, CA: Planet Drum Foundation, 1978) 217-218, as quoted in Berthold-Bond, 6.

[13] Janet Pivnick, "Bioregionalism: Living in a Place," *Synchronicity: The Magazine* (Oct./Nov. 1997) 21.

[14] Michael Barbour, "Toward a Conclusion," *Uncommon Ground – Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995) 457.

[15] Mary Douglas, "Objects and Objections, Toronto Semiotic Monograph Series of ISC, No. 9 (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto, 1992) 6-7.

[16] Berthold-Bond, 7.

[17] David Sheppard, presentation to the Oldman River Study Management Committee, *Oldman River Basin: Phase II Studies: Report and Recommendations* (Lethbridge, AB: 1978, n.p.) 290.'

[18] Patricia Hill Collins, "Black Feminist Thought," *Gender: Key Concepts in Critical Theory*, ed. Carol C. Gould (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997) 160.

[19] Mick Smith, "To Speak of Trees: Social Constructivism, Environmental Values, and the Future of Deep Ecology," *Environmental Ethics*, 21 (1999) 359-376.

[20] Kate Sandilands, "Ecology as Politics: The Promise and Problems of the Ontario Greens," *Culture and Social Change, Social Movements in Quebec and Ontario*,. eds. Colin Leys and Marguerite Mandell. (Montréal, PQ: Black Rose Books, 1992) 75-94; (Catriona), The *Good-Natured Feminism- Ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

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[22] Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (New York: Verso, 1993).

[23] Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Times*, trans. Jon Barnes (New York: Verso, 1990); Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy – Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (New York: Verso, 1985).

[24] Sandilands, *The Good Natured Feminist*, 99.

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[25] Ian Urquhart, "Blind Spots in the Rearview Mirrors – Livelihood and the Cheviot Mine Debate," *Writing off the Rural West – Globalization, Governments, and the Transformation of Rural Communities*, eds. Roger Epp and Dave Whitson (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 2001) 141.

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Appendix 1
Personal Interviews Conducted

Open-ended taped interviews were conducted with the following people:
Peggy Walsh
Ruth Melindy
Clarise Nicholls
Barry Watson
Henry Plainshawk
Wayne Hailey
Ed Connors
Rex Gibson
Brian Masterson
Paul Torrington
Lana Sturby
Selena Cartwright
Robert Stacks
Sarah Wounded Knee
Alan Timms

Informal, open-ended interviews that were not taped were conducted with the following people:
Kim O'Brien
Julie Dixon
Terry Rush
Harry Webb
Gene Spelchuk

Note: All the above names are fictitious in order to protect the identity of those interviewed.