

Body Histories and the Limits of Life in Asian Canadian Literature

by

Ranbir Kaur Banwait

M.A., Simon Fraser University, 2008

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in the

Department of English

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Ranbir Kaur Banwait 2014

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2014

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for "Fair Dealing." Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

Approval

Name: Ranbir Kaur Banwait
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (English)
Title of Thesis: *Body Histories and the Limits of Life in Asian Canadian Literature*
Examining Committee: **Chair:** Dr. Sean Zwagerman
Associate Professor of English

Dr. Christine Kim
Co-Senior Supervisor
Assistant Professor of English

Dr. David Chariandy
Co-Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor of English

Dr. Larissa Lai
Associate Professor of English
University of Calgary

Dr. Lara Campbell
Internal Examiner
Associate Professor of Gender,
Sexuality, and Women's Studies

Dr. Donald Goellnicht
External Examiner
Professor of English and Cultural
Studies
McMaster University

Date Defended/Approved: July 24, 2014

Partial Copyright Licence



The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the non-exclusive, royalty-free right to include a digital copy of this thesis, project or extended essay[s] and associated supplemental files ("Work") (title[s] below) in Summit, the Institutional Research Repository at SFU. SFU may also make copies of the Work for purposes of a scholarly or research nature; for users of the SFU Library; or in response to a request from another library, or educational institution, on SFU's own behalf or for one of its users. Distribution may be in any form.

The author has further agreed that SFU may keep more than one copy of the Work for purposes of back-up and security; and that SFU may, without changing the content, translate, if technically possible, the Work to any medium or format for the purpose of preserving the Work and facilitating the exercise of SFU's rights under this licence.

It is understood that copying, publication, or public performance of the Work for commercial purposes shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

While granting the above uses to SFU, the author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in the Work, and may deal with the copyright in the Work in any way consistent with the terms of this licence, including the right to change the Work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the Work in whole or in part, and licensing the content to other parties as the author may desire.

The author represents and warrants that he/she has the right to grant the rights contained in this licence and that the Work does not, to the best of the author's knowledge, infringe upon anyone's copyright. The author has obtained written copyright permission, where required, for the use of any third-party copyrighted material contained in the Work. The author represents and warrants that the Work is his/her own original work and that he/she has not previously assigned or relinquished the rights conferred in this licence.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2013

Abstract

Histories of racialization in Canada are closely tied to the development of eugenics and racial hygiene movements, but also to broader concerns, expressed throughout Western modernity, regarding the “health” of nation states and their subjects. This dissertation analyses books by Velma Demerson, Hiromi Goto, David Chariandy, Rita Wong, Roy Miki and Larissa Lai to argue that Asian Canadian literature reveals, in heightened critical terms, how the politics of racial difference has consistently been articulated through the language of bodily health, life, and feeling. Building upon existing debates in Asian Canadian literary studies, and drawing from interdisciplinary scholarship in biopolitics and affect theory, the dissertation reveals how the discourse of “life” and “health” has served as the rationale for practices such as internment, sterilization, and unauthorized medical experiments, but also how the literature and theory of the feeling body, including its memories, symptoms, and conceptual limits, can promote awareness both of historical injustice and of the new terms informing the cultural politics of race today.

Keywords: Asian Canadian literature; Affect theory; Biopolitics; Eugenics and medicalization; Racialization

For Be ji and Papa ji, and Mum and Daj,
with love and affection

Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge the support of my supervisory committee, who have always mentored in the spirit of intellectual generosity. Many thanks to my co-supervisors Dr. Christine Kim and Dr. David Chariandy. I thank Dr. Kim for her brilliant intellect and for insisting on intellectual rigour, for providing incisive feedback, for the many discussions we've had about Asian Canadian studies over the years, and for always returning me to Asian Canadian literature. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Chariandy for his infinite patience as I slowly developed my ideas, for his hospitality over the years, for always sharing the astounding breadth of his knowledge, for always giving insightful responses to my work, for his incredibly generous support, guidance and careful edits during the final stages of the dissertation, and for inspiring me by showing me how to write differently. I would also like to thank Dr. Larissa Lai for providing thought-provoking feedback, for challenging me to try harder, for crucial lessons in writing and for sharing her inspirational ideas.

This dissertation was made possible by the generous support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Simon Fraser University.

I am also thankful to the SFU community and the English Department in particular, for providing an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment for academic work. Graduate Chair Jeff Derksen, graduate secretary Christa Gruninger and department manager Maureen Curtin have all provided invaluable support, and librarians Rebecca Dowson and Yolanda Koscielski offered important guidance during the research process. Thesis assistants Joanie Wolfe and Amber Saunders provided indispensable help along the way. I would also like to thank April Leprette for so many encouraging words as I worked toward completion. Farah Moosa for many insightful conversations and support, and Kim Mulder, Graham Lyons, Christine McInnis Lyons, Jennifer Anne Scott,

Alison Dean, Marc Acherman, and Haida Arsenault-Antolick, for friendship and words of advice. A special thank you to Mohan Heer and Preet Gill. I am indebted to Dr. Lara Campbell for teaching a class in the first year of my PhD that came to deeply influence my thinking on the intersections of gender and medicalization. I am grateful to Dr. Roy Miki for inspiring me to pursue the study of Asian Canadian literature in the first place.

A special thank you to my family: my grandparents, Dharam Kaur Chera and Bhagat Singh Chera for so many words of love, guidance and wisdom during the formative years of my life, my great-mamaji, Ajit Singh Rye for invaluable advice early in my life, my masiji, Kailash Kaur Saini for so much love and so many blessings, my mama ji, Inderjit Singh Chera, for listening, and Roop S Saini, Kanweljot K Saini, Gurkirat K Saini, Gursanjit S Chera and Gulpawan K Chera for so much laughter, fun and encouragement over the years, and Baljit Singh Pabla for always asking me challenging questions. Thank you to my brothers Manbir S Banwait and Karambir S Banwait, and Tina T Banwait for generous and loving support along the way. And Sajan S Banwait and Samiya K Banwait for the joy they brought into my life.

And especially my parents, Kulvinderjit Kaur Banwait and Jasbir Singh Banwait, for dreaming beside me, and for so much more than words can express.

Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Figures	x
List of Poems.....	x

Introduction: When Affective Bodies Meet Biopower: A Reflection on Feelings and the Life of the Human in Asian Canadian Literature	1
Asian Canadian Subjects and Objects of Knowledge	7
Larissa Lai's <i>Salt Fish Girl</i> and Remembering Through the Body.....	27

Chapter 1. The Speakability of Emotions and the Impossibility of Speech in Velma Demerson's <i>Incorrigible</i>.....	38
1.1. The Interconnecting Histories of Asian Canadian Men and White, Working- Class Women	46
1.2. Incorrigibility: Legal Effects and Affective Governmentality	57
1.3. Racial Melancholia and Racialization by Proxy	82
1.4. Experimental Bodies and the Contradictions of Racial Citizenship.....	97
1.5. Conclusion.....	123

Chapter 2. Body Histories and Feeling Memories in Hiromi Goto's <i>Hopeful Monsters</i> and David Chariandy's <i>Soucouyant</i>	124
2.1. Forms of Address and Narrative Incompletion	130
2.2. Hope, Motherhood and the Promise of Happiness in "Hopeful Monsters"	136
2.3. From Mourning to Terror: the Faceless Neighbour in "From Across a River"	150
2.4. Body Memories and Mediated Feelings in <i>Soucouyant</i>	163
2.5. Conclusion.....	185

Chapter 3. Inhuman Subjects and Nonhuman Feelings in Rita Wong's <i>forage</i> and Roy Miki's <i>Mannequin Rising</i>.....	186
3.1. Asian Canadian Experimental Poetry and Affective Form.....	191
3.2. An Affective Anti-Economy in Rita Wong's <i>forage</i>	200

3.3. Political Feelings and Posthuman Subjects in Roy Miki’s *Mannequin Rising* 213

3.4. Conclusion..... 241

Conclusion: Psychic Property and Clockwork Feelings 243

Coming Full Circle in Larissa Lai’s *Automaton Biographies* 249

Works Cited 262

List of Figures

Figure 3.1.	Collage from <i>Mannequin Rising</i> (page 60).....	198
Figure 3.2.	Collage from <i>Mannequin Rising</i> (on the left, page 71) and photograph (photo by author) of the same location (on the right)	230

List of Poems

Poem 3.1.	chaos feary	204
Poem 3.2.	perverse subsidies.....	206
Poem 3.3.	perverse subsidies.....	210
Poem 3.4.	Scoping (also pronounced 'Shopping') in Kits.....	219
Poem 3.5.	Viral Travels to Tokyo.....	223
Poem 3.6.	Scoping (also pronounced 'Shopping') in Kits.....	228
Poem 3.7.	Scoping (also pronounced 'Shopping') in Kits.....	235

Introduction:

When Affective Bodies Meet Biopower: A Reflection on Feelings and the Life of the Human in Asian Canadian Literature

The strange disease was a great puzzle to me. Did I think I had been afflicted? If so, then I had been born with it. But Seto and Flowers seemed to think that it was something that could be caught, by walking barefoot on the sand, or on the earth, especially when it was barren. (Lai, *Salt Fish Girl* 102)

“People are catching a bug that gives them the memory structures of other animals—fish maybe, or elephants.” (Lai, *Salt Fish Girl* 103)

[W]e are the new children of the earth, of the earth’s revenge. Once we stepped out of mud, now we step out of moist earth, out of DNA both new and old, an imprint of what has gone before, but also a variation. By our difference we mark how ancient the alphabet of our bodies. By our strangeness we write our bodies into the future. (Lai, *Salt Fish Girl* 259)

Larissa Lai’s futuristic novel *Salt Fish Girl* explores how the regulation of race occurs through the regulation of life processes. Set in what was once Vancouver, the story is about a young Asian girl who exhibits symptoms of a disease that dissolves her body in water and recalls her past lives. The dreaming disease is a vehicle of memory in *Salt Fish Girl*; it embodies a form of historical consciousness that surfaces long-forgotten remnants of the past. The condition, which is rapidly afflicting ever more people, is said to be the result of agricultural genetic mutations that have contaminated the soil (102). The dreaming disease exhibits three primary tendencies: in the first, the body transmits

a distinctive odour, such as that of milk, rain or durian. Secondly, those afflicted recall historical events that precede their birth, and in many cases these acts of memory overwhelm people with such despair that they drown themselves in the sea. Thirdly, Miranda's specific story also unravels the scientific hypothesis that the disease results from an individual's exposure to contaminated soil. Miranda is born from the seed of a genetically altered durian tree, but her unnatural birth is also a return to life. She is made "out of DNA both new and old," she tells us, and her birth is a reincarnation of Nu Wa, the mythic figure from Chinese folk legend who created humans out of mud. Taking on life from the sordid milieu of biotechnology, Miranda rewrites both the diasporically transplanted tale of Nu Wa and Western scientific imperialism which, as the novel so poignantly points out, takes minority bodies as its experimental test subjects. In Lai's story, the development of biotechnology is closely intertwined with the racialization of labour and migrant bodies. The primary carriers of the disease are illegal workers who also undergo the most radical of experimental therapies (77). Crucially, we might also surmise that these workers are clones whose origins can be traced back to the Human Genome Project (known as the Diverse Genome Project in the novel), and the DNA of a Chinese woman and a Japanese man who were placed in an internment camp during the Second World War (160). In mapping this history, *Salt Fish Girl* asks its readers to reflect on the trajectory from eugenics to biotechnology, on the legacies of colonial science which continue to replicate and reproduce older narratives of race.

By tying biotechnology's history to the internment of an Asian Canadian couple during the Second World War, Lai elucidates a little explored aspect of Asian Canadian history: how the regulation of race in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century took the form of social hygiene and eugenics discourses. These troubling discourses surfaced through the policing of the state's borders with its racist immigration policies, as well as the logical extension of hygienic ideology in the practices of colonial science. In Canada, the Continuous Journey legislation, the Chinese Head Tax (1885) and the Chinese Exclusion Act (1924) adopted the hygienic language of "undesirability" to

regulate the influx of immigrants (Bashford, *Imperial* 144), while the government's internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War replicated the logic of the concentration camp. The carceral and eugenic inclinations behind these incidents have had far-reaching implications, and the legacies of these highly politicized moments of racial governance haunt Asian Canadian literary archives. In exploring this historical archive and the capricious regulation of the social body through eugenic and social hygiene discourses, as well as the techniques of knowledge associated with colonial science, I study texts that return to the first half of the twentieth century to offer narratives about the second half. I examine examples of Asian Canadian nonfiction, fiction and poetry, which focus on the eighty years between the 1930s and 2010, although all are published between 2004 and 2011. The texts I look at are as follows: Velma Demerson's *Incorrigible* (2004), Hiromi Goto's *Hopeful Monsters* (2004), David Chariandy's *Soucouyant* (2007), Rita Wong's *forage* (2007), Roy Miki's *Mannequin Rising* (2011), and Larissa Lai's *Automaton Biographies* (2009). With its reading of Demerson's *Incorrigible*, my first chapter provides a historical look at the losses of political subjectivity and social identity that attended the political, legal and socio-medical regulation of inter-racial mixing in the 1930s and 1940s in Canada.

The texts I examine in subsequent chapters also insist on exploring historical trauma from the angle of colonial science and eugenics, and its uncanny reproduction in contemporary scenes of everyday social, cultural and political life. These texts reflect how imperialism and colonial and postmodern science are globally interconnected in ways that continue to surface in today's racial narratives about Canada's border control policies and in panics over the transmission of disease through migrating Asian bodies. As Alison Bashford points out, "medico-legal border control became increasingly eugenic" in the twentieth century (*Imperial* 13). This is hardly surprising given that the history of western biomedicine is the history of colonial discourse and nation-building

(Bashford and Hooker 6). Scares in recent years over, for instance, the spread of SARS or the avian flu¹ serve as reminders of insidious forms of racism that surface in response to the mobility of Asian bodies: they reactivate older tensions about boundary crossing, contagion, infection and miscegenation. As news reports on the outbreak of SARS in 2003 revealed, the conflation of Asian bodies with the transmission of disease reflected older tensions about public health, race and border control. Since the outbreak was traced to China, Canadian media reports surfaced an existing repository of anti-Asian, anti-immigration sentiment, and defamiliarized the virus by re-associating it with Asia (Strange, "Postcard from" 222-223). This example reflects the extent to which national anxieties about borders and the boundaries of citizenship are reproduced through the scientific rhetoric of otherness.

Bashford observes that for many nation-states throughout the twentieth century, the social body was conceived literally in biological terms, and the "connections between migration, population, eugenics and genetics were to continue through much of the twentieth century" (*Imperial* 145). John McLaren, Dorothy Chunn and Robert Menzies also point out that different regions in Canada served as "social laboratories" for experiments designed to establish racial and moral boundaries during this period (5). In exploring these connections, Lai offers a parallel narrative in *Salt Fish Girl* with a story about biotechnology's origins rooted in the Canadian internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II. In *The Gene Wars*, Robert Cook-Deegan observes, for example, that the development of the Human Genome Project is tied to American research on those who were exposed to the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (93-94). Investigators assessed whether the atomic bombs had a genetic effect on survivors; this

¹ See Rita Wong and Larissa Lai's collaborative collection of poems *sybil unrest*, for an exploration of the ways that the avian flu triggered fears about interspecies and interracial contact (67, 106).

initiative later fed into the Human Genome Project.² Although rooted in the Canadian context, the novel mirrors this international history of war and medical experimentation by suggestively exploring how the racial and carceral impulse of internment extends logically to Asian Canadian bodies as experimental subjects. That the Second World War is a point of return in the novel also reflects the mark of a historical consciousness at work in Asian Canadian literature at large, a consciousness that returns figuratively – and through imaginative recreation – to the socio-political and cultural scenes of early twentieth century Canada. An entire generation of Asian Canadian writers have explored this historical archive through embodied forms of feeling, knowing and remembering.

In “Enacting the Asian Canadian,” Christopher Lee calls for a critical examination of the relation of Asian Canadian literary texts to historical narratives because, he argues, this relation cannot be taken for granted:

While it is clear that history is one of the terrains on which Asian Canadian studies endeavours to intervene, I want to suggest that Asian Canadian literature should not only be read as having a responsive relationship to history. The danger of invoking historical master narratives to understand literature is that such moves do not recognize the key role of the literary in constructing the very conditions under which consciousness of the past emerges. (39)

² He elaborates that the “roots of the genome research project can be traced back to the Manhattan District Project to build an atomic bomb. Some led through studies of the biological effects of dropping the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Others led through the mathematicians who helped create the initial atomic bomb and, after World War II was over, the hydrogen fusion bomb” (92).

According to Lee,³ Asian Canadian literature, even as it contests dominant histories, also shapes our “consciousness of the past.” Given the lopsided relation between individual subjects and histories that exceed subjectivity, Lee cautions that acts of narrating history are acts of storytelling in their own right. In other words, rather than “factual” records of history, they might be read in terms of the excesses they track, and the affective repositories of knowledge they reflect. Indeed, Asian Canadian literature explores marginal and lost histories through embodied forms of memory and feeling, materialized in unlikely symptoms and body histories. As *Salt Fish Girl* indicates, the past is recursive and returns in unanticipated ways, through the body’s imbrication in the affiliated networks of science, technology, and biopolitical governance. Observing that marginalized writers who “reclaim histories of brutality must cross a bizarre psychic gap of denial and equivocation,” Lai also asserts that the “task seems to be to construct a fictive reality in the gap between [dream and nostalgia] . . . the stories that follow . . . [are] the fragmented glimmers of that which is never quite knowable” (“Corrupted Lineage” 44, 52-53). This mode of writing offers a means of surfacing those remnants of the past that hover beyond the edges of consciousness, and by extension, beyond the

³ To consider Lee’s point from another perspective, we might reconsider the narratives that have formed the canon of Asian Canadian literature. Historical-realist novels such as Joy Kogawa’s *Obasan* and Sky Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Café* have played significant roles in shaping the archive of collective memories in the field. While Lee draws attention to how literature shapes our understanding of history, I would also like to acknowledge the fact that discussions of the Chinese Head Tax, the Komagata Maru Incident, the 1907 race riots, the Internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, the Japanese Canadian Redress movement, and the *Writing Thru Race* conference, to name some of the most visible, are examples of scholars and writers taking up the call to historicize Asian Canadian studies. This work reveals the racial legislation that has to date, informed Asian Canadian histories and identities. See, for example, *Miki’s Redress: a Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* and Kirsten Emiko McAllister’s *Terrain of Memory: a Japanese Canadian Memorial Project* for studies on the internment of Japanese Canadians; Lily Cho’s *Eating Chinese: Culture on the Menu in Small Town Canada* and Kay Anderson’s *Vancouver’s Chinatown: Racial Discourses in Canada, 1875-1980*, and Xiaoping Li’s *Voices Rising: Asian Canadian Cultural Activism*. I situate my dissertation among these debates, and continue the historical project of Asian Canadian literary studies by exploring a largely unexamined aspect of this history, that is, through a biopolitical lens.

normalizing pressures of contemporary life. This surfacing takes many forms, and in some instances, it asks us to not merely locate racialized bodies as materialized effects of biopolitical power, but also to situate these subjectivities in relation to the workings of memory and the transmission of intersubjective and transnational modes of feeling.

Exploring the role that Asian Canadian bodies played (and continue to play) as objects and subjects of knowledge-production, in social and medical experiments, and as ostensible transmitters of illness, this dissertation questions what it means to contest these forgotten and excised histories through the claims of memory, through forms of inherited consciousness and structures of feeling, and indeed, through the limits of self-knowledge.

Asian Canadian Subjects and Objects of Knowledge

If the eugenic and social hygiene contexts of nation-building, race and citizenship, loss and dispossession in the first half of the twentieth century established the condition of possibility for the emergence of an Asian Canadian social and political identity, then the need to interrogate these scenes of emergence and representation is also a crucial one for writers and scholars in the field. Indeed, the question of *how* one becomes an Asian Canadian subject has been a central theme in Asian Canadian literary studies, often entangled in the specificities of racial naming and historically contingent formations of racial identity. Judith Butler writes that “there is no ‘I’ that can fully stand apart from the social conditions of its emergence. . . . When the ‘I’ seeks to give an account of itself, it can start with itself, but . . . this self is already implicated in a social temporality that exceeds its own capacities for narration” (*Giving an Account* 7-8). Butler’s framework of narrative accountability maintains that the social has a temporality in excess of subjectivity. In addressing the elisions and excesses of trauma, and experiences of loss and racialization that remain outside of normative social reality,

Asian Canadian writers creatively examine the living past. They reflect how the process of becoming and of subjection is a deeply fraught one, implicated in the norms that make some lives more intelligible than others (17). Indeed, for Asian Canadian writers and scholars, the “I” that speaks is bound up in the profound ambivalence of historically locating “Asian Canadian” as both subject and object of knowledge, as both an effect of power and a political act of self-representation.

Writing on the narrative frames employed by the state to “identify” and name Japanese Canadians, Roy Miki provides an exemplary case study of how this takes place. As he explains, during the war years, the state employed the term “enemy aliens” to justify the internment of Japanese Canadians and the programmed destruction of the Japanese Canadian community. And yet, in the aftermath of the war, Mackenzie King “recuperated” the label “Japanese Canadians” from the racist debris of its pre-war terminology, and reconfigured the political and racial identity of “people of Japanese ancestry” as Japanese Canadian. In other words, this reframing turned on a discursive trick: while the government used the language of “enemy aliens” to justify the forcible removal of the community to internment camps in 1942,⁴ after the war Mackenzie King proposed a resettlement plan by designating “persons of the Japanese race” under the more “benign” description of “Japanese Canadian” (*In Flux* 79-80). By this time, the international backlash against racism and discussions of human rights had forced what was previously overtly racist legislation underground. But as Miki writes, in reality, the government’s plan to relocate Japanese Canadians was designed to “fill labour shortages anywhere in Canada,” while preventing individuals and families from re-establishing ties in British Columbia (*Broken Entries* 194). This important shift, in

⁴ Miki notes that the government’s plan to “relocate” Japanese Canadians from the west coast began in 1941 right after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Men who were identified as community leaders and political activists were placed in internment camps, while the community’s newspapers and schools were shut down, and fishing vessels were confiscated (*Redress* 3).

which subjects previously divested of a sense of legal and political belonging, are assimilated back into the fold of the nation-state through the defining process of naming, is a moment of re-racialization for Miki. He argues that the earlier act of state violence and dispossession is covered over in this “remaking of the racialized subject” (194). Mackenzie King’s act of naming discursively enacts the policy of forced assimilation that the government was putting into place, marking “Japanese Canadian” as an ambivalent category, shaped through a defining act of state sovereignty.

