Conduits of Communion: Monstrous Affections in Algonquin Traditional Territory

Ian S.G. Puppe, The University of Western Ontario

Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Program
Anthropology

Supervisor
Dr. Regna Darnell

Abstract
This project investigates the legacies of shifting land tenure and stewardship practices on what is now known as the Ottawa Valley watershed (referred to as the Kitchissippi by the Omamawinini or Algonquin people), and the effects that this central colonization project has had on issues of identity and Nationalism on Canadians, diversely identified as settler-colonists of European or at least “Old World” descent and First Nations, Métis and Inuit (Lawrence 2012).

Focusing on historical and contemporary political and social issues related to Algonquin Provincial Park and its establishment, this project explores; 1) Competing claims levied by First Nations Peoples, local and descendant communities as well as representatives of the Canadian settler-colonist Nation-State regarding proper relationships to the environment and its stewardship; 2) Popular discursive and practical approaches to conservation, tourism, naturalism, and heritage management; and 3) The complicated entanglements of First Nations, settler-colonist, local and descendant communities and shifting identifications made evident by changes in economic relationships to the territory in and around the Park and in some peoples’ legal status vis-a-vis the Nation-State.

This dissertation draws on public history and traditional narrative as sources for a reconsideration of history, ethnohistory, and ethnography in relation to studies of the complex contemporary Canadian Nation-State. Contributing to a specifically Canadian anthropology, I develop vocabulary through which to engage the perpetuation of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge regarding the environment, health and relationality, and to counteract Intergenerational Trauma related to dispossession and the breakdown of identity, personal and collective, under settler-colonial pressures.

Recommended Citation

Indigenous territory — also referred to as traditional territory — describes the ancestral and contemporary connections of Indigenous peoples to a geographical area. Territories may be defined by kinship ties, occupation, seasonal travel routes, trade networks, management of resources, and cultural and linguistic connections to place. Mural on a building around the intersection of Main and Broadway in Vancouver, British Columbia, 2008. Artist unknown. Indigenous territory — also referred to as traditional territory — describes the ancestral and contemporary connections of Indigenous peoples to