Miki’s analysis demonstrates how the internment years were consequently marked by two moments of state identification: in the first instance, individuals were stripped of their nationality rights through the logic that these subjects were enemies of the state, and in the second, these dispossessed subjects were renamed Japanese Canadian. These twin processes are significant for another reason, namely that the Canadian nation-state was also in the process of defining its own citizenship law in these years; the 1946 Citizenship Act brought Canadian citizenship into law for the first time. Even though the term “Canadian” had been in use in the years leading up to the act, it acquired its legal and international significance in that year. Miki writes that the “last of the restrictions would be lifted [on April 1, 1949] and voting rights followed” (*Broken Entries* 194). That these political events were happening successively recalls Giorgio Agamben’s assertion that political sovereignty is premised on a principle of exception. In *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben asserts that “the relation between constituting power and constituted power [is] the relation between the violence that posits law and the violence that preserves it” (40). Sovereignty, according to Agamben, is defined by the inclusive exclusions through which it delimits national boundaries and the parameters of citizenship. Understood in this way, Mackenzie King’s naming of the Japanese Canadian subject *a priori* authorizes “Canadian” citizenship through an act of inclusive exclusion.

This fraught process of *becoming* also framed Japanese Canadians as a model minority and projected a “myth of social acceptance” through the accommodating agenda of “upward social mobility” (194-5). As Miki points out, “[f]or a group whose voice and subjectivity had remained outside the nation’s narratives . . . the entry into the mainstream political arena was a tentative and provisional process of ‘negotiations’ with the tongue-tied ghosts of an internalized history” (195). Miki’s reflections on the psychic process of becoming Japanese Canadian, highlight the “tentative” and “provisional” aspects of the subject’s entry into the political domain through terms set by state power. And yet, despite the power that Mackenzie King expressed in the act of naming, this inscription would be challenged thirty years later by the Japanese Canadian Redress movement (195). As a reciprocal act of negotiation and contestation, the Redress movement opened up a space for reimagining Japanese Canadian subjectivity through an alternative set of terms. What Miki describes as a process of re-racialization through naming is consequently linked to his acute sense that racialized subjects are produced simultaneously as subjects and objects of knowledge through the state apparatus.

Miki’s reflections upon the state’s anxious naming and renaming of Japanese Canadians also applies more broadly to “Asian Canadianness.” Christopher Lee reflects on the “paradoxical space” inhabited by the Asian Canadian subject who is at once internal and external to mainstream society (“Enacting the Asian” 39). He observes that minority subjects who are positioned in relation to the “legacies of anti-Asian racism” on the one hand, and assimilationist pressures on the other, occupy a threshold place in mainstream culture (39). Lee’s observation that the Asian Canadian subject occupies a fraught and liminal place is a beginning point for elucidating several key debates in the literary field about defining Asian Canadian subjectivity, Asian Canadian writing, and Asian Canadian itself as an object of study. Common to all is that each of these is positioned in relation to a broader cultural schema of mainstream culture and white normativity. As Lee points out, there are various different meanings attached to “Asian

Canadian,” and as such, the term defies any straightforward definition. “Asian Canadian,” he writes, can be understood “as a socially descriptive term, as an identity (chosen or imposed), and as an intellectual formation” (“The Lateness of” 3). The term’s slipperiness generates productive debates that cut across – and interweave – all three of these semantic registers.

Firstly, “Asian Canadian” signposts a set of identity categories, and refers back to the identity politics movements of the 70s and 80s; Asian Canadian cultural narratives are rooted in this activist history. In his article “Asian Kanadian,” Donald Goellnicht observes that the “Asian Canadian canon . . . up to now [has] been based largely on identity politics,” an observation that highlights how Asian Canadian literature emerged from various community-based activisms (86). As Guy Beauregard also points out, Asian Canadian literature emerged as a collective body of work in the 1990s, incorporating into a larger history of anti-racist activism.⁵ This sense of collective identity “mark[ed] the commitment to addressing historical exclusions [that had already] characterized Asian Canadian cultural work from the late 1970s to the present” (“The Emergence of” 60-61). And yet, despite these close affiliations of Asian Canadian writing with histories of anti-racism activism and the identity categories claimed by many to turn the objectifying gaze of dominant culture back on itself, there has been a concerted effort on the part of scholars to affirm the *instability* of Asian Canadian identity.

This has occurred in the context of debates over the exigency of institutionalizing Asian Canadian literature as a field of study and as an object of knowledge. Drawing attention to the institutional need for Asian Canadian studies, Lee observes that universities provide an important interface between public spheres and the study of the social and political history of Asian Canadian communities that form a significant

⁵ Although Asian Canadian cultural production emerged much earlier, it was only in the 1990s that it came to be treated as a collective body of work as such.

segment of the country's demographics ("The Lateness" 2). He notes that there is an anxiety about the canonization of Asian Canadian studies; these anxieties reflect the fear that the corporatization of universities might also lead to the reduction of Asian Canadian studies to a multicultural celebration of difference (4). As Beauregard explains in Foucauldian terms, "multicultural governmentality names the diverse and evolving ways in which the conduct and the expression of designated 'multicultural others' may be encouraged, directed, and managed" ("Asian Canadian Studies" 14). Beauregard observes that even as a "cluster of Asian Canadian studies projects⁶ emerged alongside these modes of governmentality," they have resisted both the multicultural norms of recognition, and the treatment of "Asian Canadians as objects of knowledge" (16, 8). Although addressing similar concerns, for Lee it is also paramount to map the affective relation between the need for institutional structures and anxieties about Asian Canadian studies' institutionalization. He argues, in other words, that the relation between need and anxiety comprises an affective structure for Asian Canadian studies, one that scholars must necessarily engage in order to mediate the challenges of the past as well as the present (2, 20). Such an approach would also make room for alternative forms of knowledge, a project crucially intertwined with the self-reflexive questioning of the boundaries of Asian Canadian studies and its institutional attachments (6). Indeed, such a task not only challenges the potential appropriation of Asian Canadian literature in the name of multiculturalism, but also attends to the historical complexities and social realities that give shape to identity formations.

It is in this context that scholars have taken pains to both assert the political potential of identity politics, while highlighting the historical contingencies from which racial formations arise ("The Lateness of" 3). Lee argues that Asian Canadian bears a

⁶ As he explains, "Asian Canadian studies projects . . . are not content with simply considering Asian Canadians as objects of knowledge – but instead attempt, in distinct and sometimes conflicting ways, to understand and possibly transform various discipline-based sites of knowledge production" (8).

loose and provisional relation to the identity categories it references (“Enacting the Asian” 31). As he writes, “Asian Canadian studies redefines identitarian categories or even places them under erasure. Asian Canadian cultural formations continue to demonstrate the instability of identity” (“Enacting” 32). Lee’s argument for strategically employing “Asian Canadian” in this way draws on Miki’s argument in the well-known essay “Asiancy: Making Space for Asian Canadian Writing.” Miki argues for the provisional potential of Asian Canadian literary production, positing the need to generate in Asian Canadian writing, “the formal conditions so that the subjectivity of the writer, as a complex weave of internal and external pressures, can emerge in textual practice; and . . . to advance theoretical principles malleable enough to account for the enactment of subjectivities that cannot be contained by codification in mainstream critical discourses” (*Broken Entries* 119). In “Can Asian Adian?,” Miki similarly argues that Asian Canadian as a formation is continually in process, modified by economic and political shifts in the wider social fabric (*In Flux* 93-94). This argument for Asian Canadian as a “provisional space” has been strongly endorsed in the field of Asian Canadian studies (*Broken* 107), an articulated stance, in other words, against Asian Canadian as objects and subjects of study being “contained” in meaning by the field of Canadian literature, and by extension, by the state’s larger institutional structures, such as academic programs and universities.

This concern is taken up in a different sense in Goellnicht’s important essay, “A Long Labour: the Protracted Birth of Asian Canadian Literature.” Interrogating why East Asian Canadian cultural production has been considered under the rubric of Asian Canadian literature, while South Asian Canadian works have been read through the lens of Postcolonial studies, Goellnicht discusses their different institutional histories. For Goellnicht, the potential of Asian Canadian studies lies in the possibility of “artistic transcultural pollination, with intellectual hybridization, with interethnic social and political coalitions that might threaten mainstream hegemony and dominant discourses” (10). Reading Goellnicht’s “A Long Labour” alongside Miki’s “Asiancy” is

productive because, the two different approaches articulated in the essays – one from the angle of institutional histories and the other from the perspective of Asian Canadian acts of writing – foreground different methodologies for generating critical and creative spaces for both engaging and creating Asian Canadian cultural production. This is what Goellnicht emphasizes when he argues for the importance of considering the interconnections of differing Asian Canadian histories, and for the possibilities of “artistic transcultural pollination” (10).

In many respects, the “multiplicity” of “Asian Canadian” is embedded in the term’s history itself. As the shift in my analysis from the naming of “Japanese Canadians” to the identification and self-identification processes of “Asian Canadian” suggests, Asian Canadian is in creative and productive tension with identity categories such as “Japanese Canadian” to begin with. In engaging with the historically-specific terms of racialization, loss and dispossession these categories reference, Asian Canadian literature suggests that “Asian Canadian” is neither synonymous with any single identity formation, nor is it restricted to a single historical trajectory. Instead, Asian Canadian literature can be best understood as foregrounding the social, political and cultural processes through which one *becomes* an Asian Canadian subject, however incompletely.

The Biopolitical Paradigm

My thinking is influenced, in part, by Michel Foucault’s foundational claim that a key component of the developing modern nation-state was its use of disciplines of knowledge to regulate the productivity of bodies in terms of both labour and reproduction. Distinguishing biopower from discipline, he suggests the importance of studying how biopolitics engenders relations of subjugation and as such, the production

of subjects⁷ (*Society Must* 265). According to Foucault, before modernity, governments did not concern themselves with factors such as the infant mortality rate, disease and the health and longevity of the general population. But gradually from the 18th century onwards, Western governments increasingly became invested in the management and production of human life and the regulation of the human body: “the fact of living . . . passed into knowledge’s field of control and power’s sphere of intervention . . . it was the taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body” (*The History of* 143). Broadly speaking, biopolitics concerns itself with the specific ways in which governmental technologies regulate and govern human subjects and populations (Lemke 51). Exploring the relation between politics and life, Thomas Lemke also notes that biopolitics references “the instability and fragility of the border between ‘life’ and ‘politics’” (40). What’s more, it constitutes a form of surveillance that increasingly extends to the micro-levels of the body. At the practical level, this happened with the development of the fields of science, medicine, psychology and statistics. In more recent times, we see the extension of this form of governmentality in genomics, biotechnology, and the patenting of different life forms.

While most debates on biopolitics and biopower both emerge from, and reference, Western modernity, the dark underside of Western biopolitics – and its investment in life – is the fact that it was race-based, and eugenics was one of its logical manifestations. Understood in another way, scientific and political techniques in the governance of knowledge and the administration of politics were shaped through forms of racial regulation. Rereading Foucault’s work, Rey Chow notes that the emergence of Western disciplinary knowledge generated the epistemological grounds for dividing “Man” into “subject and object” on the basis of “racial and ethnic difference” (*The Protestant Ethnic* 2). In other words, for Chow, the discourse of racial difference is the

⁷ Discipline and biopower are technologies of power that correspond to the broad set of mechanisms that refer to anatomo-politics and biopolitics respectively (243-244).

effect of biopolitics. As Foucault acknowledges, biopolitics is racially constituted: it is a technology of governance aimed at populations to regulate not only human “life” at a general level, but also specifically takes place through racial principles: it is based on the fact that “racism is a biological relationship” (*Society Must* 256-7). It is also “the precondition for exercising the right to kill” (256), as it is premised on the “principle that the death of others makes one biologically stronger” (258). Foucault suggests the importance of studying the ways in which biopolitics engenders relations of subjugation and racism as one form of population control (265). Although Foucault foregrounds the point that the pursuit of “life” took on central importance to the modern state, his observation about the limits of biopolitics or perhaps more appropriately, about the mechanisms of production that *produce biopolitics itself*, brings me to consider, through an analysis of Asian Canadian literature, what uncanny topographies of violence are produced through these processes of life in death, and properly speaking, death in life.

In broader terms, my dissertation adds to postcolonial discussions of Foucault’s chronology of biopolitics, and it does so by considering how forms of racialization combine with the medicalization of bodies associated with Asianness. In recent years, scholars have questioned the limits of Foucault’s biopolitical paradigm, foregrounding the politics of death that is so central to western expressions of sovereignty. In “Necropolitics,” Achille Mbembe, for instance, argues that Foucault’s notion of biopower is not sufficient to account for contemporary configurations of power, noting that populations are now “subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living dead” (40). In Mbembe’s view, new economies of militarization and mass destruction are giving rise to new spatial and temporal articulations of power which must be understood outside of the nation-bound temporality of biopolitics. He takes slavery as the exemplary case for reading the conditions through which social death emerges:

Indeed, the slave conditions results from a triple loss: loss of a “home,” loss of rights over his or her body, and loss of political status. This triple loss is identical with absolute domination, natal alienation, and social death (expulsion from humanity altogether). (22)

According to this formulation, social death refers to the political expulsion of individuals and communities from humanity altogether, and this expulsion takes place through the subject’s radical separation from her home, from her body and from her political and social status as human. The slave condition reflects how sovereignty, when pushed to its limits, produces a set of contradictions about the ownership of human life, and the economy of violence that coincides with it.

Interrogating what the limits of sovereignty might be, Mbembe follows Foucault in asserting that a sovereign exercises its power through the act of killing or allowing one to live: this gesture is what constitutes, properly speaking, the limits of sovereignty (11). But if biopower pertains to the relentless production of life, then necropower for Mbembe designates a terror formation that claims violence and death as *the* primary tools of power: necropower is an extension of the kind of sovereignty that was particular to slavery and the concentration camp, but which is now multiplying in various places across the globe. Mbembe notes that race, an outgrowth of biopower, is the most salient feature of necropolitics; it both justifies colonial rule and plays a formative role in “the selection of races, the prohibition of mixed marriages, forced sterilization, even the extermination of vanquished peoples” (17, 22). When the logic of slavery and the concentration camp are extended, spatial rule in places like Palestine shows us the multiplicity of sovereignty – its dissemination through private armies, regional lords, private security companies, child soldiers and so on – and demonstrates the extent to which sovereignty is no longer concentrated in the hands of a monarch or state power. Rather, it is exercised by numerous actors which operate both legally and extra-legally with respect to the structures of the state. In this respect, Mbembe

gestures to the limits of the biopolitical paradigm and the insufficiency of biopower for conceptualizing contemporary processes of colonization: his analysis focuses on colonial sites where life-threatening violence takes the form of a general rule rather than an exception.

Keeping Mbembe's postcolonial reading of biopolitics in mind, I locate my analysis of racial dynamics and colonial policies in the first half of the twentieth century in Canada, an endeavour that firmly situates itself in the nation-building, democratic, infrastructural, and life-sustaining impetus of biopolitics. By looking at racial regulation and medical experimentation in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century, my dissertation refocuses attention on how the production of social death is intrinsic to the workings of the modern nation-state at the turn of the century. Demerson's *Incorrigible* explores the losses of legal and political identity that emerge from this context, and draws attention to the extent to which forms of citizenship and belonging have been, and continue to be racially legislated through immigration policy. My dissertation also nuances Mbembe's discussion of social death in another important sense: I foreground the gendered aspects of racial governance, and the regimes of life and social death it generated. My first chapter, "The Speakability of Emotions and the Impossibility of Speech in Velma Demerson's *Incorrigible*," focuses on the gendered parameters of Canadian citizenship, and the regulation of the social body through eugenic and social hygiene initiatives directed at female bodies. Both chapters I and II take this angle as Demerson and Goto explore the fundamental importance of race to the future of the nation and the promise of happiness that gets attached to motherhood and to pregnant bodies.

In spite of this focus on national boundaries and the boundedness of Canadian citizenship – or perhaps because of it – my dissertation also draws attention to how Asian Canadian bodies have been simultaneously eugenic and global ones, implicated in an inter-national web of racial imaginaries. The global mobility of bodies marked as

Asian, their transnational affiliations and patterns of movement, and their association with geographies of otherness, means that any examination of political sovereignty is incomplete without a study of how tensions between national politics and international affairs have marked the notion of Asian Canadian from the outset. In “Refracting Pacific Canada,” Henry Yu employs the term “Pacific Canada” to “name [an] oceanic orientation and history,” and to reflect on the transnational movements that shaped Canada’s economic development in general, and British Columbia’s in particular: “Canada is as much a Pacific-oriented as it is an Atlantic-oriented nation” (5). Yu highlights Canada’s colonial past as well as the history of Asian workers, noting how the labour of Chinese workers who built the railway subsequently brought white settlement to British Columbia, a process inflected as much by transatlantic as it was by transpacific flows. Eleanor Ty also remarks in her study of “Asian American and Asian Canadian mobility,” that political and economic changes in the last century have encompassed shifts from the role that Asian Canadians played in the labour migrations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to more diverse immigration patterns (*Unfastened* xvi). What Ty’s and Yu’s comments reflect is the need to imagine the history of Asian Canadians in relation to not only Canada’s history of racial discrimination and exclusion, but also in terms of patterns of migration within Canada and across the globe over the course of the twentieth century. Locating Asian Canadian bodies in this way allows us to read these bodies’ affective trajectories and the micro- and macro- politics of life they became embroiled in. In particular, I examine the biopolitics of life as a multiplying and expanding regime, understood not only through nationally-bounded exercises in state power, but through processes that extend past the borders of the nation-state and across the globe.

My second chapter, “Body Histories and Feeling Memories in Hiromi Goto’s *Hopeful Monsters* and David Chariandy’s *Soucouyant*,” takes this angle to examine a colonial narrative about loss and despair. In particular, Chariandy’s *Soucouyant* reflects how disease, an embodied symptom of a colonial narrative of trauma, enacts a global

movement when the losses of the past come to bear upon the experiences of racism and despair in the present. Conversely, in Chapter III, “Inhuman Subjects and Nonhuman Feelings in Rita Wong’s *forage* and Roy Miki’s *Mannequin Rising*,” Wong and Miki re-contextualize biopolitics – understood in the first sense as a nationally and geographically bounded exercise in political sovereignty – as a global one. Writing about colonization and imperialism as key components of processes of globalization, both Wong and Miki address the body as an open and interactive system. As Wong suggests, not only do globalization’s consumptive capacities generate forms of social death across the globe, but a “planetary commons” also binds us together through our bodies’ mutual vulnerability. In contrast, Miki examines how our bodies incorporate into our material environments, taking note of how we quite literally consume forms of life that are nonhuman, animal, microbial, and dead. This poetic approach brings together the macro- and micro- scales of contemporary life processes through the body’s movements in time and space. In this respect, chapter III shifts chapter I’s focus on the national politics of racial life and the production of regimes of social death to the level of the global. And in considering how human bodies meld into what they are supposedly *not*, Wong and Miki explore the global implications of contemporary expressions of sovereignty through a micro-politics of the body.

Eugenic Bodies

The first chapter of my dissertation turns to the first half of the twentieth century, and to the terms and practices of social hygiene and eugenics, in order to begin reading “Asian Canadian” in relation to the shifting historical frames of race, racialization and citizenship. I employ the motif “eugenic bodies” to broadly describe the racial logics at work in the first half of the twentieth century. In brief, eugenics refers to a social reform-based science that used genetics as a justification for breeding “less desirable” traits out of a population. The British scientist Francis Galton was the first to articulate eugenics in the form of a biological politics, signalling the birth of an ideological formation that would have a lengthy, tumultuous and troublesome world

history. In *Modernism and Eugenics*, Marius Turda explains that eugenics was modelled on three basic principles, “first, the crucial role of heredity in determining the individual’s physical condition; second, the link between biology, medicine and the health of the nation; and, third, the politicisation of science” (7). Even though eugenics first took expression in scientific discourses about race, it quickly permeated cultural and political expressions of racial identity. Taking many forms, eugenics as a scientific, political and economic practice, both transmogrified and came to embody the grist and gist of Western modernity. Turda notes, for instance, that between 1870 and 1940, “eugenics became part of larger social, political and national agendas [everywhere and] . . . included social hygiene, population policies, public health and family planning, as well as racial research on social and ethnic minorities” (118). Associated closely with the eugenics movement, the social hygiene movement typically concerned itself with issues of venereal disease and promiscuity, and promoted the discourse of racial purity and personal and social hygiene.

While Nazi mass-extirpation policies during the Second World War are the starkest reminder of this legacy, eugenics became synonymous with a constellation of racially-inspired metaphors and practices in Europe and North America alike. David Macey sums this up in the following way:

In the period of the formation of the nation-state, threats to the unity and strength of the population were thought to come from a contagion by an alien element. In this context, tropes of race became aligned with the ‘sciences and technologies of the social’ that were emerging as part of biopolitics. They became part of the new rationality of the state, finding expression in projects such as public hygiene and eugenics, and, at the extreme, in Nazism. (186)

Although the impact of eugenics discourse was felt most vividly in the twentieth century with its culmination in the Nazi final solution, it can be traced to, in Foucault's words, nineteenth century "biological theory and the discourse of power." Foucault argues that

a bundle, of notions (such as: the hierarchy of species that grow from a common evolutionary tree, the struggle for existence among species, the selection that eliminates the less fit) – naturally became within a few years during the nineteenth century not simply a way of transcribing a political discourse into biological terms . . . but a real way of thinking about the relations between colonization, the necessity for war, criminality, the phenomena of madness and mental illness, the history of societies with their different classes, and so on. (*Society Must* 257)

Foucault traces twentieth century racial thought to the nineteenth century, noting how interlacing ideas about evolutionary development came to be broadly mapped onto justifications for colonization, class relations and a whole host of social issues related to race and otherness. Keeping this in mind, I do not restrict my analysis of the eugenics trajectory to the first half of the twentieth century, but rather begin with the premise that eugenics neither began in the twentieth century, nor did it end with the Second World War.

If we think about eugenics as a vector of motilities, connecting different places together on the global map, then we can also track how this vector transmitted anxieties, fears and panics about racial hygiene, the threat of disease and contagion, and the promise of racial purity across different Western modern nation-states. And if we look more closely at the Canadian context, we can see specific dimensions of racialization with respect to Asian bodies folded into the eugenic fabric, producing variable conditions of liveability and unliveability. The internment of Japanese Canadians is a key example of biopolitical regulation during the first half of the

twentieth century. Kirsten Emiko McAllister notes, for instance, that when the Canadian government dismantled the six internment camps it operated in the New Denver area of British Columbia in 1945, it forced most of the Japanese Canadian internees to leave the province, with the exception of the two thousand who fell into the following categories: “TB patients, incurables, derelict single old men, and women and old couples who [had] no young members of their families living in Canada, people in mental homes and those serving in penal institutions” (*Terrain of Memory* 3). This example reveals how discourses of race, criminality, otherness, and medicalization all come together in eugenic rule. It also suggests how racialized white and non-white bodies were also eugenic ones; and when they became the focus of the bureaucratic gaze, their encounters with one another and with various institutional apparatuses manufactured narratives that were both more and less than the “racial century” they lived in.⁸

Eugenics is the first modality – a set of metaphors, practices and racializing processes alike – through which I approach this project because eugenicists wilfully and

⁸ In *Imperial Hygiene*, Bashford dubs the first half of the twentieth century the “eugenic half-century,” observing that it is a part of the “racial century.” The racial century encompasses “the consolidation and rigidifying of racial categories in the second half of the nineteenth century” and the fifty years of eugenics that followed in the twentieth (2). Many have understood World War II, and the Nuremberg Trials that followed, to be the final notes on a period of unparalleled violence, anti-Semitism, racism, and human rights violations, forms of violence which exposed the links between nation-formation and racism. But it would be a mistake to say that eugenics ended in 1945 for, as Angus McLaren tells us, eugenic policies continued in Canada into the 1970s (*Our Own Master* 159). Daniel Kevles also points out that, “[r]ace was a minor subtext in Scandinavian and British eugenics, but it played a major part in the American and Canadian versions of the creed. North American eugenicists were particularly disturbed by the immigrants from eastern and southern Europe who had been flooding into their countries since the late 19th century. They considered these people not only racially different from but inferior to the Anglo-Saxon majority” (436). Kevles focuses on the threat that non-Anglo-Saxon European immigrants conveyed to North American eugenicists, but his observation also limits his analysis since, if eastern and southern Europeans offended the sensibilities of white eugenicists, then it remains to be seen how, and in what ways, non-white racial minorities were “accommodated” within the eugenicist agenda.

deliberately played with the boundaries of life and death, producing variable and site-specific conditions of social death. Donna Jones writes that,

Racial social Darwinists insisted that as the truth of living being is biological, only physical race could sustain the social bond, and society was the theater of human animals' struggle of all against all and the domination of one group or subspecies over another. (8)

The spectacle of struggle, reflected in the conflict of one "race" with that of "another," is not particular to the war of one nation against another but is eclipsed, as Foucault explains, in a process of social normalization in which the state attempts to "purify" its own elements, that is, through the self-directed logic of state racism. In Foucault's view, state racism incorporates all institutions of social organization into the creation of a "normalizing society" (*Society Must* 61-62). For Jones, it is imperative to interrogate this notion of racial organization through the lens of "life," because life became conflated with racial identity in the eighteenth century, and indeed, she argues, it was also in the name of life that the colonies came to challenge European racism (9):

Once distinguished by its ability to reproduce, life could be defined as that which physically embodies a physical memory by means of which the present is bound to the past. Biology opened up the possibility of defining life in terms of memory, and the discovery of a deep ethnological past in the context of social Darwin anthropology made it possible to speculate on the memories of racial groups. Life, memory, and race came to be joined in new politically charged and vitalist discourses of race. (6)

According to Jones, the notion of "life" came to be defined in terms of human biology, and biology and anthropology, in turn, conceived of racial identity through the politics of memory: with this model, "life" was conceived within a teleological and evolutionary model of development, justifying and solidifying race and racism.

The first half of the twentieth century was a formative time for citizenship politics in the country. In Canada, this era marked the historic granting of the vote to women, anxieties about the mobility of young women in cities, and fear-mongering about Asian and other racialized minority bodies. For instance, the myth of the white slave trade – Asian men in opium dens trafficking young white women – fuelled anti-immigration sentiments. Scholars such as Mariana Valverde and Angus McLaren have also pointed out that, with respect to the racialized “Asian” body, immigration laws around the turn of the century came to embody the eugenic principle, manifesting deeply-felt anxieties about “biological race” through deportation and regulation attempts against miscegenation.⁹ Taking up the problems of immigration, J.S. Woodsworth’s now infamous *Strangers Within Our Gates* (1909), outlined the “principles of immigration taxonomies,” categorizing immigrant groups in a descending order of desirability (Valverde 110). In this regard, Canada’s head tax policy imposed on Chinese immigrants, increased from \$10 in 1884 to \$500 in 1903, the 1924 Chinese Immigration Act, the 1907 Gentleman’s Agreement between Canada and Japan limiting intake of Japanese immigrants to 400 / year, and finally, the Continuous Journey policy were specifically geared to both appease and fuel eugenic sentiments (Miki, *In Flux* 48-9). The language of racial biology, deviance and medical intervention were significant fixtures in this landscape. Although these scholars locate Canada’s exclusionary immigration policies in the context of eugenics, I am more interested in examining how a culture of social hygiene and eugenics materially shapes the racialization of bodies. I explore this in more detail in my first chapter on *Incorrigible*, an autobiography about a young white woman who is racialized in association with Asianness, who is incarcerated for having a relationship with a Chinese man, and who ultimately becomes the targeted

⁹ See Valverde’s discussion of eugenics in *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* and McLaren’s *Our Own Master Race: the Eugenics Crusade in Canada*.

subject of medical treatments and experiments¹⁰ as a result of this association. While my first chapter historically situates the eugenic regulation of bodies, this thread is taken up in my second chapter as well, with Goto's focus on how eugenics resurfaces in the context of contemporary fears about monstrous births and physical mutations.

¹⁰ Sterilization policies were also a part of the larger context of medicalization during this time. In Canada, both the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia implemented compulsory sterilization on individuals labelled "feeble-minded." Race-based sterilization policies in both provinces were manifestations of the kind of eugenic governmentality I outlined above. McLaren notes, for example, that First Nations and Métis, who constituted a mere 2.5% of Alberta's population, formed a disquieting 25% of those sterilized by the Alberta Board of Eugenics (60).

For example, Leilani Muir's legal case against the Alberta government in 1995 brought to public attention another example of sterilization activities undertaken by the Alberta Eugenics Board, revealing an additional angle to 20th century racial engineering: the extent to which young white girls from working class backgrounds were regulated through the categories of race, class and gender. Muir was classified a moron and sterilized without her knowledge as a 14 year-old in 1959 (Wahlsten 192). Her case brought to light the duration of sterilization activities in Alberta, which were "vigorously implemented" from 1928 up until 1972 (185). Muir's case corresponds to my analysis of *Incorrigible*, and Demerson's incarceration in a reform institute for girls in 1939, during the heyday of Canadian eugenic policies.

In a more recent study, Ian Mosby examines a set of nutritional studies conducted on aboriginal communities and Indian residential schools in Northern Manitoba between 1942 and 1952. Mosby argues that "during the war and early postwar period – bureaucrats, doctors, and scientists recognized the problems of hunger and malnutrition" in First Nations populations, but viewed "residential schools and Aboriginal communities as kinds of 'laboratories' that they could use to pursue a number of different political and professional interests" (148). Observing malnutrition in the communities they studied, the researchers treated these populations as "a possible laboratory" where they observed the *effects* of malnutrition on the human body, rather than effecting interventions that would alleviate hunger and malnutrition in an adequate way (160). The specific policies gearing the studies were consistent with state efforts to treat the "Indian problem" through forced assimilation (171). While Canada's legacy of colonization and systemic violence towards First Nations peoples cannot be overstated, this history of medical experimentation and colonial science also corresponds to other narratives about racial governance and social engineering during this century.

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* and Remembering Through the Body

What are the material and bodily processes through which an individual rewrites the racialized conditions of her own formation as a subject? To return to *Salt Fish Girl* and its reflections on the dreaming disease, the novel draws attention to a persistent call in Asian Canadian literature to a form of bodily apprehension that challenges, at the same time that it addresses, histories of colonial science, race and racialization. Writing through this context, Asian Canadian writers draw attention to the myriad ways in which human social and political existence is produced and normalized along racial lines, and in doing so, they explode the myth of racial identity by pointing to the body's inherent instability. In "Future Asians," Lai writes that the act of storytelling helps us access a "sense of history" that "is experienced and written on the body" (173). I use the term bodily apprehension to describe a similar process at work in *Salt Fish Girl*: it reflects Lai's suggestion that subjectivity must be understood as an effect of collective memory, unconscious feeling and a biotechnologically engineered body.

The question of how we become who we are through histories that exceed our self-understanding is an important one, especially when we consider how the frames of race, racialization and governance shifted over the course of the twentieth century, through developments at both the national and international levels. For instance, the international context of eugenics, medical experiments and racism gave way, in the post-World War II context, to human rights discourses as a technology of governance.¹¹

¹¹ Inderpal Grewal also understands human rights discourses to be "a technology of transnational governmentality" (157). Following Grewal, I see it as a continuation of Western governmentality, but with a crucial difference: it recodes the centrality of race and racialization in the Western hemisphere through the same categories of experience it claims are universal to all human beings: dignity, fear and want, all three of which have been extensively critiqued as an extension of Western philosophical categories.

As Donna Haraway observes, “United Nations humanism” replaced the “racial chain of being” (*Simian, Cyborgs* 210). In Canada, the Citizenship Act came into effect in 1947, and like many other Western democracies, the Canadian nation-state continued to assiduously regulate the movements of racialized minority groups into its borders. Globally, other nation-states were experiencing seismic political shifts with, for example, Britain’s withdrawal from India and the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. The post-World War II moment also witnessed the American occupation of Japan, and Japan’s subsequent transition from an imperial power in Asia to a democracy, all under the aegis of American authority. Although merely two examples, both the Indian partition and Japan’s imperial politics leading up to and during the Second World War, as well as the American nuclear bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, continue to raise the specter of human rights violations – and the failure of human rights discourses to adjudicate the political claims of “humanity.” The legacies of trauma that emerged from these, and other similar contexts, reflect an ongoing need to explore “sites for memory and history, for the rewriting of the past as well as the reimagining of the future” (Eng and Kazanjian 4).

For Asian Canadian writers, the challenge of addressing the historical contexts of Asian Canadian identity is met through an attention to the lived body’s specificity – its openness, its inherent instability and its unfolding through perception, memory and affect. In *Salt Fish Girl*, Miranda has a “memory structure” that exceeds the temporality of her life, and her collective memories take shape through a biological condition that marks her body as other:

it seemed the most natural thing in the world that I should remember things that went on before I was born, things that happened in other lifetimes. . . . I did not understand my condition as a “condition,” nor did I know that there were others . . . who were afflicted with variations of the same bizarre symptoms. . . . Its sufferers had not yet begun their

compulsive march into the rivers and oceans, unable to resist the water's pull. (71-71)

It is through Miranda's symptoms – her durian smell, her memory dreams, and her body's dissolution in water – that Miranda acquires a critical apprehension of the racialized conditions of her own formation as a subject. Indeed, whenever Miranda / Nu Wa submerges in water, she simultaneously remembers and forgets the conditions of her own birth. Such moments of fleeting awareness – when the protagonist finds her body opened to and integrating into the material environment – highlight how the limits of Miranda's consciousness are altered when her body shifts in moments of stress. As Rosi Braidotti points out, the body is “an en fleshed kind of memory” (156). Memory accessed via the dreaming disease offers a means by which Miranda confronts and transforms the limits of her body as well as her consciousness of the temporality of her life. This attention to the body as a “dynamic entity” (157), reflects how subjectivity is reconstituted time and again. Ultimately, the novel's contention is that the process of rewriting the body also opens the body to forms of memory, knowing and feeling that are intersubjective as much as they are intergenerational.

A similar attention to the limits of bodily apprehension also informs other works of Asian Canadian literature examined in this dissertation. I argue that by exploring the shifting and historically-contingent forms that the racialization of Asian bodies takes, Asian Canadian literature highlights the unnatural and highly constructed boundaries of Asian Canadian subjectivity. Each of the texts I examine takes a distinct approach to writing this racialized body, a range that moves, for instance, between asserting the ambivalence of feeling and memory as sites for political subjectivity in Demerson's work, to forms of body memory in Chariandy's, and a proprioceptive poetics of the lived body in Miki's. I have suggested that expressions of political sovereignty are deeply invested in producing and regulating the boundaries between life and death, between liveliness – the life-giving attributes and rights that belong, properly speaking, to human

social, cultural and political life – and social death. Works by Asian Canadian writers reveal that the biopolitical surveillance of “life” must be considered in the context of individuals as social, biological and affective subjects whose memories and narratives exceed its regulatory framework.

The affective repositories of knowledge embodied in these cultural narratives describe a historical archive of trauma, loss and dispossession. Marianne Hirsch contends that the “bodily, psychic, and affective impact of trauma” “exceed[s] the bounds of traditional historical archives and methodologies” (“The Generation” 104). For Hirsch, intergenerational memory structures defy the parameters of both traditional archives and individual subjectivity. My analysis of the “biopolitical body” in Asian Canadian literature is rooted in an examination of how writers such as Demerson, Goto and Chariandy foreground a politics of the feeling body in their texts, thus historically contextualizing the feelings that we feel – in their proper socio-political and cultural milieus. As Ann Cvetkovich also writes, “an archive of emotions . . . is one of trauma’s most important, but most difficult to preserve, legacies” (437). Tracking the affective legacies of trauma begins, I contend, through attention to the socially contingent and productive role of “emotion cultures” in shaping subjectivity. Cultural theorist Anu Koivunen asserts the cultural and historical specificity of emotions, writing that “emotions and emotion cultures [are] contingent technologies of subjects” (19). Jennifer Harding and E. Deidre Pribam also argue for an understanding of “the complexity of emotional practices” and the significant role that they play in the “development of

social identities and in the production and exchange of meaning”¹² (4). Taking a similar approach, my first chapter interrogates the culture of shame associated with the legal and social address of incorrigibility, the legal charge of promiscuity that leads to Demerson’s incarceration. In Chapter II, I suggest that *Hopeful Monsters* explores the “promise of happiness” that is transmitted through medicalised discourses of motherhood. In contrast, *Soucouyant* positions melancholia as an intergenerational structure of feeling that is a part of a larger spatial and temporal colonial apparatus. As I suggest, Demerson, Goto and Chariandy draw attention to how structures of feeling are themselves informed by the larger colonial and socio-economic infrastructures that shape our social existences, an angle also taken up by Wong and Miki in their exploration of globalization’s affective aspects.

¹² Teresa Brennan explains that the “taken-for-grantedness of the emotionally contained subject is a residual bastion of Eurocentrism” (2). For Brennan, the “transmission of affect” “capture[s] a process that is social in origin but biological and physical in effect” (3). According to her model, individuals are not only *affected* by others through non-linguistic cues in their environments, but that the effects of this process of *affecting* also occurs through physiological changes in the individual. By and large, Brennan’s approach presupposes that affect is one way of understanding the workings of intersubjective relations outside of the communicative model of language, and thus offers an alternative way of theorizing subjectivity and subject-formation. Brennan’s approach differs from that of Sara Ahmed who contends that feelings and emotions not only dissolve the supposed distances between bodies, but that feelings are crucial to the creation of boundaries. “To say that feelings are crucial to the forming of surfaces and borders,” she writes, “is to suggest that what ‘makes’ those borders also unmakes them” (*The Cultural Politics* 25). Complicating Brennan’s formulation, Ahmed contends that the experience of pain returns us to our bodies in ways that manifest their materiality, collapses us into ourselves rather than extending us outward toward others (26). This does not mean that pain is not a social experience, Ahmed claims. Instead, the pain of others hails us to bear witness to suffering in ways we may not even comprehend (29-31).

Affecting Bodies

A part of my understanding of emotion and affect derives from Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie's summary of the three different components of affect. Their definition is worth quoting at length here:

The first is affect as transitive (Guattari 1996, 158), as the movement of impersonal, or we could say "pre-personal" forces . . . This is affect as the "limit-expression of what the human shared with everything it is not . . ." (Massumi 2002, 18). The second aspect is affect as more personal. . . this is affect as emotion or feeling eventually to become recognizable as the register, eventually the representation, of the ongoing folding of self and world, as the person. Emotion involves physical states (heat and increased heartbeat in anger, trembling in terror). Feelings are complex strings of ideas traversing emotions as they remap them (Damasio 2004, 28). The third aspect of affect perhaps lies in between the other two. This is the Spinozan "power to affect and be affected" "by which the power of acting of the body itself is increased, diminished, helped, or hindered, together with the ideas of these affections" (Spinoza 1952, 395). (140)

I would like to first draw attention to the second component of Bertelsen and Murphie's definition, which specifically refers to the role of emotions and feelings in subject-formation. Emotions and feelings represent the person, they contend, and from this perspective, individuals can be formed and situated within site-specific cultures of emotion. Alison Jaggar explains that "emotions differ from feelings, sensations, or physiological responses in that they are dispositional rather than episodic" (53). For example, if I burn my finger, my body's physiological response will be one of pain, but this automatic and involuntary account of pain differs from a feeling of sadness, which may or may not stem from the experience of physical pain. In other words, the emotion of sadness or melancholia is not coterminous with that of physical pain, even though

sadness or melancholia may induce physiological sensations in the body. All this is to say that even though the two do not exist independently of one another, emotions and feelings are neither temporally consistent, nor does one always follow logically from the other. Instead, emotions offer the possibility of denoting those experiences of trauma, loss and mourning that persist long after their original source has been allotted to the past. Perhaps what is most relevant about an approach that distinguishes emotion from feeling and more importantly, emotion from affect is that it enables us to view emotions as historically specific and socially contingent occurrences.

This view of emotion is perhaps best described by feminist studies of emotion. Emotions are gendered, site-specific and historical constructions and thus a “difficult epistemological category,” especially since women and racialized non-white groups have traditionally been separated from the rational sphere through their placement in the realm of emotion (Harding and Pribam 1). The dichotomy between emotion and rationality is, of course, a false one, feminist scholars have contended. For instance, both Jaggar and Rose McDermott contend that emotions are cognitive, and that both emotion and reason function together in the decision-making process (McDermott, “The Feeling of Rationality”; Jaggar, “Love and Knowledge”). Jaggar argues that emotions are necessary to “the construction of knowledge” (51). What is illuminating about this approach to emotion is that it enables us to unsettle the singularity of emotion rooted in the individual subject, and instead to posit that a subject’s emotional orientations are inseparable from the social, material, economic, cultural and political worlds she inhabits.

Considerations of affect in Asian Canadian literary studies have most closely focused on the racial affects of loss and melancholia. In her analysis of the affective dimensions of citizenship, Lily Cho explicitly foregrounds melancholia as a structure of feeling. According to Cho, “feeling bridges the gap between humanity and citizenship” and is thus “a constitutive element of how we understand contemporary citizenship”

("Affecting Citizenship" 111). For Cho, racial melancholia becomes one way of making visible the violence of racialization and the feelings of "vulnerability, fear, and grief" it engenders (114). Cho's work dialogues with a number of Asian American scholars such as Rey Chow, who points out that minority writers "inscrib[e] difference and hybridity" through "ambivalence, anger, pain, melancholy, shame, and abjection" (139). Race theorist Anne Anlin Cheng also insists on looking at "racial identity as a melancholic formation," drawing on psychoanalytic models of subject formation to analyze the psychic dimensions of racialization (24).

For Cheng in *The Melancholy of Race*, racial melancholia functions in the American national imaginary as a form of "disarticulated grief" (44). White racial identity, she argues, is predicated on a storehouse of grief in American culture. Arguing for the need to study racialization under the rubric of melancholia, Cheng proposes that Freud's suggestion that there are two distinctive forms of grief – mourning and melancholia – is significant to the study of Asian American identity in the country. For Freud, Cheng observes, melancholia is incessant and ongoing; it refuses to come to a close: "The melancholic is, one might say, psychically stuck . . . Melancholia . . . denotes a condition of endless self-improvement" (23). And yet, Cheng continues on to note, "this impoverishment is also nurturing" because the melancholic consumes the lost object, incorporating it into herself; what's more, it is also important to note that this act of integration, of assimilation into the self is a traumatic one, functioning together with the original grief in a twofold process. At the heart of this convoluted relation to loss, according to Freud, is the opportunity to see how the ego is constituted. As he informs us, the ego is constituted through a lost object. In this respect, "melancholia alludes not to loss per se but to the entangled relationship with loss. We might then say that melancholia does not simply denote a condition of grief but is, rather, a legislation of grief" (Cheng 23).

Cheng extends Freud's analysis by observing that Freud fails to account for the consequences of a melancholic formation, reflecting on the "layers of denial and exclusion that the melancholic must exercise in order to maintain [the] elaborate structure of loss but-not-loss" (24). Looking at racialization as part of a melancholic formation is important, she suggests, precisely because it reveals insight into the psychic construction of the nation, all the while helping us to think through racialization as a process of constitutive loss, a doubling process, as it were, that reflects on both the majority and minority alike (27). According to this model of understanding the psychic processes of racialization, American histories of racialization suggest the American nation's partial consumption of its racial minorities – for instance, through the use of Asian labour – while it simultaneously denies such links. If, as Cheng describes it, we are to understand racialization as part of a melancholic process, then racialization – or its enduring effects – must also be read as being part of a knowledge-structure that simultaneously evades and teases the conscious, never to be fully realized in corporeal identity. In mourning, Freud argues, "the ego is left free and uninhibited once again after the mourning-work is completed" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 312). In this respect, mourning is temporally bound and finite, so that the grieving subject can recuperate and recover once the cycle of mourning has been completed. Melancholia, on the other hand, is not only more encompassing but also indefinite in its structure.

As Freud describes it, the ambiguous relation that the melancholic has with the lost object takes place in the realm of the unconscious; and in fact, in order for this struggle to take place, the unconscious must also enact a foreclosure of conscious knowledge: this scotoma in the subject is what sustains her melancholia. I examine and historically locate the melancholic structure of loss in both my first and second chapters. In my second chapter in particular, melancholia is a part of a larger colonial structure of inherited feeling in Chariandy's *Soucouyant*. However, while exploring this structure of feeling, I also extend my analysis to consider the political function of other emotions and feelings such as anger and hope in Asian Canadian literature. In looking at feeling,

affect and memory as highly ambivalent sites of subjectivity, and in turn, the relation of these to the politics of speakability in Chapter I, I argue that Demerson's racialization by proxy (to Asianness) draws our attention to the *processes* by which one gets to be racialized. These processes highlight, on the one hand, how subjectivity is temporally renewable, and on the other, the highly constructed and unnatural boundaries of racialized identity.

While my first chapter introduces the possibility of reading melancholia through anger, thus suggesting the work of multiple affective modes in subject-formation in Asian Canadian literature, the second chapter explores what Goto introduces as a spectrum of feeling states in her writing – revulsion, despair, joy, horror and hope. Specifically, Goto shows the limitations of the psychoanalytic theory of subject-formation, and shows instead how the process of acquisition, of gains, and of adding on, is what constitutes subject-formation: subjectivity is not merely constituted through loss, but is also constituted and reconstituted through the process of acquiring a set of attachments and relations. Indeed, both *Soucouyant* and *Hopeful Monsters* reveal how being inaugurated into language means being addressed linguistically and non-linguistically by multiple others and it is through the multiplicity of this address that we see the subject emerge ambivalently through love, fear, melancholia, joy, wonder, laughter and anger, and in contestation of those relations.

My third chapter approaches the topic of affect from a different direction: in her collection of poems, Wong explores the political potential of disgust and malaise to critique regimes of commodification under globalization. This poetic account of consumption contrasts with Miki's *Mannequin Rising*, who tracks desire as an affective structure in globalizing processes, in order to consider the limits of subjective boundaries. Finally, my dissertation concludes with a discussion of the poem "Rachel" in Lai's *Automaton Biographies*. Written from the perspective of Rachel, the replicant / clone from Ridley Scott's 1982 film *Blade Runner*, the poem is a reflection on Rachel as a

biotechnologically-engineered life form. Confronting the very conditions of her subjectivity through a poetics of feeling, Rachel returns me to the title of this Introduction: “When Affective Bodies Meet Biopower: a Reflection on Feelings and the Life of the Human in Asian Canadian Literature.”

Chapter 1.

The Speakability of Emotions and the Impossibility of Speech in Velma Demerson's *Incorrigible*

This chapter situates questions about racialization and Asian Canadian subjectivity firmly within a eugenic history, tying the history of Asian Canadian settlement to the arena of international politics with respect to shifting ideas about race and humanness in the years leading to and during the Second World War. My narrative focus is *Incorrigible* (2004), an autobiographical text that tells the life story of a young, white woman who is incarcerated and experimented on because she has a Chinese fiancé. Her account begins in 1939, when Velma Demerson is charged for being “incorrigible” under the Female Refuges Act (FRA) and thrown into a reformatory for women. The autobiography reaches back to her childhood in the 1920s, while mapping the decades that follow up until 1989. Unlike the non-white authors I address who write about race to critique the imperial history of whiteness, Demerson represents herself as a figure of white femininity. In this respect, the text differs from the other literature I look at, since different presumptions about race factor into how the author writes about racial relations: inasmuch as Demerson writes about her engagement and marriage to an Asian man, Harry Yip, and the birth of their mixed-race child, her story weaves in, out, and away from these familial bonds. The autobiography ultimately resounds with the eventual loss of both of these figures, one of whom – her son – dies at the age of 26. In coming to a close, the text thus also marks the loss of this familial structure through

divorce and death, a “closing” that in turn, folds Demerson back into whiteness through her remarriage to a white man. Reflecting back on this fraught and (now) inaccessible set of relations, the narrator shifts between modes of racial visibility and invisibility that at once disclose and erase her familial ties. Indeed, disclosure and erasure are inseparable parts of the same story since Demerson’s legal and social status is called into question by her association with these two figures, and she is variably bound to and torn from them. Although Demerson is physically white, her legal status as non-citizen (she loses her citizenship because of her marriage to an Asian man) and her experiences of racialization “by proxy,” lead to devastating losses of legal and social identity.

I examine how the legal charge of “incorrigibility” functions as a technology of subjugation in the text, and thus situates Demerson in an “emotion culture” of shame, despair and ultimately, emotional estrangement. In “An Affective Turn? Reimagining the Subject of Feminist Theory,” Anu Koivunen asserts the cultural and historical specificity of emotions, writing that “emotions and emotion cultures [are] contingent technologies of subjects” (19). If there is a need, as Koivunen points out, to examine emotion cultures for their formative role in subjectivity, then Demerson’s *Incorrigible* also provides a gender-specific account of how structures of feeling shape meaning and define social experience. A provision under the Ontario Female Refuges Act, the charge of incorrigibility (1919-1958)¹³ was used to label the errant behaviour of young women

¹³ The Female Refuges Act was first enacted in 1897. The 1919 amendment to the Act introduced the clause of incorrigibility that would enable authorities to police young women for immoral behaviour. See historian Joan Sangster’s “Incarcerating ‘Bad Girls’: The Regulation of Sexuality through the Female Refuges Act in Ontario, 1920-1945” for more detail (240, 1996).

who romantically strayed across colour lines.¹⁴ Indeed, this race and gender-based category operated at the nexus of biopower, a form of power that Foucault describes as central to western governance. According to Foucault, power gradually became invested in managing the biological life of the species in the late eighteenth century. Reproduction, mortality and the birth rate became central concerns of sovereign power (*Society Must* 243). One of the basic effects of this regulation of collective life, Foucault proposes, is a form of racism that “society will direct against itself, against its own elements and its own products” (62). Despite Foucault’s recognition that biopower¹⁵ is aimed at regulating the reproductive body and his suggestion that racism is intrinsic to the governance of life, there is little discussion of racial reproduction as *the* exemplary form through which female bodies are most intensely disciplined and regulated. He acknowledges that a “thorough medicalization of [the bodies of women] was carried out in the name of the responsibility they owed to the health of their children, the solidity of the family institution, and the safeguarding of society” (*History of* 146-147). Even as Foucault observes that women’s bodies were of significance to the state because they became bearers of national responsibility, he fails to more closely interrogate this relation. Writing on Foucault’s work, Penelope Deutscher similarly emphasizes that women ultimately came to “assume a status as a reproductive threshold of the future” (129). Taking up where Foucault left off, and situating my analysis of incorrigibility within the wider domain of racial governance, I question what disciplinary tactics come into

¹⁴ The term “incorrigibility” continued to be employed under the Juvenile Delinquents Act until 1984. In its 1965 report on Juvenile Justice, the federal Department of Justice’s Committee proposed that “conduct now variously described as incorrigibility, unmanageability, being beyond the control of a parent or guardian, or being in moral danger, should not be included within the offence provisions of the federal Act’ (MacLeod, 1965: Recommendation 15, p. 285)” (Spratt and Doob 160).

¹⁵ If we follow Foucault’s suggestion that two techniques of power emerged in the seventeenth century – one having to do with the discipline of the body, in order to maximize its labouring capacities and ensure its subjugation to economic imperatives – and the other related to the species body (*History of* 139), then we might also want to more closely examine the female body’s relation to both technologies of power.

play to police and punish women who cross racial lines. Specifically, I theorize incorrigibility as an affective disciplinary category, one that reveals much about the culture of racial hygiene and the larger patterns of social dispossession it gave birth to.

As I argue, the text reflects on emotion as a fraught and ambivalent category of experience. Commenting that “continuous sorrow [is] an impossible state,” Demerson asks if she will “become bereft of feeling?” (94). Indeed, although Demerson writes about feeling humiliation, anxiety, shame and despair (5,17), an “inability to confide [her] pain to others” (68,70), and experiencing hysteria as well as anger (89, 115), the narrator later concludes with the need to “step[] out of emotional attachment” in order to address the past (159). This psychic response to trauma reveals the extreme patterns of disassociation at play for the narrator: her incarceration divorces her from the belonging and love she experiences with Harry; she reflects, for instance, that love, replaced by a “life of physical fear,” has become a “luxurious fantasy” (68). With such descriptions about her mental state, Demerson oscillates between cataloguing her feelings and stating her emotional numbness (94). Emotional estrangement can, of course, be an effect of many traumatic experiences, but Demerson’s query points to a specific question emerging out of her life story: how does the suspension of feeling shape linguistic acts? What is the relation of emotions, feelings and affects to language and the politics of testimony? There is an obvious link: we know certain feelings *as* feelings because they get expressed in language. But if feelings have historically been taken to be a measure of our humanity, as Susan Maslan¹⁶ observes (“The Anti-Human”

¹⁶ She points out that “feeling” became a referent of “humanness” during the Enlightenment. What this also indicates is that as an eighteenth-century formation, the coupling of feeling and the “human” reflects how, “over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the human, precisely in its quality as fleshly and embodied, took on new meanings that made it central to the conceptualization of right. Specifically, the human body—not as a body to be fed, nor as a producer of labor, nor as an object of demographic concern—as the locus of sensibility, of feeling, and consequently of sympathy began to intrude into and to remake the political imagination” (362).

358), what kind of political work does the suspension or refusal of emotions do? Maslan proposes that we think about the human body as the site of feeling, and at the same time questions how this pairing signifies racially. Reading the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, she notes that the Declaration introduced a way of thinking about racialized non-European people as *human* through feeling. In recognizing the natural rights inherent to all people, it simultaneously established the category's distinction from the political rights of the (white, male) "citizen" (359-360): "despite commonplace assumptions about the Enlightenment, the primary qualification for inclusion within the category of the human was the capacity to feel, not the capacity to reason" (358). In other words, the idea of humanity became legally and politically important with the drafting of the French Declaration, and is rooted in the idea that everyone – Asian and Black subjects, for instance, may lay claim to humanity, but not to citizenship. Demerson's autobiography similarly reflects on feeling as a fraught political and experiential category in the struggle it enacts between the speakability of emotions and the impossibility of speech. Demerson questions what it means to think about the acts of speaking and feeling together. Does one follow the other or do they coincide? Are they simultaneous? What kind of temporality does this relation suggest? More importantly, what marks Demerson's struggle with feelings, and the peculiar way she signals both the losses and the shifts in her own feelings, is the implication that the links between feeling, knowing and remembering cannot be taken for granted.

Consequently, the question of genre posits a significant difference between this text and the others examined in this dissertation, especially since it allows us to explore the links between feeling and the genre of autobiography. *Incorrigible* suggests the limits of the feeling subject, whose subjectivity emerges at the limits of her sense of her own body, where knowledge, memory, assumptions about the world and feeling as an experiential category are all put to the test. Demerson pieces her story together sixty odd years after her incarceration, and thus draws attention to how the autobiography is subject to all the vagaries of forgetting and repression that characterize the act of

storytelling. Annette Kuhn writes in *Family Secrets* that “the borderlands of memory,” elision and repression, shape “narratives of identity” (2). In much the same way, Demerson’s autobiography is as much a narrative about telling and repression as it is about the narrator’s “rediscovery” and remembering of incidents that she had forgotten for many years. For instance, it was only in the mid-1990s that Demerson recalled (through a flashback) the most painful of medical treatments that she endured during her incarceration (Backhouse¹⁷ 123). The gynaecological treatments Demerson receives at the Mercer are so excruciatingly painful that they remain blotted from her memory for years. Although the autobiography is written after this return to memory occurs, the text enacts a struggle with memory through an exploration of the narrator’s lack of knowledge about her treatment at the hands of various legal and medical bodies.

These medical treatments violate the boundaries of her body, disrupting a range of feeling, emotional, cognitive and affective modes through a disruption of the subject’s sense of self. In *The Feeling of What Happens*, Antonio Damasio claims that core consciousness and autobiographical consciousness together constitute the self: the core self refers to the continual and ongoing recreation of the subject in her second by second engagement with the environment. For Damasio, core consciousness describes our lived sense of the present but it lacks an extended awareness of our relation to time. By contrast, the autobiographical self, based on autobiographical *memory*, is constituted through the narrative acts that make up a subject’s life story, that is to say, her biography (17-18). There is a relation between these two kinds of consciousness Damasio argues, writing that the “autobiographical self arises from the core self” (18).

¹⁷ In her chapter on Demerson’s case, “Sexual Battery: Gynecological Treatment in the Mercer Reformatory, 1939-40,” in *Carnal Crimes: Sexual Assault Law in Canada, 1900-1975*, Backhouse reads the medical treatments that Demerson experiences at the hands of Dr. Edna Guest as a case of “sexual battery.” In Demerson’s view, the gynaecological treatments she was subjected to during her incarceration “constituted a form of non-consensual sexual assault” (124).

But what if the relation between the two is interrupted and reformed through multiple forms of violence and trauma? Through forms of violence and trauma that are at once discursive and extra-discursive, corporeal, pedagogical and affective? Damasio's suggestion is that when extended consciousness is disarticulated from core consciousness, the subject loses her sense of self (202-203). In *Incorrigible*, Demerson's experiences of loss also disrupt her sense of her life's temporality, reflecting the need to examine the politics of remembering at work in the text.

This chapter considers Demerson's textual struggle with bureaucratic discourse in light of her representation of herself as a feeling *and* a non-feeling subject, arguing that the narrator's critical consciousness¹⁸ emerges through an engagement with feeling as an ambivalent experiential and political category; writing of the loss of emotions, feelings and affective experience, she suggests that it is not so much that there is a relation between the emotions we feel and how we come to speak, but that a rupture and a deferral also marks that relation. Through this reading, this chapter proposes a model for understanding the profoundly fraught relation of feeling, emotion and affect to speakability by suggesting that Demerson's racialization and experiences of trauma cannot be adequately explained by racial melancholia, a key term explored by postcolonial theorists in recent years, but which has not been adequately considered in the context of white to Asian racialization in Canada. Examining Demerson's relation to loss through the prism of melancholia also enables me to extend my analysis beyond the psychoanalytic frame first posited by Freud for theorizing loss, to consider an arc of racial grief that moves through a trajectory of fear, despair, shame, anxiety, emotional numbness, and anger to a critical engagement with the politics of emotion itself. This approach reveals subjectivity to be temporally renewable, while loss is subject to

¹⁸ As Kuhn asserts, memory is an important tool in autobiographical writing and a part of "the awakening of critical consciousness, through . . . activities of reflection and learning, among those who lack power; and the development of a critical and questioning attitude towards their own lives and the lives of those around them" (8).

foreclosure and elision in relation to shifting structures of feeling and non-feeling in the autobiography.

This chapter's argument moves through five main parts. In the first, I situate the text within an Asian Canadian literary history, illuminating the historical background to the autobiography and the eugenic-based medical practices Demerson refers to in her narrative. The second part concerns itself with examining the text's engagement with a politics of feeling through the affective category of incorrigibility. An analysis of this disciplinary category paves the way to a more in-depth study of racialization and loss in the text. I propose a model of racialization by proxy for reading the specific forms that racialization takes in *Incorrigible*. Here, I also suggest that Demerson's autobiography calls for more complexity in our reading of racial melancholia, given that the narrator is ultimately folded back into whiteness. The autobiography calls for alternative terms for imagining the devastating experiences of racialization and social ostracism, for conceptualizing both the subject's return to memory and the ongoing revisions of subjectivity. In the final section, I conclude by examining how the frames of citizenship and biopolitics come together in mediating Demerson's relationship with her son, Harry junior, ultimately producing conflicting and unanticipated narratives about political subjectivity, racial identity, and citizenship. As I suggest, the vicissitudes of eugenic and social hygiene regulation during this time produced capricious and uncanny lines of life, liveliness and social death: these reveal the shifting gender and race-based legal, social, cultural, and political terms under which we become, finally human.

1.1. The Interconnecting Histories of Asian Canadian Men and White, Working-Class Women

Incorrigible is about a young woman who grows to adulthood in the 1920s and 30s in Canada. When her parents report her to the authorities for leaving home with her Chinese fiancé, eighteen-year-old Demerson is sent to Toronto's Belmont Refuge, an industrial institute intended to offer "shelter" to young women.¹⁹ When the Belmont shuts down due to lack of funding, Demerson is transferred along with the other women

¹⁹ Institutes such as the Belmont were meant to be "shelters" rather than prisons for young women, and sought to rehabilitate their re-entry into society by providing reference letters, work experience, religious guidance and moral teaching (Demerson 13-14, 60, 118-119). As Demerson points out, there was a distinction between industrial institutes and the Mercer Reformatory, which was a more severe correctional institute, also aimed at "reform" in policy, but in reality it was used to house women charged with criminal activities such as violation of the liquor laws. One young woman in the autobiography asserts that "[t]he Mercer Reformatory is a prison where one who has sinned must suffer for her sins. The Belmont Home is a place for wayward girls" (14). Many of the women incarcerated in the Mercer, for instance, are arrested for vagrancy (15) or, according to the Criminal Code of Canada (1929), "[e]veryone is a loose, idle or disorderly person or vagrant who (i) being a common prostitute or night walker, wanders in the fields, public streets or highways, lanes or places of public meeting or gathering of people, and does not give a satisfactory account of herself" (167).

The Belmont was run by charitable donations (Demerson 118), "but received a per capita rant from the provincial government and also the city" (Sangster, "Incarcerating 'Bad Girls,'" 1996, 240). As Sangster observes, "if a woman started off at Belmont and refused the discipline there, she could easily be transferred to the reformatory under the FRA." She explains further that, "[a]fter Belmont closed its doors as an Industrial refuge," it became standard practice to send females over the age of 15 to the Mercer Reformatory (which continued the mandate to discipline girls and young women for their unruly sexuality or other "immoral" behaviour) ("Incarcerating Bad Girls," 190, 2006). While Sangster suggests that only young women over the age of fifteen were sent to the Reformatory, Demerson notes that a fourteen-year-old epileptic girl was also a part of the group of Belmont girls sent to the Mercer, highlighting how often legal rules were overturned in practice to incarcerate females (7).

to the Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Females,²⁰ a prison institution where the physician in charge, Dr. Edna Guest,²¹ conducts a series of treatments and experiments on her without her consent. While at the Mercer, Demerson gives birth to a sickly child whose weakened condition was later acknowledged by the Ontario government to be the result of these experiments.²² When she marries Harry Yip after ten months of incarceration, she unknowingly forfeits her citizenship.²³ Twelve years later and amid conditions of poverty and ongoing employment struggles, Demerson and her husband lose custody of their son, Harry junior. The autobiography is an important historical text because it provides an insider account of institutional life, and highlights the discrepancies between the supposed policies motivating their operation and the actual practices that took place within them, such as the eugenic-inspired medical treatments and experiments conducted at the Mercer. As Demerson points out, the distinction between the two kinds of institutes (refuge versus prison) collapsed when the girls were transferred from the Belmont to the Mercer, a process that for Demerson criminalized incorrigibility even though legally incorrigibility “[was not] a criminal [but a moral] offence” (14).

²⁰ For more information on the history of the Mercer Reformatory, see Carolyn Strange’s “The Velvet Glove: Maternalistic Reform at the Andrew Mercer Ontario Reformatory for Females, 1874-1927.” See also Kelly Hannah-Moffat’s *Punishment in Disguise: Penal Governance and Federal Imprisonment of Women in Canada* and Amanda Glasbeek’s discussion of the Mercer in *Feminized Justice: the Toronto Women’s Court, 1913-1934*, Strange’s *Toronto’s Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* as well as Wendy Reumper’s “Locking Them Up: Incarcerating Women in Ontario, 1857-1931” in *Law, Society, and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*.

²¹ Dr. Edna Guest was a prominent feminist figure of the time. Backhouse’s analysis of Demerson’s case in *Carnal Crimes* provides an overview of Guest’s career.

²² As acknowledged in the apology she received from the Government of Ontario in 2001: “the government wishes to apologize for the adverse effects your incarceration undoubtedly had on your son, who was born to you while you were in custody” (*Incorrigible* 165).

²³ Demerson was one of an estimated one million residents of Canada, called the Lost Canadians, who either lost or else were denied their citizenship as a result of discriminatory racist and patriarchal state policies. See, for example, blog.lostcanadian.com.

As I mentioned in the Introduction to this project, *Incorrigible* bookends an alternative story about racialization taking place through the institutionalization and medicalization of a young, white woman. Her narrative returns us to the first half of the twentieth century, a formative time in Canadian politics, which has thus offered a significant historical paradigm for scholarship in Asian Canadian studies. Much has been said about Canada's racial policies and nation-making during this time, with scholars giving well-deserved attention to, for instance, Canada's regulation of immigration from Asia. The turning away of immigrants from India on the *Komagata Maru* in 1914,²⁴ the ongoing strategic regulation of Chinese immigrants through the head tax system (beginning in 1885) and the Chinese Immigration Act (1924), and the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War,²⁵ all represent traumatic histories of racism that have garnered valuable literary and scholarly treatment. The race riots that took place in Vancouver and Bellingham in 1907, targeting Chinese businesses and Japantown (in Vancouver) and South Asian homes (in Bellingham), were also symptoms

²⁴ In "Specters of Indigeneity," Renisa Mawani examines the racial exclusions and anti-immigration sentiment that led to the *SS Komagata Maru's* denied entry in Vancouver, while foregrounding the ways that indigeneity factored into political and legal discussions of the *Komagata Maru* (370). The largely male and Punjabi contingent of 376 passengers aboard the Japanese steamship was denied permission to disembark in May of 1914, a decision that was later upheld by "three newly-enacted orders-in-council": "the first disallowing the entry of unskilled laborers and/or artisans, the second requiring each 'Asian' entrant to be in possession of \$200 upon arrival, and the third necessitating that passengers make a 'continuous journey' from their place of origin to Canada" (382). As Mawani explains, the *Komagata Maru* became a prime example of how different ports across the world came to be connected in the space of a single journey, signalling a "formative moment in British colonial history . . . that . . . connected Britain, India, Hong Kong, and Canada within a circuitous, albeit uneven, movement of peoples, and within a global regime of law, legality, and violence" (370). The *Komagata Maru* is one of many examples of border regulation during this period.

²⁵ Some scholarship on this topic includes Mona Oikawa's *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory, and the Subjects of Internment*, Kirsten McAllister's *Terrain of Memory: a Japanese Canadian Memorial Project* and Roy Miki's *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*.

of this racial legislation.²⁶ As Donald Goellnicht observes, “Canada’s pattern of behaviour was very similar to that of the United States, with the exploitation of Chinese labour²⁷ in the nineteenth century, when cheap labour was in demand (for gold mining, railway building, etc.), and the exclusion of immigrants during most of the first half of the twentieth century”²⁸ (“A Long Labour” 6).

Scholars have duly noted that the social movements of this century circled around the figure of the Asian, employing a vast symbolic arsenal to consolidate an “Asianized” version of otherness. Daniel Coleman and Goellnicht take note, for instance, of “the Women’s Christian Temperance Union’s ‘White Ribbon Campaign’ against the liquor trade that used racialized imagery to figure the contamination of the public body by alcohol” (“Race into the” 3). On a broad level, they write, “race thinking enjoyed such

²⁶ During the 1907 race riots, in Bellingham, U.S.A. a mob “drove out some 700 Sikhs,” and in Vancouver, anti-Asian rioters vandalized both Chinatown and Japantown (Lee, “Asian Canadian Critical” 119). In “Interpreting Social Disorder,” Julie Gilmour observes in her analysis of the Vancouver riots that this case of civil disorder had an international audience, and carried “serious consequences not only for Canada’s relationship with Japan, but for the web of relationships between the United States, Great Britain, China, Japan, and India” (484). As Gilmour points out, the Vancouver anti-Asian riots drew Great Britain into the fray because it had a commercial treaty with Japan (signed in 1894), and which Canada signed in 1906: the treaty “required the Canadian government to treat Japan as a most-favoured nation and to protect the lives and property of Japanese citizens” (485). The riots were followed by the Gentleman’s Agreement between Japan and Canada in 1907, which restricted Japanese immigration to 400 immigrants per year (Miki, *In Flux* 48). Canada’s diplomatic management of its relationship with Japan mediated via the commercial treaty, pressure from the Foreign Office to “treat Japan as a ‘civilized nation’ and an ally with treaty privileges,” and the Gentleman’s Agreement, suggest how Japan, China and India were hierarchically placed in the colonial order at the time (Gilmour 493).

²⁷ Writing on the Chinese Head Tax, Lily Cho also observes that anti-immigration laws were “as much about the inclusion as [they were] about the exclusion of Chinese labour” (“Rereading Chinese Head” 62).

²⁸ These processes of exclusion continue, Goellnicht writes further, “with the internment and ‘repatriation’ of Japanese Canadians during World War II; with the exclusion of immigrants from India from 1908 to 1951; and with the disenfranchisement of all of these groups But the Canadian state has been more adept at containing or diffusing protest from racialized minorities” (“A Long Labour” 6).

legitimacy in the sciences and social sciences that it became foundational to activist movements aimed at reform in education, women's lives, immigration policy, criminology, and urban poverty" (3). As Robin Winks argues in his historical overview of *The Blacks in Canada*, the "target of the new century's exclusiveness was the Asian, and in particular the Indian—in Canada occasionally called a Sikh, although many were Hindu" (300). Immigrants from Asia were widely conceived of as racially inassimilable and the principal threat to Canada's social fabric, in part due to their larger numbers in the country (300). Among these social movements, the eugenics and social hygiene movements emerged as dominant interpretive frames for naturalizing existing patterns of racial, class-based and gendered discrimination.

Racial Hygiene, Racial Governance in Canada

Eric Hobsbawm argues that for Western countries at the turn of the century, "ethnicity and language became the central, increasingly the decisive or even the only criteria of potential nationhood" (*Nations and Nationalism* 102). Scholars such as Marius Turda have also noted that, in the years leading up to World War II,

Maintaining the nation's racial potential became of prime political importance alongside instruments for eliminating the "dysgenic groups," be they defined socially or ethnically. The racial mythology, in addition to a whole range of modern hygienic techniques aiming at improving the health of the nation, thus helped create a new political biology whose purpose was to prepare the race, at the expense of ethnic minorities, for the onset of the biopolitical state. (115-116)

The eugenics and social hygiene movements advanced this racial ideology in Canada, influencing discussions on topics related to "racial inefficiency, social inadequacy, and ill health" (McLaren, *Our Own Master* 9). Backhouse explains in *Colour-Coded: A History of*

Racism in Canada, that following the Industrial Revolution, eugenics²⁹ emerged as a discipline alongside “ethnology, anthropology . . . psychology and sociology” (5). In Canada these goals came to fruition, as a form of “race-based reproduction management”³⁰ (Strange and Stephen 525). A vast network of political and medical authorities sought to strengthen the character and stock of specific populations, while also regulating groups of “undesirables.” The social hygiene movement, with its

²⁹ When Francis Galton first began to formulate his conception of eugenics, he did so by drawing on nineteenth century developments in the field of science (such as with germ theory, or in pathology and physiology); these became incorporated into what came to be known as “sanitary science,” leading to the prominent social hygiene movement of the early twentieth century (Pelling 30). Drawing heavily upon the work of Charles Darwin, Galton became immersed in research on human populations and human ability during the course of his lifetime; these interests corresponded with his desire to racially hierarchize nations according to standards of moral and intellectual superiority. If negative or undesirable traits could be bred out of a given population, Galton contended, then the quality of the nation or the “race” would be improved overall (McLaren, *Our Own* 15). “English biomedical politics” travelled swiftly to Canada, where Canadian politicians, religious leaders, scientists and psychiatrists alike took up the racial degeneration concerns of hereditarianism (Strange and Stephen 525).

Galton’s theories became widespread in many countries from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, by turns motivating and motivated by racist ideologies: “Many different scientists, all of them white, undertook the complex work of delineating ‘racial’ categories and speculating about the multiple distinctions between human beings that might be drawn from ‘racial data.’” In addition to skin colour, scientists also examined characteristics as diverse as nasal index and stature, and social markers such as reputation, language, religion, dress, and intelligence” (Backhouse, *Colour-Coded* 5-6). In this sense and as Cecily Devereux argues, “the basis of eugenics was genetic, the idea that many characteristics or ‘tendencies’ – not only physical characteristics but perceived inclinations towards, for instance, alcoholism, tuberculosis, or insanity – are hereditary” (*Growing a Race* 6). Although, as Jennifer Stephen has noted, scientific research into “theories of genetic crossover and multiple transfer” eventually discredited the purportedly scientific source of eugenic theory, “its legacy remained in the practices . . . [that] developed under its influence” (“The ‘Incorrigible,’ the ‘Bad’” 412).

³⁰ Eugenics and race-based thinking joined together in “public Canadian discourse” to culminate, for example, in 1912 with “the first international eugenics congress” in London and the attendance there of notable Canadians Alexander Graham Bell (inventor) and Sir William Osler (physician) (McLaren 23; Coleman and Goellnicht 3).

emphasis on social purity, its anti-prostitution stance and its regulation of venereal disease, played a key role in producing and sustaining the myth of racial hygiene.

Incorrigible must be read in the context of these larger socio-political shifts vis-à-vis state formation, as well as wider patterns of migration. Racial anxieties during the period fed into a discursive and material network of information processes, a network that fuelled fears about biological mixing between genders and across racial lines. This discursive explosion—that is to say, the many political and social agendas that eugenics and social hygiene projects participated in—occurred in the volatile context of shifting discourses of citizenship and racial hygiene, and particularly, re-articulations of femininity from the perspective of the medico-legal apparatus. Specifically, this dissertation suggests how the early twentieth century project of race in Canada must be examined not only through the regulation of migration and various immigration policies, but also through the socio-scientific surveillance of populations. Indeed, anxieties about border controls and the influx of Asian immigrants were frequently mapped onto medical practices, as reflected in the sterilization laws that Alberta and British Columbia passed in 1928 and 1933 respectively. Carolyn Strange and Jennifer Stephen point out that despite considerable support for eugenics in other parts of Canada, these two provinces³¹ were the only ones to pass sterilization bills, because their health care systems were inadequate to the task of providing for a growing population. “British Columbia’s major cities, Victoria and Vancouver,” for instance, “were prime entry points for Chinese and Indian immigrants” (531). And it is in this sense that “Canada’s

³¹ In North America, in addition to Alberta and British Columbia, thirty-one American states also passed legislation for sterilization purposes. The first bill “was introduced in Michigan in 1897; the first to be enacted was in Indiana in 1907 and the second in British Columbia’s neighbour to the south, Washington, in 1910” (Angus McLaren, “The Creation of a Haven” 133).

sterilization laws, while never explicitly race-specific in design or intent, were implemented to racist effect”³² (534).

Incorrigible sheds light on a medical story of eugenics and racialization, and the colonial surveillance of populations through science. The numerous dimensions of colonial medicine have been discussed at length by postcolonial scholars. As the historian Alison Bashford explains, public health spaces, “national borders, immigration restriction lines, quarantine lines, racial *cordons sanitaires* and the segregative ambitions of a grafted eugenics and public health” were intersecting and “real boundaries of rule.” “All these spaces,” she writes, “these therapeutic, carceral, preventive, racial and eugenic geographies – produced identities of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and citizenship, and of “alien-ness” (1). Writing on the spatialization of public health in the Western world, Bashford also points out that the Chinese diaspora was associated with disease in the nineteenth century,

China itself was understood to be a global reservoir of the disease . . . Chinese migration, goldseeking or indentured labour, were understood to be the routes for the entry of leprosy into ‘British’ space – either the Empire imagined as contiguous territory around which *cordons sanitaires* of immigration restriction should be placed, or entry into Australia or Canada imaged as quarantined, defended and white nations. (88-89)

Kay Anderson similarly argues that “Chinatown was for its representers an incubator of vice and disease that threatened to corrode the pure ‘stock’ of a race and nation If leakage from the ghetto could not be directly plugged, the flow into Chinatown could at least be stemmed at the source” (*Vancouver’s Chinatown* 140). The association of Asian

³² According to Demerson, although Ontario did not have sterilization laws, “Ontario sterilized more females with developmental disability per capita than Alberta” (velmademerson.wordpress.com/the-acts/).

bodies with disease is an old one, a part of colonial imaginings of power and boundaries of repulsion and desire.³³ As Mariana Valverde observes, Chinese immigrants were viewed as “hopelessly degenerate, as a nation in evolutionary and moral decline”³⁴ (111). These views suggest anxieties about the exposure and vulnerability of white subjects to non-white bodies, anxieties that Demerson’s important story about interracial marriage and mixed-race identity, reflects on.

Asian Canadians, Interconnecting Histories

Demerson’s narrative adds to the complexity of this twentieth century narrative of racial hygiene, drawing attention to interracial relations between white women and Asian men, and in particular, shows how such relationships reveal a contradictory mesh of ideas about racial identity, legal and social status, immigration policy and the management of young, white women. In her important study of cross-racial relations in British Columbia, Renisa Mawani observes that Chinese migration “renewed constitutions of race and racisms” while, “physical and discursive proximities, contacts, and encounters produced additional regimes of racial truths and added modes of legal

³³ Ann Laura Stoler argues, for example, argues that the “domesticating strategies of empire . . . [show] the affective [to be] a charged political domain,” one which reveals a “a politics of emotion, the power relations underwriting indiscretions of feeling, sexual liaisons chanced, parent-child bonds painfully severed and not always remade” (18).

³⁴ By the 1920s, Canadian eugenicists had made the topic of the “feeble-minded” a pressing national issue (Strange and Stephen 527). Here, like elsewhere, the topic of degeneracy became the primary locus and site of fears about numerous social ills. For example, Dr. Helen MacMurchy (1862-1953), Canada’s “pioneering propagandist for eugenics,” identified mental deficiency as the singular cause of “venereal disease, alcoholism, crime, tuberculosis, epilepsy, and illegitimacy” (527). “Christian charity and philanthropy along with the country’s open door to immigrants,” MacMurchy argued, “allowed feeble-mindedness to flourish” (527). By the beginning of the twentieth century, Toronto had rapidly begun to develop as a think-tank base for eugenic-minded doctors, psychologists and administrators who “translated eugenics from scientific discourse into social cause” (526). However, arguments about feeble-mindedness as cause (or effect) were often confused with debates about how alien immigration, “alcoholism, insanity, and women’s work” also functioned as social contaminants (McLaren, *Our Own* 23).

and nonlegal governance” (*Colonial Proximities* 7, 6). Mawani claims that these geographies of surveillance and violence produced regimes of racial death that were as political as they were cultural. Demerson’s *Incorrigible* reveals these regimes to be shifting ones, ones that moved racialized white and non-white subjects through capricious forms of social existence and social death. Her autobiography also suggests the necessity of reading patterns of white and Asian racialization together, and to consider the ways in which they folded into one another.

Incorrigible is one of several Asian Canadian literary texts attentive to the interconnecting histories of diverse populations, and specifically inter-racial encounters between white women and Asian men.³⁵ Writer Sky Lee, for example, touches on the figure of white femininity in her novel *Disappearing Moon Cafe*, highlighting how the historic Janet Smith case – the 1924 unsolved murder of Janet Smith, a Scottish nursemaid, implicates a Chinese houseboy, Foon Sing in a mesh of racially determined conflicts – and intensifies social fears about miscegenation. In her essay “Dead Girl-Bag’: The Janet Smith Case as Contaminant in Sky Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Cafe*,” Tanis MacDonald notes that Janet Smith’s body, as a symbol of illicit sexuality, meets the “collective body” of Chinese-Canadian bachelors vis-à-vis Foon Sing’s implication in her murder (37). Fred Wah’s *Diamond Grill* similarly reflects on the forbidden relationship between white women and Asian men, noting how different Canadian provinces passed legislation to prevent white women from working in Chinese restaurants as a way of pre-empting inter-racial mixing (57). Wah’s poetics speaks to a politics of hybridity and hyphenation “from a blood quantum point of view,” complicating dominant configurations of racial identity (*Faking It* 74). In her account about extraordinary trauma, including criminalization, racialization, violent medical experiments conducted

³⁵ See, for example, Lily Chow’s *Chasing their Dreams: Chinese Settlement in the Northwest Region of British Columbia* for a history of Chinese immigrant and First Nations interactions in B.C..

on the body, the biopolitical management of women and social alienation, Demerson similarly moves between her membership on the margins of both a Chinese Canadian bachelor community and a society of white, mobile, young, and working-class women.

Demerson's narrative also offers a political intervention against many of the silenced narratives of incarcerated women. Although few literary scholars have taken up Demerson's autobiography, historians such as Constance Backhouse, Carolyn Strange and Joan Sangster (back cover) have remarked on its significance to the study of women's history in Canada. Offering insight into the violence of a woman and child's encounters with the numerous legal and social codes of the day, the autobiography is one of few personal narratives of incarceration during the heyday of the Canadian state's disciplining of working class girls and women during the 1930s and 1940s. This "community membership" is given voice in the text's afterword, which includes a written apology that Demerson receives from Attorney General David Young on behalf of the Province of Ontario, in December of 2002:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Government to apologize to you for your incarceration under the *Female Refuges Act* in the 1930s. This Act had unfortunate and unjustified consequences for you and other women who were unjustifiably incarcerated under its provisions. In addition, the government wishes to apologize for the adverse effects your incarceration undoubtedly had on your son, who was born to you while you were in custody, and to his father, Harry Yip. (165)

The autobiography's publication follows Demerson's legal and political battle for apology and redress in a two year process of negotiation for compensation with the Ontario government. Demerson points out that this apology is not addressed to all the women incarcerated under the provisions of the *Female Refuges Act*. But she imagines that the letter removes the stigma and shame of incarceration from all women who

were convicted under this law, writing that the “hundreds or thousands of women who were unjustly imprisoned between 1913 and 1964 are finally exonerated” (165). This act of imagination aligns Demerson with a community of women who were similarly coerced and condemned under the “stigma of wrongdoing,” indicating the ways in which the narrator positions herself affectively within a community of marginalized women (165). This apology also links to other contemporary apologies, such as Brian Mulroney’s 1988 apology for the historic uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War and in 2008, Canada’s apology to First Nations residential school survivors. These official apologies are formal (albeit inadequate) acknowledgements of Canada’s legacy of colonization and forced assimilation. They are also temporally bound together, forming a narrative series that critiques the protracted consequences of racial governance and nation-building in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century. Although these formal apologies herald what has come to be known as an era of reconciliation, the government apology addressed to Demerson and other women “unjustifiably incarcerated” under the Female Refuges Act, offers a glimpse into the racial regulation of white, female reproductivity; this form of racial governance differs radically from the targeted regulation of racialized minority groups that took place in the same period, but it was nonetheless linked to the desire to prevent the growth and reproduction of Asian Canadian communities.

1.2. Incurability: Legal Effects and Affective Governmentality

Up to this point, I have examined the racial hygiene logic of modern governance in Canada. But what specific forms did the eugenic regulation of bodies take? Scholarly treatments of racial hygiene discourses are often restricted to discussions of governmentality and the influence of medical scientists and social activists in implementing eugenic policies such as sterilization. And yet, I wonder about the entire

body of laws and programs that bolstered the broader eugenic agenda. My intention is to specifically question how eugenic and racial hygiene regulations were directed at young, white women. How did women who became embroiled within the legal system negotiate and renegotiate its terms of interpellation? In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault argues that a politics of war forms the “basis of social relations,” an arrangement that reveals that war and peace are not distinctive, but embedded features of one another (48-51). For Foucault, racial biology and eugenics are merely one example of an analytics of war that determines the organization of modern states and their laws (50-51). Foucault asserts that the “problem of life” becomes central to the social contract and a new form of power begins to address “man-as-species” (241-242). While states become primarily concerned with the production of “life” rather than death, racism nevertheless functions as an integral part of the internal mechanisms of the state (254), serving, as it were, as “the precondition for exercising the right to kill” (256). The biopolitical genealogy that Foucault traces is thus suggestive in its implications: both biopower and racism are central to the workings of the modern nation-state or, alternatively, both are simultaneously products and waste-products of its political and economic structures.³⁶ In this context, eugenics and racial hygiene created spaces of control, discipline and regulation, carceralily infusing the personal and public places of everyday existence.

³⁶ In fact, it is now somewhat commonplace to say that “racism is a biological relationship.” Foucault’s work, however, also shows how racial relations not only reflect the tense bio/political relation we share with others, but also how these relations are economic and liberal ones (*Society Must* 256-7). According to Foucault, the development of liberal governmentality in the middle of the eighteenth century in Europe “constitute[d] the condition of intelligibility of biopolitics” (*The Birth of Biopolitics* 328). Liberal governmentality, Foucault contends, exists in a formative and fundamental relation to the practices of the market; because Europe appears as an economic unit for the first time in eighteenth century (55), regionalized in a way it never had been before, the rest of the world is ultimately consolidated as Europe’s market (60). Foucault’s model of international economic relations must be read in the context of his suggestion that biopolitics—a political rationality or form of governmental power—regulates “population” as a category of state-control in the West.

Taking the juridical as an example in *Incorrigible*, we see signs of this type of governmentality emerge through the legal regulation of young, white women, a form of governmentality that extends socially to shape the emotional dispositions of gendered subjects. I do not counter Foucault's argument *against* a model of power relations that stems from the juridical.³⁷ Rather, I am suggesting that the category of incorrigibility is juridical to the extent that it hails Demerson through the law, while functioning discursively across multiple social registers. It is a norm, to draw on Foucault, that circulates between discipline and biopolitics, "applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize"³⁸ (*Society Must* 253). The legal charge of incorrigibility engages the female subject both as a body to be disciplined through the punitive system of the law, and biopolitically addressed through her racial status as a white, reproductive subject. Disciplinary *and* biopolitical, it is as such a racial norm, designating and condemning behaviour that troubles the discourses of racial purity.³⁹

The category of incorrigibility is discursive in the sense that it operates as a legal and social form of condemnation, but in the text it also extends affectively into the *nonlinguistic*, into, in other words, what Paul Gilroy describes as the "anti-discursive and extra-linguistic ramifications of power at work in shaping communicative acts" (57).

³⁷ In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault is arguing against the juridical model of power to suggest that power is multiple rather than unitary: it does not spring from a single source (the law or the sovereign). The hierarchical model of subjugation, according to Foucault, overlooks the multiple matrixes of power through which subjects are constituted, and these include the familial and bureaucratic networks, and the numerous other temporal processes and knowledge-networks that facilitate our growth from childhood to adulthood (43-45).

³⁸ According to Foucault a norm moves between both discipline and biopolitics: "Both technologies are obviously technologies of the body but one is a technology in which the body is individualized as an organism endowed with capacities, while the other is a technology in which bodies are replaced by general biological processes" (249).

³⁹ Also see page 81 for Foucault's discussion of how racism operates as a norm and produces the discourse of racial purity.

Although Gilroy is speaking of the economy of slavery here, noting the “extreme patterns of communication” produced by the institution of slavery, his point is applicable to other arbitrary expressions of legality and illegality as well. In the context of the autobiography, the category of incorrigibility is only the beginning point, the linguistic marker as it were, for tracing the entire force field of affects that it sets into motion. Maureen Cain shares my view on this, arguing that “feelings/emotions/unformulated experiences . . . do exist prior to knowledge of them” (90). My study of “incorrigibility” is attuned to this relation of affects, feelings, emotions and unformulated experiences to knowledge. Structures of feeling carry epistemological force even as they precede categories of knowledge, calling on us to be attentive to whatever exists outside of the bounds of the known. It is in this respect that I acknowledge the paradoxical relation between incorrigibility’s discursive effects, its location within the domain of language and the extra- and non-linguistic cues it dictates.

Close to the end of the autobiography, Demerson writes of her return to Toronto in 1989 as a sixty-nine year old woman, fifty years after her incarceration in 1939. Her aim is to confront Dr. Edna Guest and to examine those remnants of her past that still remain illegible to her:

It’s a long way to Toronto by train from the province of my newly created life but I need time to plan. I’ve done everything I will ever do. I’m stepping out of my emotional attachments – an example of independence, for what it’s worth. I’m going home to attend to “unfinished business.” . . . but I’m going into a prison, not coming out. It’s a lonely trail. I feel as if I’m entering a monastery, not a place of peace but of purgatory. I must relinquish all ties to the present and entomb myself in the past to affirm that it actually existed. There must be some crumbs to scavenge. . . . It is my intention to transcend a formidable gap between the past and the present. (159)

“I’m stepping out of my emotional attachments,” Demerson writes. Suggesting that emotional attachments are intimately tied to temporality, this passage resonates with cognitive and emotional dissonance, and with the assertion that accessing the past needs to occur through the narrator’s separation from her present emotional affiliations. She asserts that this suspension of emotional attachment – to people, to place, and to the sphere of her immediate social existence – is what will enable her to “entomb [herself] in the past.” Moreover, Demerson reveals that the act of entering the past via the suspension of feelings is intimately connected to the epistemological dimension of this access: that this suspension is what mediates her access to institutional archives as well as her own autobiographical memory. When Demerson returns to Toronto in 1989, she does so in order to visit some of the archives that contain information about her life, and to also trace Dr. Guest’s whereabouts.⁴⁰ We might understand this effort to acquire knowledge⁴¹ as a simultaneous effort to address the psychic legacy of trauma, partly constituted through the deferral of her current life.

This suspension is a significant one, because it mirrors the earlier interruption of Demerson’s life that took place through her incarceration and medicalization. The incarceration altered the temporality of Demerson’s life and played an instrumental role in refashioning the conditions of her existence. Writing on the moment of her incarceration at the Mercer for instance, she recalls an acute sense of being devoured: “All movement, all time, even my very thoughts are being consumed. I feel naked, shamed, and defenceless” (2). In these lines, the metaphor of consumption, the

⁴⁰ She discovers that Dr. Guest died in 1958, leaving her desire for confrontation and closure incomplete (160).

⁴¹ Demerson has little to no knowledge about what is happening to her body. As I mention, it is also important to pay attention to the means by which Demerson acquires information about what was happening in her life, because her narrative demonstrates not only how she acquires information through archives and libraries, but also suggests the significant role that more informal structures (such as conversation with both other incarcerated women and authority figures) play in a social context in which knowledge is *kept* from women.

narrator's sense of being ingested, of being eaten alive, contrasts with her sense that even time is consumed. This altered relation to the temporality of her life, intimates not only a devastating experience of erasure, but also a loss of self in the face of overwhelming odds. Damasio notes that the autobiographical self is positioned in time: the autobiographical record includes a sense of the "lived past" as well as an imagined and "anticipated future" (196). "Memories of the future," he argues, play an intrinsic role in shaping subjectivity (203). The disruption of Demerson's projected sense of personal time also deprives her of this anticipated futurity, and it is this forced break in time that she returns to through the archive.

During this trip, part of Demerson's research included looking into the legal infraction she was charged with. Demerson was sentenced in 1939 under the Ontario Female Refuges Act for being incorrigible, a moral descriptive and condemnation often used to regulate the conduct of young, working-class girls and women⁴² during this period. The FRA was:

Specifically aimed at women between the ages of 16 and 35, presumably because these were women's more active sexual and reproductive years, the FRA designated refuges or correctional institutions as places where women were offered shelter, work, and reform as a means of counteracting their "unmanageability and incorrigibility." In 1919, the Act was also broadened with a clause giving magistrates and judges new wide-ranging powers. Any person could bring before a magistrate "any female under the age of 35 . . . who is a habitual drunkard or by reasons of other vices is leading an idle and dissolute life." All that was needed was a sworn statement about the woman's behaviour, or in the

⁴² Sangster points out that incorrigibility was a term that was also applied to boys, but only girls were legally punished under the label ("Between the Lines").

case of parents and guardians, a claim that their daughter was “unmanageable and incorrigible.” No formal charge and trial were needed, and hearings were in private, although written evidence was supposedly required. (Sangster, “Defining Sexual Promiscuity” 48)

The *Female Refuges Act* was an attempt to control the reproductive potential of young women.⁴³ Indeed, following 1918 when women acquired the “formal rights of citizenship with the granting of the vote,” the Canadian state became predominately invested in “manag[ing] female citizenship for the national good” (Strange, *Toronto’s Girl* 187). In Tracy Kulba’s view, new imaginings of nationhood accompanied women’s franchise, as “discourses of citizenship were broadened to encompass practices of social and sexual self-government, a move in which women became responsible for the moral and physical future of the nation’s human resources” (21).⁴⁴ The race and scientific motherhood movements accompanied this gifting of responsibility to women; the post-war era also gave rise to infant and child welfare movements which meant that

⁴³ Sangster explains further that, “[t]he Female Refuges Act was enacted in 1897 to regulate the Industrial Houses of Refuge, which held women sentenced or ‘liable to be sentenced’ by magistrates under local bylaw or Criminal Code infractions Faced with criticisms about the Act, a 1942 amendment allowed sentences to be appealed before the Court of Appeal — though this appears to have been seldom used” (“Defining” 48).

She points out elsewhere that “the categories of idleness (refusing to fit into the work ethic of capitalist society) and dissoluteness (refusing to accept dominant notions of sexual morality) were often closely intertwined and condemned in the eyes of authority” (“Incarcerating Bad Girls,” 1996, 265). Sangster also notes that “the section of the Female Refuges Act that criminalized the ‘idle and dissolute’ woman” was applied to First Nations women in greater frequency over time (“Reforming Women’s Reformatories” 238).

⁴⁴ Much has been said about how reproductive politics were deeply entwined with the politics of nation-building. See, for example, Jennifer Henderson’s discussion of white femininity in *Settler Feminism and Race Making in Canada*, or Angus and Arlene McLaren’s *The Bedroom and the State: the Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1980*.

administrators began to regulate mothers more closely.⁴⁵ In this regard, technologies and laws “related directly and indirectly to marriage” (Kinnear 9-10) constituted re-articulations of old forms of knowledge about women’s bodies and the kinds of productive and reproductive work they do. This took a specific form in the spectrum of laws aimed at preventing inter-racial mixing.

Laws pertaining to women were often racially-inflected to discourage inter-racial relationships. For instance, the “White Women’s Labour Law,” passed in Saskatchewan, was the first of its kind and prevented white women from working for “any Japanese, Chinaman, or other Oriental person”⁴⁶ (*Colour-Coded* 136). According to Backhouse, laws such as this one are an example of how whiteness gets constructed as the norm in law⁴⁷ (136). The *Female Refuges Act* similarly fits into this register of legal surveillance, illustrating how “[w]omen’s criminal behaviour was predominately sexually defined” (Reumper 356): the “legal regulation of women’s sexuality through this law was racialized and racist . . . convictions of White women . . . involved with Asian, Afro-Canadian, and Native men indicated fears that these women were especially debased

⁴⁵ The “scientific motherhood” movement assiduously instructed women on pregnancy and motherhood. As Wendy Mitchinson suggests, because the advice given to potential and pregnant women carried “scientific” authority, doctors and other experts claimed that women who refused to adhere to their instructions were considered “irrational” (281). Prominent doctors such as Helen MacMurphy stressed the importance of segregating and sterilizing women who fell into the “feeble-minded” category over birth control as a solution to the potential danger they posed to “Canadian survival” (A. Levine 133-135).

⁴⁶ Backhouse, among others, has also pointed out that fears of miscegenation were not alone in promoting bills such as this one. Organized labour and competitors with Asian businesses were driving forces leading to the White Women’s Labour Law: “White women, who were restricted in the types of jobs they could obtain, typically earned wages that were one-half those of white males, and slightly less than those of male Asian immigrants. The gender factor is obvious The new legislation denied Chinese businessmen access to these less expensive employees, and would result in a significant blow to their competitive position” (*Colour-Coded* 139).

⁴⁷ “This statute “marks the first overt racial recognition of ‘whiteness’ in Canadian law” (Backhouse 136).

and in need of carceral supervision because they had violated an important colour line” (Sangster, “Defining” 47).⁴⁸ This legislation allowed parents to bring their daughters to the attention of the authorities as a means of controlling and punishing them, but at the same time, anyone could report a woman who stayed out late and drank, who strayed outside the bounds of community norms, or who was seen consorting with the wrong type of man or men. As previously mentioned, Demerson’s parents employ a similar tactic to curb their daughter’s behaviour when her father reports her case to the authorities.

Although the FRA was presumably targeted at a range of criminal and immoral behaviour in women,⁴⁹ the specific charge of incorrigibility bears further looking into. Strange maintains that “[c]harges such as ‘incorrigibility’ or ‘difficult to control’ were the most common complaints laid by parents against their daughters. At Toronto’s first training school for girls, these phrases appeared consistently on the standard complaint forms, also suggesting that recording clerks supplied parents with the official discourse of delinquency” (Strange, *Toronto’s Girl* 135). Incorrigibility characterized a defiance of parental authority, but women who challenged authority outside of the parental sphere could also be deemed incorrigible, precisely because the juridical system – and by extension, women’s reformatories – assumed a simultaneously paternal and maternal role in administering justice to women. As a review of the literature suggests, incorrigibility is, first and foremost, an ambivalent term. Legal categories such as

⁴⁸ Writing on anti-miscegenation laws south of the border, Susan Koshy explains how such laws “reaffirmed [the] status [of Asian Americans] as perpetual foreigners, as racial and sexual aliens” (*Sexual Naturalization* 1). She also argues in “Morphing Race into Ethnicity” that “Asian Americans produced, and were in turn produced by, whiteness frameworks of the U.S. legal system” (154). While there were no direct laws preventing inter-racial marriage in Canada, as Backhouse notes, authorities often employed other measures to discourage these alliances (*Colour-Coded* 146).

⁴⁹ FRA prosecutions peaked during the period from the 1930s through to World War II. Most of the women prosecuted during this time were under the age of twenty-one (Sangster, “Defining” 49).

incurrigibility were volatile and lent themselves to diverse interpretations: their implementation would lead to terrible consequences for many women. Sangster emphasizes that even though “incurrigible and dissolute” were “usually . . . code words for promiscuity,” the looseness of the terms meant that they could be – and were – variously interpreted (*Regulating Girls* 87). In *Toronto’s Girl Problem*, Strange points out that “labels such as ‘incurrigibility,’ ‘delinquency,’ and . . . ‘vagrancy’ [were vague labels]” (133). One of the consequences of this was that “the overwhelming majority of [Mercer] inmates served sentences for victimless crimes” (133). In her study of the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic, Jennifer Stephen also notes how one social worker (M.J. Clarke) medicalizes “incurrigibility” by suggesting it is hereditary: “We often find that those who used to be considered ‘incurrigible,’ ‘bad,’ and ‘immoral,’ are, as a matter of fact, feeble-minded, and not responsible for their actions. If this is proved to be the case we are of course, relieved of all necessity of trying to ‘reform’ the individual or individuals, but we are still far from a satisfactory solution of our problem” (“The ‘Incurrigible,’ the ‘Bad’” 411). Clarke is not alone in connecting “immorality” to genetically-inherited degeneracy. In her research in 1989, Demerson similarly unearths Dr. Guest’s eugenic beliefs in a published paper (163).

Writing on Demerson’s specific case, Backhouse explains that incurrigibility first came into effect in 1919 at the end of World War One, tapping into social fears about “the disruption of gender roles and working-class female sexuality”:

Hundreds of women were arrested under the *Female Refuges Act* during the decades that it was in force. The peak of the prosecutions came during the 1930s and with the onset of the Second World War. Like Velma, most of the women were young, Canadian-born, and working-class. Few had finished high school. . . . Although most were imprisoned on the flimsiest of evidence, their ‘incurrigibility’ appears to have been constructed from extramarital sexual activity and illegitimate

pregnancies. . . . Many of the women who ran afoul of the law were involved in inter-racial relationships with Asian, Black, and Aboriginal men. . . . In keeping with the long-standing Canadian pretension to racial neutrality, the law did not articulate on its face that inter-racial sexual relationships constituted “incurability.” (*Carnal Crimes* 116-117)

As Backhouse sketches above, the FRA was an anti-miscegenation law, one that went hand in hand with a wider rubric of racial citizenship discourse. Demerson makes a similar connection between her romantic relationship with a Chinese man and the charge of incurability in a key passage in the text. The autobiography specifically draws attention to how the term itself circulates as an affective technology of governance, moving within a paternalistic paradigm and extending presumptions of intimacy and knowledge about women’s personal lives beyond the familial sphere to the public one. To consider this in greater detail, I turn to a brief reading of the narrator’s first experience of being charged with the offence, and then to a later retelling of it. Demerson writes:

The judge says, “You are charged with being ‘incurable’ and I sentence you to one year in the Belmont Home.” I walk back and forth in this barred enclosure, stunned! How could it be that a judge . . . would refuse to allow me to marry the father of my child? Yet it’s so obvious – why hadn’t I thought of it before? . . . Chinese babies are undesirable. What could be worse than a white woman willing to challenge government policy designed to “protect” her? (51)

The judge’s condemnation of Demerson becomes one of the first instances in which she is subjected to a form of state power as a result of having a Chinese boyfriend. Linking her relationship to the legal and moral infraction of incurability, Demerson suggests the role that the charge plays in further racializing her relationship with Harry and

indeed, in the unborn child's racialization as Chinese. The implication is that this constituting moment makes her whiteness hyper-visible while subsuming her romantic and familial alliances. This moment is crucial in another respect, too, because it lays the foundation for thinking about subsequent references to "incurribility" in the text.

Together, references to "incurribility" in the text not only frame the narrator as a juridical subjectivity, as I have discussed above, but also ask us to read incurribility as a psychic norm,⁵⁰ as a part of a particular "emotion culture," and as engendering a specific form of racial grief. The category of incurribility is profoundly social for Demerson: she structures her experiences of trauma and severe alienation around the term, so that "incurribility," in fact, becomes a measure of the racialization and physical agony she endures, a measure that exceeds its structure as a legal and discursive form of address. Jennifer Harding and E. Deirdre Pribam observe that "the relationality of political positionings with ongoing processes of emotional subjectivity . . . operates to alter social identities such as gender or class" (15). In a similar sense, the autobiography offers insights into how "incurribility" – a linguistic address laid against young women for being wilful, disobedient, unruly and uncontrollable – is not only a part of a legal vocabulary, but also serves as an emotional, affectively-charged term of discipline and control, one that criminalizes the personal and intimate spaces of life. The autobiography exhibits a textual struggle with this word, along with similar labels such

⁵⁰ In *The Psychic Life of Power*, Butler asserts that any consideration of how the subject forms must also take into account "the regulatory formation of the psyche" (18). In Butler's view, neither the Foucauldian nor the psychoanalytic schools of thought offer an adequate synthesis of power as a source of subjection and "the extent that norms operate as psychic phenomenon, restricting and producing desire" (21). In Butler's reading of Foucault, the subject's subjection in power is necessarily incomplete, and for that reason, is constituted by repetition again and again (94). Although Butler's analysis here is limited to a project that brings psychoanalytic theory to bear on Foucault's characterization of power as multiple and productive, her analysis also carries implications for thinking about Demerson's experiences of subjugation and the function of "incurribility" as a psychic norm.

as vagrancy and deviance that the other women are labelled with, all serving as reference points in a gender-based lexicon of fear, shame and debasement:⁵¹

In Belmont, I learn that girls like me are “incorrigible,” though since we had homes we’re not classed as vagrants. . . . All the Belmont girls have stories. They are spread from one girl to another. We assess our own degradation by comparing ourselves to each other. (57)

In the above lines, Demerson asserts the distinctly social dimension of her “degradation,” a point that affirms Erica Johnson and Patricia Moran’s argument that shame “operat[es] at the intrapsychic and intersubjective level, on the one hand, and the cultural and social level, on the other” (*The Female Face 2*). As the text repeatedly reminds us, the charge of incorrigibility places Demerson in a haunted economy of shame, anxiety, fear, despair and ultimately, emotional estrangement. These are all words that the narrator uses to describe her experiences and are consistent with her desire, as I suggested at the beginning of this section, to suspend her emotional attachments to first learn about, and then write about her life. In this regard, the charge of incorrigibility is intimately bound up with emotional subjectivity in the text, an indication that it has an epistemic function that Demerson repeatedly attempts to locate, but which generates effects that extend into what is unknowable for her.

Demerson links the condition of incorrigibility once again to her relationship to her family in a much later discussion:

⁵¹ Also see pages 15 and 59-59 of *Incorrigible* for more information on how the narrator maps the criminalization of young women through these categories. As Glasbeek maintains, categories such as vagrancy and drunkenness “are made distinct by the law itself . . . [and] in many criminalized women’s lives, these categories blended together as part of their day-to-day culture of survival” (94).

Now my inability to protect Harry against the psychological effects of a hostile world haunts me. Am I entirely at fault? . . . Guilt propels me forward. I find my name on the Mercer Reformatory register and discover I was sentenced under the *Female Refuges Act*. I didn't know I was sentenced under an act. Just as I didn't understand when the judge said my offence was "Incorrigible." I finger my way through the *Canada Criminal Code*. The offence isn't there! There must have been a mistake. I should never have been imprisoned. It's only after the Ontario Archives locate a serological report with my name on it that I realize I had been used in a drug study. If I had known of the effects of these drugs, I wouldn't have taken them. Harry would have been well and my marriage may not have broken up. (162)

When Demerson turns to the *Criminal Code of Canada* years later to read the offence, she finds that it is no longer there. The FRA was removed from legal application in 1964, so by 1989, it would not have even been present in the *Criminal Code*. The above-passage is thus significant because it reveals insight into how the absence of a textual trace in the *Criminal Code* once again denies the narrator knowledge about the details of her life, suggesting not only the "[power] of bureaucratic discourse, which circulates without voice or signature" (Butler, *The Psychic* 6), but also how knowledge structures Demerson's relation to feelings: missing knowledge about the facts of her life is an absence that shapes Demerson's feelings of guilt as well her sense of loss. In turning to legal and institutional archives for an answer, she finds her access to knowledge blocked by the FRA's erasure.

This elision is made all the more devastating by the fact that Demerson's experiences of trauma also alter her own memories. She talks about her loss and recovery of memory in an interview with Backhouse, noting that she had wiped out her memory of the worst of the medical treatments she endured during her incarceration. It

was only in the mid-1990s that a flashback recalled these treatments after an absence of many decades (*Carnal Crimes* 123). On the one hand, the autobiography suggests a crucial interrelation of Demerson's autobiographical memory to institutional archives, the implication being that a dependence on the archive shapes the form of the autobiography. The most compelling thing about this interrelation is Demerson's ongoing search for knowledge about the conditions of her life, a struggle that is matched in kind by the force of institutional structures that deny her such access. For instance, the narrator observes that the Mercer is a "'don't know' world" (93). A "matron must never divulge information or even speak to an inmate unnecessarily," the narrator reflects when her baby is taken to the hospital for a rash, but she is neither informed nor given any information about the nature of his illness. She elaborates further, "I don't have permission to go to the nursery. I would be breaking the rules . . . I can't wander about the Mercer on my own volition. The memory of physical pain has robbed me of all strength and initiative" (93). In spite of her assertion that she lacks strength and initiative, Demerson later approaches another Mercer inmate for information, persisting despite her fear of challenging authority (99). This is merely one example of an ongoing and relentless struggle for information on the narrator's part, and is part and parcel of her larger questioning of institutional knowledge.

On the other hand, a radical rupture in the subject's sense of her own life story also reveals memory to be an unstable site, provisional and liable to change. Damasio defines the autobiographical self as the "nontransient collection of unique facts and ways of being which characterize a person" (17). The autobiographical self emerges from autobiographical memory, a collection of memories that form the biographical record of an individual's life (17-18). As *Incorrigible* suggests, memory is not only subject to modification, but there is also a generative space between individual memory and the archive, between memory, forgetting and forms of remembering: this generative space offers possibilities for narrating a self that is constituted by trauma, partial elisions and the instability of autobiographical memory. I am not suggesting that institutional

archives over-determine the shape of the narrative, but that Demerson's engagement with archival research, a site where memory and structures of knowledge meet, gives rise to the possibility of a critical relation to emotion that is also crucial to memory work. Damasio explains that "when consciousness is impaired so is emotion. In effect, [there is a] connection between emotion and consciousness, on the one hand, and between both of these and the body, on the other" (16). Similarly, Demerson's autobiography articulates a fraught relation to emotions, a textual instance that I explore in more detail in the following section with respect to a politics of fear in the autobiography. As I suggest, Demerson narrates the subject's humanity through a politics of fear in the text, but the failure of this act of narration ultimately calls on the reader to question how the text resists being easily categorized in terms of its emotional methodology.

1.2.1. Form and Feeling: The Inside and Outside of Fear

Demerson angrily struggles with bureaucratic documents to find a trace of her life in legal, medical and institutional archives. Her anger not only initiates this learning process, but also stems from it through her negotiations with the discursive forces that frame her experiences. This process also invites the reader to enter into the bureaucratic maze Demerson is navigating and thus to encounter her subjectivity in the losses, absences and rifts in her life story. As a result of this search that is at once personal and intimate and impersonal and institutional, the autobiography questions its own premise as a referential entity. Tess Cosslett observes of the genre of autobiography that it is referential, "it refers to real things in the world" and yet, as *Incorrigible* affirms, "it also dissolves into uncertainty when looked at more closely" (9). Despite their historical referentiality, the boundaries of autobiographies are fluid, and in *Incorrigible* these boundaries are made even more so by the text's relation to the

outside world, signalled by the author's struggle to make sense of the "facts" of her life.⁵²

This project is necessarily incomplete, for the "factual" record Demerson provides through her use of endnotes and supplementary information slips away at the very moment that the reader grasps it. The difference between the grammatical "I" of the text and the identity of the author is of course, always already inconsistent with what Philippe Lejeune calls the "autobiographical pact." Lejeune notes that in the genre of autobiographies, the text, though meant to affirm the identity of its author, fails to fulfill the autobiographical pact (14). Demerson's textual struggle with the biographical details of her life further signals the impossibility of such a pact, because the narrative voice exceeds the bounded speaking "I" that belongs, properly speaking, to the white, male subject. There is consequently an illegibility at the center of the text, and this has to do with not only all the extra-textual information that informs the telling of Demerson's life story – reflecting the author's retrospective research process which takes place years after the initial moments of injury. It is also related to how the category of feeling operates at the junction of autobiographical realism and the permeability of form in the text. To look at this more closely, I turn to a brief reading of the first few pages of the autobiography.

⁵² Julie Rak asserts that "autobiography seems to resist definitions that depend on truth claims, even as it requires them (Marcus 1994). What makes an autobiography truthful and not a fiction? Is it historical accuracy, the successful communicating of the writer's personality or experience, or the expectations of generic fidelity which make it part of a genre? Are genres of necessity closed systems which are always tested by limit cases, or are they really open systems that are able to change (Ongstad 2002)? These rather thorny questions are still part of auto/biography studies, but the urgency about definitions is changing to an understanding of auto/biography as an act (Smith 1995), a set of discourses about identity (Gilmore 1994; Bergland 1994; Marcus 1994), or as practices (Stanley 2000)" (18).

The first pages of the autobiography shed insight onto how Emerson adopts fear as a formal strategy for positing the narrator's humanity. The text opens with the narrator describing her first impressions of the Mercer Reformatory as the car pulls up the driveway:

I see the Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Females as a dark formidable fortress pencilled black against the white sky. The enormous structure with its jutting turrets appears to stretch an entire city block. It casts a shadow over the grassy exterior extending to a wide spiked fence and onto the street beyond. (1)

Adding to my feeling of helplessness is some obscure premonition, an instinct that something dreadful could occur in such a sinister place. My throat feels taut. I feel isolated, apart. Fear envelops me. I feel totally alone. (2)

This time I'm entering an institution where all personal recognition has been dispensed with. This sudden realization triggers an immediate identification with all the women who preceded me and stood on this very spot. It's becoming horribly clear that my life is forfeit to a still unknown but punitive monster—the state. All movement, all time, even my very thoughts are being consumed. I feel naked, shamed, and defenceless. (2)

In the above passages, Emerson foregrounds the Mercer Reformatory's massive architectural body to introduce the mnemonic devices of fear, alienation and loss into the narrative. The Mercer is an "enormous structure with . . . jutting turrets," we are told, one that "casts a shadow over the grassy exterior," has a "dark stone exterior" and a "wide spiked iron fence"; the architecture itself terrifies the narrator (1). This frame

over-determines the autobiographical narrative that follows, marking Demerson's story in two respects. On the one hand, the institution's overwhelming architecture aligns the narrator "with all the women who preceded [her]," thus advancing a female subject-position as the exemplary identity-formation through which the reader is advised to approach the text. On the other hand, it presents the trope of fear – the narrator's defencelessness in the face of the state's monstrosity – as a way of positing the autobiography in the gothic mode. The state's monstrosity overwhelmingly contrasts with the narrator's loss of freedom. I understand this positioning as a highly crafted one, one that calls for a critical engagement with the location of the female subject-position Demerson is offering to her readers, and her narrator's relation to the devices of fear and alienation that are so characteristic of this genre.

Since Demerson brings the autobiographical and gothic genres together, it is necessary to examine how the gothic form complicates the kind of subjectivity Demerson constructs. As critics have highlighted, the gothic connotes "spatial oppressions, loss of identity and fear of annihilation" (Weaver 2). According to Cynthia Sugars and Gerry Turcotte, the gothic is also "preoccupied with the fringes, the unspoken, the peripheral, and the cast aside. It is populated with monsters and outcasts, villains and victims, specters and the living dead" (xv). Signalling the play between terror and vulnerability, and the dichotomy that Sugars and Turcotte suggest is specific to the gothic form, Demerson similarly uses the first pages of *Incorrigible* to suggest the subject's loss of self in the face of overwhelming odds. The state's expression of power isolates the protagonist, leading to her sense of being "totally alone." This psychic estrangement takes place even as the breakdown of any sense of personal recognition *connects* the narrator to all the women who have gone before her: "all personal recognition has been dispensed with. This sudden realization triggers an immediate identification with all the women who preceded me and stood on this very spot . . . my life is forfeit to a still unknown but punitive monster – the state" (2). Her identification with others recuperates the collective humanity of the women

incarcerated at the Mercer, and it does by highlighting the state's monstrosity. Certainly, Demerson's assertion also references a chiasmic movement in the text, one that detaches identity from the individual body, and instead pairs recognition and identification with the suspended social existence of other women. An initial reading of these pages reveals the extent to which the narrator's loss of identity eclipses wider patterns of social disenfranchisement; and her acknowledgement of the history she shares with other women at the Mercer is a critical apprehension of these conditions. I would like to examine this collective sense of identification further by exploring the deeply fraught process through which Demerson acquires this sense of identification with the other women. In what follows, I argue that these framing paragraphs offer a far more ambivalent conception of femininity and female identity than the author's use of gothic devices may initially suggest. Because fear is the trope through which Demerson approaches her framing of subjectivity, the loss of identity she describes is also paradoxically an assertion of identity.

In "Familiar Ghosts: Feminist Postcolonial Gothic in Canada," Shelley Kulperger asserts the importance of examining how the feminist postcolonial gothic memorializes trauma (100). She also questions the traditional work done by the gothic, noting that an attention to authorship reveals the kind of female subjectivity legitimated by gothic fiction:

particular constructions of space as uninhabitable, labyrinthine, dangerous, entrapping, uncanny, and haunted are, in the feminist postcolonial Gothic, further materialized so as to reveal the specificity of female subjectivity that they uphold. As allegories for female restriction to the private sphere, gothicized spaces and subjectivities traditionally authorize, and have been authored by, in the main, white middle-class women. (118-119)

Drawing from Kulperger, we can infer that the gothic must be contextualized doubly: once in relation to its historic function in legitimating white, middle-class femininity, and secondly as a form that highlights the fissures and ruptures in this model of colonial femininity. A critical postcolonial and feminist gothic thus adapts the uncanny and uninhabitable topography of the traditional gothic form to unravel its colonial threads. Interestingly enough, the question of authorship and who gets authored has important implications for *Incorrigible* as well, because it raises the question of what kind of subjectivity the narrator lays claim to, either successfully or unsuccessfully.

Read in the context of the feminist autobiographical gothic, *Incorrigible*'s narrator can be seen as being pulled in a number of different directions. For one, Demerson is drawing on two generic forms which have historically authorized dominant social positions: white middle class femininity with the gothic, and the male Enlightenment subject with autobiography. Of course, recent feminist projects have rewritten the parameters of both, challenging their traditional formal qualities, and making room for marginalized voices and narratives. As Julie Rak points out in her study of feminist autobiographies, such texts question the cohesive and coherent humanist (male) self that historically inhabits the position of the speaking "I" through the reclamation of "women's marginalized texts," as well as through challenges to this self at the level of "language, genre, and identity" (6). According to Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in their analysis of stories from the "colonized subject," autobiography "also entwines the definition of the human being in a web of privileged characteristics" (xvi). "[I]llegitimate' speakers," they write, "have a way of exposing the instability of forms" (xx). Demerson's narrator exposes the instability of form by revealing the twin workings of desire and transgression, propriety and subjection in the text. Her autobiography must be read not only as a feminist undercutting of dominant narratives of power (which it does do), but also in terms of its yearning for the stability of identity and authority of authorship reflected by the dominant narrative positions Kulperger and Rak write about.

As I have already pointed out, fear is the defining trope in the opening pages of the autobiography: “Adding to my feeling of helplessness is some obscure premonition, an instinct that something dreadful could occur in such a sinister place. My throat feels taut . . . Fear envelops me” (2). In these lines, Emerson’s description of the Mercer’s “sinister” façade equates the architectural structure with the condition of being fearful. This textual strategy not only introduces the tropes of gothic fiction into the narrative, but also foreshadows a narrative of loss and mourning. These lines establish a temporal relation between the narrator’s fear and her anticipation of the future, a relation that emphasizes the subject’s vulnerability, helplessness, and lack of autonomy, responsibility and culpability in the face of this overbearing futurity. Indeed, this relation requires further unpacking because the trope of fear is not a neutral one, as Peter Nyers informs us.

Although fear is often employed to explain our humanity, it is inconsistent with the political exercise of individual autonomy. In *Rethinking Refugees*, Nyers maintains that “fear” is a problematic political concept because it reveals the limits of “human political subjectivity” (xvi). Writing specifically on the UN’s “appeal to fear” in defining refugee status, Nyers asserts that the “appeal of fear . . . is that it is an emotion that is universally shared among all human beings. But,” he continues, “human beings who are defined by their fear have a long history of being simultaneously defined as social outcasts, lacking full reasoning capacity, and incapable of presenting an autonomous, self-governing form of personal subjectivity” (xvii). According to this argument, resorting to fear to argue for inclusion within humanity fails precisely because autonomous individuals do not need to resort to fear to gain political access to their humanity. If fear undercuts agency, then how do we read the work of fear in a text that can be read as feminist? In one respect, *Incorrigible* fails to fulfill the expectations of the genre because this strategy operates hand in hand with another technique that is particular to the text – the narrator’s desire to “sanitize” and thus curtail the scandal of her own transgressions.

Indeed, the first pages of the autobiography can be read as a frame for the rest of the text because they suggest Demerson's attempts to "sanitize" her own transgressive behaviour through a politics of fear. This passage ties in to a compulsive tendency on the narrator's part to not only explain her innocence and victimization, but also to mull over the specific nature of her flirtation with the forbidden. Throughout the autobiography, the narrator situates herself between the twin impulses of transgression and conformity. As she asks herself, "It's not clear to me why I detoured so far from popular views. During my childhood, I absorbed all the myths and values of my community. How did I get here?" (54). Reflecting on her attraction to Harry, Demerson contends that "[t]here's an element of mystery about Harry that bewitches [her]" (38). Attracted to Harry because of his otherness, Demerson also observes that she is safe with him "because the Chinese are not generally considered aggressive" (33). This admission of forbidden desire contrasts with the narrator's first impulse to separate herself from the other incarcerated girls and women. Writing about her imprisonment at the Belmont, Demerson observes, "[a] young woman approaches and speaks to me. I ignore her. My being here is a mistake, an injustice. . . . Bad girls are shrill and coarse, but I've never even spoken back to my parents" (52). Later, the narrator experiences a shift in perception about these incarcerated girls and women: "My views of the type of person placed in a home begin to change drastically. There are lots of different women here, but we all have been imprisoned under the broad label of immorality" (53). This experience of identification is an important moment in the autobiography, one that is replicated later as the narrator continues to shift between a sense of identification and dis-identification with the other women. Sometime later, during a lunch break outside in the Mercer yard, Demerson spies a woman looking down at her: "Framed in a window just below a turret is an emaciated creature who looks like a witch I don't wave or acknowledge her . . . because it's of no importance. She's probably a drug addict—why otherwise is she there? A drug addict is a sinister being" (16). In these lines, the narrator dismisses the quarantined woman in the window. I read these movements between

identification and dis-identification in the narrative as part of the specific form that racialization takes for Demerson.

Much has been made of social hygiene as a kind of sanitizing discourse, one which monitors racial boundaries as much as it produces otherness. Alison Bashford claims that,

The pursuit of 'health' has been central to modern identity formation. It has become a way of imagining and embodying integrity and, problematically, homogeneity or purity of the self, the community, and especially in the early to mid-twentieth century, the nation. Nation-forming has found one of its primary languages in biomedical discourse, partly because of its investment in the abstract idea of boundary, identity and difference, but also because of the political philosophy that thinks of the population as one body, the social body or the body of the polity.
(Imperial Hygiene 4)

The collectivity of women incarcerated at the Mercer constituted one of the most heavily regulated segments of the social body: young, working-class girls and women who challenged the boundaries of purity and community. Along similar lines, Pelling also notes that "the original utilitarian arguments for sanitary reform [were] co-opted into a widely-held and holistic religious and moral framework" (30). Social purity regulations were about establishing different social and subjective levels of "cleanliness" and social sanitation. Demerson's struggles to connect with the other women reveal the extent to which she internalizes these external mechanisms of control: social hygiene becomes, in other words, self-producing and self-policing, internalized as a self-regulating form of subjection. Understanding this in a racial context is important because the racialization that takes place in the text is consistent with the sanitizing discourses of larger social hygiene and eugenic forces: racialization (examined in more detail in the following

section) is a mechanism of controlling the movement and interrelations of people. It consequently functions internally and subjectively as a sanitizing discourse in *Incorrigible*, and it manifests symptomatically through fear in the text. Fear is a formal strategy that posits the narrator's humanity in the face of state power, and reflects a struggle for social agency in the autobiography. This problematic tension with fear is productive inasmuch as it reveals a deep ambivalence in the text about the affective mode and the possibilities it offers or forecloses.

Koivunen asserts that emotion is a personal, cognitive and epistemological category, offering "opportunity for increased personal and political accountability," and has been employed in the autobiographic mode as such (9, 23). Scholars maintain that a feminist politics has potential precisely because it is rooted in feelings: autobiographies⁵³ afford a chance for exploring how emotions are not only historically contingent gendering practices (with women, for example, being gendered through the discourses of hysteria and melancholia), but also that emotions can signal alternative and subversive forms of knowledge.⁵⁴ *Incorrigible*, however, complicates this location of emotion as an epistemological category, given the deep ambivalence it reveals with respect to the workings of feeling. Although the question of affect and the feeling subject has been central in feminist readings of autobiographies, memoirs and testimonials, and for imagining a collective identity for women, the form of Demerson's narrative substantially complicates emotions and feelings as a methodology: it does so by revealing its own formal strategies to be fraught and ambivalent ones, implicated in the genealogies of authority the author sets out to critique. But these contradictions are

⁵³ See Rak's discussion of women's life writing: "'life writing' in Canada has become a specifically feminist way to find and read texts, such as letters and diaries, as ways in which some women in Canada have expressed themselves" (3).

⁵⁴ Also see Koivunen's article "An Affective Turn?" in *Working with Affect in Feminist Readings* for an informative discussion of these issues. As she points out, affect and the subject of feelings have also been problematized and complicated by many feminist theorists.

also important, I argue, because the narrative's failure to narrate Demerson's humanity is also rich in its implication for another reading of a politics of affect in the text: that is, from the perspective of racial melancholia.

1.3. Racial Melancholia and Racialization by Proxy

In their introduction "Mourning Remains," David L. Eng and David Kazanjian assert that loss, understood through melancholia, reveals insight into not only the subject's constitution and the production of psychic life (4). It also reflects how the act of mourning histories of violence and displacement must be attentive to the "numerous material practices by which loss is melancholically materialized in the social and cultural realms and in the political and the aesthetic domains" (5). Eng and Kazanjian posit that melancholia is both a condition of subjectivity and a materializing element of contemporary topographies of loss. And yet, they assert, if melancholia plays a formative role in the process of mourning, then it also connotes a creative relation between mourning and hope (2). I would like to extend further this doubled function of melancholia, to propose that we consider subject-formation not simply through the circuit of melancholia and loss, but by shifting between multiple structures of feeling – between mourning and hope, or indeed, between melancholia and anger – to complicate models of identity that posit loss as the condition of entry into subjecthood. Such a claim asks us to contextualize racial identity within a wider rubric of feelings and affective states, and to consider how subjects who confront the structuring effects of racialization also open themselves up to the possibilities of reconstitution and revision, the promise of hope and the political potential of anger.

The need to think critically about Demerson's multiple losses – her loss of familial ties, her loss of spontaneous feeling, and her loss of memory – becomes even more urgent when we consider that race and racialization are defining, if not

constituting features in her narrative. It is for this reason that I want to situate *Incorrigible* within discussions of racial melancholia, even though I argue that as an articulation of the psychic form of racialization, racial melancholia ultimately fails to provide an adequate account of subjectivity. In *The Melancholy of Race*, Anne Anlin Cheng's psychoanalytic mapping of racialization in the psyche of American life follows Freud, who famously characterized loss in terms of the ego's struggle to retain the lost object. Cheng suggests that melancholia offers a way of thinking outside of normative measures of feeling such as joy and sorrow, which are insufficient to the task of comprehending "survival and the management of grief" in extreme conditions (21). For Cheng, both white and minority racialized bodies are melancholic identities, a part of the same signifying process that rejects, assimilates and denies psychic injury. They have differing relations to melancholia, for white normative identity is produced through the "incorporation and rejection" of the racial other (11-12). Cheng's suggestion that white melancholic identity is built on the bones of the racial other, foregrounds the *intersubjective* dimensions of racialization, and highlights how white and non-white identities are produced in relation to one another. But how can we locate subjects such as Emerson whose racial identity is subject to change, whose "whiteness" is itself subject to violation and consequently, lacking the same valences of power as "normative" forms of whiteness? A subject who is white, and not quite, at the same time? While Cheng's analysis focuses on the psychic dimensions of racial grief, I am more interested in examining the specifically temporal dimensions of loss and its revision.

In one respect, Emerson's racial identity conforms to both sides of the racial signifying process Cheng outlines. On the one hand, she is a white, melancholic subject, whose incorporation but rejection, denial and loss of her husband and son form the basis of her narrative and reflect, as Cheng argues, how racialization can operate through the partial digestion of racial minorities. Reading American national identity by way of Freud's definition of melancholia, Cheng argues that hegemonic white identity in

America operates according to a melancholic logic: “Dominant white identity in America operates melancholically—as an elaborate identificatory system based on psychical and social consumption-and-denial” (11). Although Cheng is writing on the specifics of American racial ideology, her analysis also invites a reading of white racialization in Canada, and Demerson’s own position of “relative” privilege in relation to her partner’s racial identity and their son’s mixed-race heritage. On the other hand, a second look at *Incorrigible* reveals that the narrator has an even more fraught relation to white racial identity, given that she occupies an ambiguous position in relation to whiteness to begin with. To begin, I explore the narrator’s relation to whiteness prior to her relationship with Harry Yip senior, because contemporary understandings of “whiteness” – as, first and foremost, a “physical” trait – differ from conceptions of racial identity during the time Demerson grows to adulthood. I then propose a model of racialization by proxy for reading Demerson’s gender-specific experiences of racialization through her associations with Harry senior and junior. Ultimately, these twin processes of racialization in *Incorrigible* demonstrate how it is possible to simultaneously be a melancholic object and subject: this threshold movement between the two asks us to be attentive to the multiple ways in which subjectivity is constituted, both inside and outside the structure of loss.

Demerson is the daughter of a white, British woman and a Greek man, but despite “looking white,” she also has dark hair and dark eyes, characteristics that lead to her sometimes being mistaken for “French” (36). In her response to such descriptions of her appearance, Demerson suggests a deep ambivalence about the politics of race and her intercultural background, anxieties that surface through the resentment that she feels toward her father. “I’m not loyal to my father,” she writes (28). Writing of a friend she had in high school, for example, the narrator mentions that the “boy said, ‘Some of my friends say I shouldn’t go round with you because you’re not white but you’re the whitest girl I ever met.’ He knew my father was Greek; this would never happen if I lived with my mother” (89). Here, the protagonist reflects on her fraught relation to her

Greek inheritance, and the less-than-white status she acquires through her father. Her conflicted sense of racial inheritance is also shaped by her parents' divorce, her mother's financial precarity, her loyalty to her mother, and her own outsider status within the sphere of her father's economic success and his successful place in a Greek community (27, 32-33). Taken together, these factors question racial identity, and its social and political constitution through state-legislated practices such as the school register: "I know that nationality is determined by the heritage of one's father. I hated it in school when I had to identify myself as Greek on the school register when my mother was respectably English and all my friends were British" (51). Reflecting on her childhood, Demerson reveals an acute awareness of social hierarchy, articulated through her parents' familial origins. She also points to the dissonance she experiences in moving between her mother's "Britishness" and her father's background as Greek, which is articulated through her reflections on her own appearance. And yet, as Demerson tells the reader, while her mother's financial precarity, her working-class status and her sense of inherited Greekness substantially complicate her access to "respectability," her father's financial stability also provides a security blanket and the "regular routine at [his house] satisfies [her] need for security" (27). Shifting between these two familial settings, Demerson reveals the extent to which this movement produces and in fact, accentuates her precarious sense of racial identity.

In 1909, J.S. Woodsworth, an influential figure in Canadian politics, published a well-known treatise on immigration and the problems of settlement. *Strangers within Our Gates, Or Coming Canadians* is a careful and precise treatment of race and pluralism in Canada, and perhaps best exemplifies views at the time about racial identity. As Valverde observes, Woodsworth outlined the "principles of immigration taxonomies," categorizing immigrants in a descending order of desirability (110). *Strangers within Our Gates* places immigrant groups in a racial hierarchy, "organized in descending order from most to least assimilable" (Coleman 22). Daniel Coleman also explains in *White Civility* that Woodsworth's list

descend[ed] in preference from British, Americans, Scandinavians, Germans, and French to southeastern Europeans, Austria-Hungarians, Balkans, Hebrews, and Italians, before it reaches the cut-off at the White borders of Europe, so that Levantines, Orientals, Negroes and Indians (both 'Hindus' and Amerindians) are considered incompatible with the national project of building a British-based civility.⁵⁵ (22)

While noting that the ideal was always British according to this model, Coleman also argues that Woodsworth re-scripted British whiteness to create his own vision of what a British-derived Canadianness might look like. He imagined a civil society based on the principles of hard work, industriousness, and hospitality, but divested of the kind of highbrow, pretentious qualities characteristic of British people in general, and British aristocrats in particular (22-24). For Woodsworth and others like him, Canadian civil society would reinvigorate a vision of Britishness that would exceed Britain's own vision of itself, built upon the shoulders of hardworking Northern European people, such as the Scots and the Irish, who reclaimed the term "British" to reinvent themselves in Canada (17).

In this Woodsworthian model, the project of building a nation-state called for a pragmatic approach to questions of economic interest and international relations, while resolving any contradictory views of racial minorities through a *pragmatic* approach to nation-building. Woodsworth's chapter on "The Orientals: Chinese, Japanese, Hindus," reflects such a circuitous logic. For one, Woodsworth acknowledges the usefulness of Asian labourers to the economy, but points out that unlike the others, a Japanese labourer "competes – and successfully, too – with the white man" (*Strangers within* 152). Taking into account the fact that Japan is Britain's ally, Woodsworth concludes

⁵⁵ In "Black Canadas and the Question of Diasporic Citizenship," David Chariandy points out that J.S. Woodsworth ultimately argues that both blacks and Asians jeopardize the project of citizenship and democracy in Canada (325-326).

that the question of Japanese immigration is “more serious” than the Chinese one, while the “Hindu problem” raises an even more complicated set of questions: noting that immigration from India is the most recent immigration concern, Woodsworth points out that “the Hindu is a British subject” and denying immigration from India may very well fuel unrest in the “Indian Empire” (152). By situating his analysis of these groups comparatively and in an international political economy, Woodsworth then takes pains to emphasize the “virtues and vices” of each group in order to affirm his conclusion that all “Orientals” lack the ability to conform to Canadian moral standards and way of life. This “virtue and vice”-based analysis in the text functions as a way of containing any contradictory impulses regarding the assimilation of Asian immigrants. One such example, which suggestively indicates the potential Canadianness of Chinese Canadian children, is found in the chapter’s excerpt from Rev. J.C. Speer’s *The Story of China in Canada*. Speer writes that although Chinese Canadian children have learned “the bitter lesson that they are strangers in a strange land,” when some of them speak in English, they reveal that they are “Canadian as are we of Anglo-Saxon speech” (145). Woodsworth reconciles such contradictions – the possibility that immigrants from Asia may, in fact, be and become “Canadian” – by asserting the foreign beliefs and lifestyle of these individuals. For instance, in describing the figure of the Sikh, who he incorrectly describes as a Hindu, Woodsworth notes that the “Hindu is a rather picturesque figure” who “adopt[s] the Canadian costume,” but in “retaining his turban” becomes “decidedly grotesque” (154). This, and similar exercises in testing racial fitness move through a discussion of Asian labour and its usefulness, while explaining Asian immigrants’ inassimilability through differing “moral standards and religious beliefs” (155).

Demerson’s portrayal of Greekness and later, her romantic association with Harry, reflects the racial hierarchies of this period. But as Coleman’s analysis also suggests, racial and national groups shifted in relation to one another within this hierarchy, according to criteria such as moral conduct: “inclusion in the nation can be shifted conveniently between moral criteria (e.g., vengeance, avarice, alcoholism) and

racial ones (being Cossack, Jewish, or mixed-race)” (180; emphasis in original). Coleman links the significance of moral criteria to racial identity, calling attention to how racial logic operates insidiously and in multiple ways. Placing Demerson in this formulation, we can see how, in the case of the latter, she is situated somewhere between Britishness and Greekness. She is caught between naming practices established patrilineally (the school register) and her own racial appearance, which differs from the blue eyes, blond hair ideal. As Demerson’s mother tells her, “When I married your father, a friend said I’d have a black baby. When your brother had fair hair and blue eyes, I was so proud pushing the baby carriage along the street” (36). This example reveals the extent to which Greekness is figured as a departure from a “British”- derived model of whiteness. Apart from the emphasis Demerson’s mother places on the importance of having a fair child, the conflation of Greekness with blackness is also startling here. It is no coincidence that this takes place, however, for it indicates the figurative role that blackness played in the policing and construction of whiteness during this time. In “Rethinking Whiteness,” Sneja Gunew observes how “[i]n the settler colonies various groups became white in relation to not being black”⁵⁶ (141). It is telling that whiteness is demarcated from Greekness *through* blackness in the above passage, and what’s more, it shows the various ways an unborn child gets racialized. Along with Gunew, Renisa Mawani also acknowledges that indigeneity played a central role in defining whiteness in Canada (“In Between and Out” 54): “Although whiteness was an ‘empty category,’ and was never explicitly defined in law, white settlers came to know themselves through what they were not, a process to which Indian-ness was central” (54). Although *Incorrigible* offers little engagement with indigeneity, it does offer insight into the multiple ways in which whiteness gets articulated, not only through the black-white model, as the above example demonstrates, but through a triad of differentiated

⁵⁶ In this article, Gunew also argues for the need to consider whiteness in relation to indigeneity, noting that indigeneity complicates understandings of whiteness in settler colonies like Canada and Australia even further (142).

relations. Indeed, the relation of whiteness to these differing racial identities (blackness in the above example, and Asianness in others) is one sign of how whiteness writes over aboriginality in Canada. Whiteness is both a shifting and an expansive category, and it shrinks and expands according to different racial criteria.

Although Demerson fails to conform to the norms of white British femininity by virtue of her Greek inheritance, she nevertheless gets measured through the racial criteria of morality. For the narrator, this means that her experience of being incarcerated is at odds with her perception of herself as a “proper” subject: “A young woman approaches and speaks to me. I ignore her. My being here is a mistake, an injustice. I’m fully aware of racial discrimination. The others are here for breaking the law” (*Incorrigible* 52). As I mentioned earlier, in her initial shock at being placed in the Belmont Refuge, the narrator avers that her own conduct should not have been criminalized. As she points out, “racial discrimination” directed against Chinese immigrants is what led to her incarceration. In these lines, Demerson argues for a separation of “racialization” from “conduct,” a statement that, in effect, belies the fact that she has been incarcerated precisely *because* of her conduct, or rather, because of her romantic entanglement with Harry. And yet, she learns soon enough that many of the other girls placed in the home have also been sentenced for being incorrigible (53). This is perhaps why Demerson’s incarceration is all the more jarring for her: she vacillates between acknowledging her social precariousness (as a young, half-Greek woman of working-class background in an interracial relationship) and attempting to avoid being pigeon-holed in this way, highlighting as Michael Omi and Howard Winant point out, that there is a need to recognize “the *performative* aspect of race” (203). In other words, she may want to *perform* whiteness but she is coded as non-white or not-quite white, time and again.

Moreover, by flagging “racial discrimination” as the reason for her incarceration in the above lines, Demerson also marks the slipperiness of her own racial identity,

which shifts upon her relationship with an Asian man: interestingly enough, even though the narrator has a precarious social, racial and economic identity to begin with, her incarceration also inversely marks her as white. That is to say, even as she fails to signify whiteness in the sense of a British-derived identity, Demerson nevertheless falls into the regulated category of young, white, working-class women. Her performance of racial identity is routed through her social positioning as a subject of gender, and by being subject to social purity initiatives, Demerson's body is implicated in "the reproduction not of human beings in general but of [whiteness] in particular" (Valverde 60-61). In this way, the association of whiteness to conduct draws attention to the narrator's composite relation to racial identity, which signifies differently depending on whether her body is being read dominantly through one, or simultaneously through both the signs of whiteness and Asianness; a daughter of a white, British woman and a Greek man, the young Demerson is uniquely situated at the nexus of different types of racialization. As such, the spectrum of ethnically defined discursive positions she occupies (ethnicized Greek but white, to racialized in association with Asianness), shows how Demerson is variously racialized toward and away from the invisibility of whiteness, by turns becoming an illegitimate and incommunicable subjectivity.

Incorrigible's narrator exhibits a desire to conform to the ideological structure of whiteness, marking the text's complicity in this ideology, while indicating Demerson's movements between racial invisibility to visibility and back again. Often, Demerson refers to her racial coding with Harry as an associative one, related to the word-of-mouth knowledge people have about the fact that she has a Chinese fiancé and mixed-race baby (102-103). "God knows," Demerson writes, "the criminal tag of 'exclusion' in the Chinese Immigration Act is a euphemism for 'undesirable.' I'm debased by association with an undesirable" (54). Using the language of undesirability, debasement and shame to describe her relationship, the narrator suggests she is racialized through this set of relations: Demerson is racialized through Greekness on the one hand, and through a moral transgression that violates the broader boundaries of whiteness, on the

other. In this regard, we might view Demerson's racialization as being "inherently comparative, a psychosocial and historical process" (Shu-Mei Shi 1350). In an introduction to comparative racialization, Shu-Mei Shi claims that we should be attentive to "the recognition and activation of relations that entail two or more terms" in racialization. "This . . . form of comparison," Shi writes, "brings [forward] submerged or displaced relationalities" (1350). Since Demerson's narrative marks a slippery and shifting relation to racial identity over time, the autobiography reveals a similar relational logic at work in processes of racialization: it places Demerson on a spectrum from Greekness to whiteness to Asianness; this movement between the three highlights the artificiality of whiteness, its historically contingent relation to Greekness and Asianness, and its construction through the insidious production of these other racial categories. Indeed, the narrator simultaneously consumes and is consumed within these articulated racial relations which, as Cheng points out, function like melancholia to revile the object that they are attached to (12).

In "Affecting Citizenship: the Materiality of Melancholia," Lily Cho points out that racial melancholia elucidates the "substance of loss for racialized subjects. To get to this loss, to name it might reveal something about what those social bases for collective grief might be" (118). She elaborates further that "[e]ven though melancholia is a psychic condition, its deployment as a ground for collectivities borne out of unresolved grief has a materiality" (120). Cho's argument about the materiality of loss for racialized minorities is informative in its treatment of the material processes through which racial grief gets reproduced (109-110). The materiality of melancholia has a relation to citizenship, Cho asserts, because it provokes a critique of the limits and legacies of citizenship discourse, a discourse traditionally referring to the language of rights and responsibilities that accompanies our belonging to a specific nation-state (111). For Cho, the most compelling thing about racial melancholia as a theoretical frame is that it enables us to consider the psychic processes through which the social reproduces itself. *Incorrigible's* narrator, however, shows the instability of these processes, especially as

she traverses the liminal spaces between gendered and racial normativity: these threshold movements unsettle the stability of melancholia as a structure of loss, inviting further reading of the elastic boundaries of whiteness in *Incorrigible*, and more broadly, of racialized subjects' shifting sense of belonging and dispossession.

I thereby situate the narrator's subjectivity between a politics of loss that can be understood as both melancholic and non-melancholic. On the one hand, Demerson is melancholic inasmuch as she moves between social acceptability and ostracism – the process of incorporation and rejection that is particular to racial melancholia – and in the text, specific to the outside edges of the social the protagonist occupies by virtue of her Greek inheritance and working-class status. On the other hand, the changing meanings of whiteness over the course of the twentieth century also reflect a different story. The autobiography encompasses a range of shifting definitions of whiteness that gradually altered as the twentieth century progressed, with the definition of whiteness ultimately moving away from British nationality toward a broader one that also incorporated whites from other European backgrounds. As multiculturalism scholar Himani Bannerji suggests, “an element of racialized ethnicization” eventually came to “whiten[] North Americans of European origins” (6). This changing context for understanding Demerson's own relation to loss suggests that the melancholic structure of the psyche also changes over time. In her analysis of racial identity, Cheng notes that racial identity is inherently unstable (24). In a similar respect, the revisionist history of whiteness – its expansion over the twentieth century – both incorporates and displaces the early conditions of racialization in Demerson's life. This displacement asks us to question how such shifting conditions shift, in turn, an individual's narrative of loss and trauma.

Indeed, Demerson explains close to the end of the text that she now has a white family. “I'm now married to a white man and have two children,” she writes, “we own a house” (155). Demerson's mention of her white family is made in the context of a

meeting with Harry junior after he has grown to adulthood: “My main objective is to impress Harry with my respectability,” she writes, “I need to dispel any negative impressions he may have regarding white women who marry out of their race . . . I’m now married to a white man and have two children; we own a house. Now Harry is a stranger” (154-155). These lines reframe Demerson’s relation to Harry, reimagining their earlier familial relations in terms of estrangement and strangeness. This sense of estrangement is made all the more striking by her description of belonging not just to another family, but to a white family. Ironically enough, this inclusion into whiteness, and the narrator’s desire for social respectability, also asks us to conceive of alternative terms for reading loss and subjection: her incorporation back into the fold of whiteness asks us to consider the temporality of loss, the processes through which it is written over, and the need to read subjectivity as narrative, subject to partial elisions, rewrites, and ongoing revisions.

This is why I would like to posit the possibility of reading the work of affect in the autobiography as an effect of anger. In the psychoanalytic account, anger is a by-product of melancholia, produced through the ego’s negotiation with the lost object. But I propose that we look outside the discursive effects of melancholia to theorise subjectivity in relation to the shifting frames of the temporal, and in relation to structures of feeling such as anger. This brings me to reconsider the critical impulse that drives Demerson to the archive to ask whether we can trace a trajectory of feelings and non-feelings in the text to anger. Alison Jaggar explains that,

Emotions become feminist when they incorporate feminist perceptions and values . . . For example, anger becomes feminist anger when it involves the perception that the persistent importuning endured by one woman is a single instance of a widespread pattern of sexual harassment, and pride becomes feminist pride when it is evoked by realizing that a certain person’s achievement was possibly only because that individual

overcame specifically gendered obstacles to success. (“Love and Knowledge” 61)

Jaggar argues that an individual from a historically disenfranchised group (ie. women), can reclaim the social and political function of an emotion through a critical engagement with the terms of her disenfranchisement. If anger is a way of reading Demerson’s turn toward the archive, it perhaps suggests a rigorous methodology on the narrator’s part in addressing the absences in her life story. She writes in one moment, for example, that anger drives her to the library for details about her drug study (115). To return to the textual moment I began the previous section with, I propose another reading of Demerson’s return to the past through an engagement with institutional archives: for Demerson the act of suspending feelings in order to learn about her life signals a form of anger which refuses to be contained by the framework of melancholia. Indeed, in introducing the possibility of reading away from racial melancholia, my intent is not to overlook the affects and politics of loss at work in the text, but to signal the multiple valences and indeed ambivalences about emotional subjectivity at work in the narrative, an autobiography that asks us to variously reflect on the politics of shame, emotional estrangement, fear, melancholia, and indeed, anger.

Melancholia offers an account of the power relations that shape and produce racialized subjectivities, David Eng asserts: “Freud’s premier theory of unspeakable loss and inexorable suffering . . . serves as a powerful tool for analyzing the psychic production, condition, and limits of marginalized subjectivities predicated on states of injury” (“Melancholia” 1276). And yet, historically understood, Freud’s concept of melancholia has consistently fed into notions of hysterical femininity (1275). The assumption in Freud that femininity can be normatively understood as melancholic conflates the originary moment of subject-formation – the gendering of the female body at birth – with melancholia as an inherent component of subjectivity. While we might usefully think beyond the gendered implications of melancholia in Freud’s original

formulation for the very reason that Eng affirms – that melancholia is a valuable analytic tool for thinking through the legacies of unimaginable and uncontainable loss, this model also foregrounds melancholia as a universal feature of subject-formation. Judith Butler points out that,

The social world appears to be eclipsed in melancholy, and an internal world structured in ambivalence emerges as the consequence. . . . the account of melancholy is an account of how psychic and social domains are produced in relation to one another. As such, melancholy offers potential insight into how the boundaries of the social are instituted and maintained, not only at the expense of psychic life, but through binding psychic life into forms of melancholic ambivalence. (*The Psychic* 167-168)

For Butler, melancholia helps to explain how the social and the psychic inform one another. But this model neglects to examine the subject's ongoing relation to the social, where the psyche is subject to foreclosure time and again. Commenting on *The Psychic Life of Power* a couple of years later, Butler revises her original position to suggest that we take the psychoanalytic concept of foreclosure and make it social and temporally renewable ("Changing the Subject" 739). In revisiting her earlier argument, Butler suggests a way of thinking about subjectivity in a more open-ended way, one that acknowledges that even though we are born into social conditions that delimit our lives in ways we can never fully understand, "we are not constituted for all time in that way" (739). Such an approach thus enables "new possibilities" to emerge, so that subjectivity is open to renewal at different points in time. In this regard, I am less interested in challenging melancholia as an affective structure, for it politicizes loss in a multiplicity of ways, and more critical of it as a model for subject-formation. Keeping *Incorrigible* in mind, I see this playing out in the following way: the subject may be *melancholically* subjected but not once and for all, and is constituted repeatedly through a plurality of life events, emotion cultures, and acts of memory which shape both the psyche and the

social. Why, we might ask, is it necessary to consider the temporality of loss in the constitution of subjects and their social identity? Freud's contention that mourning and melancholia overlap, but that melancholia marks an inability on the subject's part to let go, reflects a theoretical trajectory that does not account for the political role of other structures of feeling such as anger in subject-formation – and the ongoing revisions a subject undergoes through ongoing revisions of the autobiographical self.

If as I have suggested, Demerson's narrative demonstrates the historically contingent and unnatural boundaries of racial identity, then *Incorrigible* also asks us to consider the material and bodily scene of biopolitical control the author maps for us. We are asked to ponder the deeply social processes through which biological life documents the political. In what follows, I explore how, in becoming a test subject, the narrator enters a knowledge-power network that forecloses the possibility of speakability, a foreclosure that returns us to the bodily site of injury. Biopolitical scholar Stuart Murray proposes that there are norms which give shape to our humanity, and these are contingent upon the norms of our speech (192). In examining the medical norms at play at the Mercer, I explore how these norms anticipate and create silences around the body, preventing speech and precluding testimony. Exploring her devastating experience of incarceration allows Demerson to explore the regime of social death in place at the Mercer. Achille Mbembe argues that Foucault's notion of biopower does not sufficiently account for modern forms of power which produce social death. Arguing that colonial populations are now "subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*," he asserts that we should be attentive to the "repressed topographies of cruelty" which shape such geographies of existence and non-existence (40). While Mbembe offers an important re-working of Foucault's notion of biopower in foregrounding the centrality of a politics of death to neo-colonial formations, I am specifically interested in the implication that social death is an ongoing and indeed, a constitutive dimension of modern governance.

In drawing attention to this aspect of governmentality, Demerson turns us finally to the question Giorgio Agamben poses: “What is the status of the living body that seems no longer to belong to the world of the living?” (97). In *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben interrogates the biopolitical processes through which some bodies cease to be politically relevant (139). This limit on who gets to belong, Agamben argues, is the founding principle of modern societies (100). And yet, *Incorrigible* revises Agamben’s query, posing the following question instead: what is the status of the living body that *returns* to the world of the living? The status of the subject who politically contests and reclaims the rights of citizenship? What does this return illuminate about the threshold between the politically alive and the politically dead? In what directions does this biopolitical limit shift? The trajectory of Demerson’s narrative reflects how the Agambian principle of exception is not outside of time or space, but continually adopts new criteria for inclusion and exclusion; we have seen how processes of racialization can position subjects simultaneously inside and outside the machinations of power. In particular, *Incorrigible* allows us to explore the excesses of biopolitics, and these excesses are generated when the lines of race intersect with those of gender, producing conflicting narratives about legal and political identity, citizenship, loss and disenfranchisement.

1.4. Experimental Bodies and the Contradictions of Racial Citizenship

In this section, I examine how Demerson’s relationship with her mixed-race child becomes impossible in four significant ways: first of all, her social isolation and the medical treatments and experiments she undergoes estrange Demerson from her own body and complicate her relationship to her pregnancy. Secondly, he is racialized even

before birth as Asian; this racial status not only complicates and politicizes his existence as pre-human,⁵⁷ but also makes Demerson's whiteness hyper-visible. In this respect, the unborn child's ontological status (as a racialized half-Asian one) calls into question Demerson's access to social legitimacy. Thirdly, Harry becomes the prime target of state regulation and biopolitical control after his birth. This becomes quite clear through the ways in which Demerson and Harry are caught in the matrix of shifting definitions of citizenship at the time. The Canadian Citizenship Act came into effect in 1947, and when Demerson applied for a passport in 1949, she discovers that she lost her citizenship upon her marriage to a foreigner. Harry, however, retains his citizenship status, and this enables him to move paradoxically both within as well as outside of the nation-state. His legal and social status suggests a way of thinking through not only the contradictions of modern citizenship, but also for addressing competing understandings of the "human" during this time.

1.4.1. The Life that is Saved is the Same as the Life that is Abandoned

The type of medical procedure we undergo is degrading and none of us knows what the other endures. Only the older women are unafraid to use medical words with their ominous meanings. (105)

It's only after the Ontario Archives locate a serological report with my name on it that I realize I had been used in a drug study. If I had known of the dangerous effects of these drugs, I wouldn't have taken them. Harry would have been well and my marriage may not have broken up. (162)

⁵⁷ The contemporary pro-life contention is that the foetus is already human, and it equates the foetus with "life" and life with "supreme value" (Duden 2). I depart from this perspective to suggest that the unborn in the autobiography highlights the highly constructed nature of this equation of the foetus with life.

Dr. Guest would have had to examine over three hundred Mercer women the year the Belmont girls arrived. It's likely she spent more time on Helga and me than on the others. I underwent weekly treatments for over two months in surgery, injections, and chemical applications. (163)

In the above passages, Demerson catalogues the different treatments she undergoes during her eleven-month stay at the Mercer Reformatory in Toronto. According to the records she acquires from the Ontario archives, she not only endures a series of painful treatments for gonorrhoea, implemented by Dr. Edna Guest, but after Harry's birth, she is also asked to take pills whose effects were unknown to her, but which she believes led to Harry's severe eczema (91). Dr. Guest "was committed to studying the Mercer inmates as research subjects for the advancement of medical knowledge," Demerson writes (109). Explaining the extent to which Dr. Guest was a public figure, Demerson also notes that she worked at the Mercer for nearly twenty years: "She had close connections with the medical, military, and governmental personnel in the prison system. In 1922 when she first became a physician at the Mercer, gonorrhoea statistics for the women there rose to 47 percent from 26 percent in the previous year" (161). This rise in statistics is consistent with the fact that "the treatment and medicalization of women's criminality blossomed as never before" at the Mercer in the mid-decades of the twentieth century⁵⁸ (Ruemper 369).

Historicizing her experiences through Dr. Guest's career, Demerson provides invaluable insight into how medical professionals, along with social policies and legal

⁵⁸ According to Reumper, the Mercer functioned as a "moral hospital" for the treatment of venereal disease. It was a "combination of a rescue home and a modern lay hospital, but with the coercive force of a prison" (363).

procedures, contributed to the everyday medical administration of social hygiene.⁵⁹ The strongest basis of support for this ideology was provided by medical professionals who sought to link public health to hereditary characteristics⁶⁰ (McLaren, *Our Own* 28); for doctors, establishing a connection between eugenics and public health was a way of solidifying the authority and practices of the medical profession, a process that fed into the larger ideological practices of the nation-state. In their account of the centrality of science and medical experimentation to the modern nation-state, Jordan Goodman, Anthony McElligott and Lara Marks observe that as the “boundary between science and the state was becoming progressively blurred” in the beginning of the twentieth century, so, too, did “medical science [become] a constitutive force in the creation of a ‘knowledge society’ built around the functionality of the body” (5). Elaborating further, they explain that the discourse of racial hygiene was not only “invented by medical science,” but medical science also provided the modern nation-state with a new lexicon and set of narrative devices to fashion political and social relationships (5).

It is now widely known that the Nazis were not alone in conducting horrific medical experiments, but not enough is known about the specifics of the medical experiments and treatments administered to young women incarcerated in prisons and reformatories in Canada, and even less is known about the role played by race in such

⁵⁹ See pages 163 and 164 for a more detailed summary of Dr. Guest’s activities. According to Demerson, eugenicists such as Guest viewed the Mercer inmates as “incurable moral degenerates due to inbred character defects” (163). For instance, in one report, Guest offered a recommendation for studies to be conducted on these inmates, proposing that immoral behaviour is a result of physical abnormalities in individuals: “many unsocial acts among women were due to the abnormal functioning of glands associated with the sex instinct” (163).

⁶⁰ Demerson also discovers that her mother gave Dr. Guest approval for an “operation.” She speculates that it might have been a reference to a sterilization procedure (160).

experiments.⁶¹ There is, however, a strong correlation between the development of modern medical practices, racial science and colonization, a connection that postcolonial scholars and historians of medical science have amply demonstrated:

Along with the exploration of the earth’s “dark continents,” the human body itself had become the subject of exploration — and conquest It is necessary . . . to situate the relationship between medical science and the individual in the context of a twentieth-century modernity that privileged the body above all else . . . in the late modern period, the modern state increasingly used its prerogative to lay claim to the individual body for its own needs, whether social, economic, or military.
(Useful Bodies 2)

In the above quotation, Goodman, McElligott and Marks discuss how modern science’s exploration of the human body mirrors the imperial narrative of expansion and “exploration” that so heavily over-determined the logic of colonization. Rey Chow similarly avers that those who were “banished to the European madhouses, prisons, and hospitals” happened to be “living . . . subordinates within the European colonial apparatus” (*The Protestant Ethnic* 3). My reading of *Incorrigible* takes a similar approach, but I locate my analysis in two specific aspects of Demerson’s experience: that her body is mined as a resource for the production of scientific knowledge, and

⁶¹ In 2002, Dorothy Proctor won a legal suit against the Canadian government for having been administered LSD, electric shocks, and sensory deprivation during her incarceration in the 1960s at the Prison for Women in Kingston. Proctor’s case sheds light on human rights violations against female prisoners in the 60s and 70s in Canada (Backhouse, *Carnal* 356; also see a radio clip of her interview on Radio CKUT 90.3 FM:

<http://ckuttimecapsule.wordpress.com/2013/05/02/dorothy-proctor-a-survivor-of-prison-experiments/>

Proctor’s own mixed-race background (she is from a Black Canadian and aboriginal family) perhaps sheds some light on the role of race in the incarceration and medical treatment of marginalized women.

moreover, that this “biological politics of the body” (Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs* 200) functions as such precisely because Demerson is pregnant with a mixed-race child. The medical treatments are pedagogical in both effect and intent: Demerson is singled out because of her pregnancy, and the treatments she undergoes have the effect of disengaging the narrator from her own body. Consequently, *Incorrigible* reveals the racial reproductive politics at play in social hygiene and eugenic exercises. The logic of “protecting” the lives of young, white women unfolded violently and produced multifaceted social patterns of loss and dispossession. These patterns disclose how the life that is “saved” is the same as the life that is abandoned.

The conundrum of the medical treatments and experiments conducted on Demerson must therefore be considered in the context of the precisely racial nature of her pregnancy. Inter-racial crossing, the slipperiness of bodily boundaries, and questions about the liveability of the foetal entity all converge rather startlingly in the fraught site/s and moments of experimentation, as well as in their aftermath. In an interview with Backhouse, Demerson speculates that Dr. Guest selects her for the medical treatments because she is pregnant with a mixed-race child:⁶²

I’m positive she was conducting experiments. She [may have felt] justified in her experiment because [she thought my] baby was going to

⁶² See Backhouse on her note on Demerson’s complaint to the International Court of Justice in 1998. Demerson claimed that the sulphanilamide that was given to her during her pregnancy and while she breastfed her baby, caused methemoglobinemia in the child (*Carnal* 121, 355).

be feeble-minded⁶³ anyway, defective. Was her main objective to kill the baby all along? . . . she may just have been plain racist and had to make sure that baby died. (*Carnal* 120-121)

In the above, Demerson reflects that her future child's mixed-race background accounted for Guest's disregard for her pregnancy. This, perhaps, explains why Guest administered sulphanilamide to Demerson, in spite of controversy at the time regarding the drug's harmful effect on pregnancies, as well as on breastfeeding mothers and infants during the postnatal period (355).

A look at *Incorrigible* in terms of reproductive politics offers insight into how the solidifying of racial categories during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries coincided with the question of what constitutes life. For early twentieth-century biologists, scientists and politicians alike, the question of "life" became synonymous with not only how to protect (and increasingly, manipulate) the boundaries of (human) life, but also how to manage, in capitalist terms, the margins of "valuable" human life. The interlinking of race and life was decidedly expressed in social hygiene and eugenics as defining narratives and practices of the twentieth century, which emerged as "scientific" interpretations of biological life and became a powerful intervention in the social and political lives of people everywhere. Chow maintains that "the systematic pursuit and enforcement of life in modernity must be recognized as the backdrop to our

⁶³ Eugenic initiatives included "the incarceration of people identified as subnormal or inappropriately sexual . . . even in provinces where eugenic policies were never codified in law" (Strange and Stephen 527). Popular sentiment served to fuel legislation related to the incarceration, isolation and sterilization of anyone included under the splayed rubric of the "feeble-minded": "In 1924, lobbying by juvenile court judges across the country . . . produced an amendment to the federal Juvenile Delinquents Act, which empowered courts to intervene in cases involving 'sexual immorality or any similar form of vice' . . . Unlike prisons, whose inmates' sentences were statutorily limited, psychiatric hospitals, industrial schools, and training schools exercised their much wider latitude to segregate 'unfit' individuals for indeterminate periods—even life sentences" (528).

controversial situations of racial and ethnic violence” (*The Protestant Ethnic* vii). Exploring the development of a European scientific methodology in her study of prominent French scientist Georges Cuvier (1769-1832), Denise da Silva also argues that Cuvier naturalized the notion of “life” by embodying “life” in the body of the European “man”: this approach provided “man” “with an attribute all other living things lack, that is, self-perfecting; . . . man is a perfect animal because he is not only subjected to, but also a subject of, productive regulation” (104-105). Life is posited as a “tool of universal reason,” da Silva asserts, and by extension, those who fail to perform universal reason fail to embody life perfectly (103). This biopolitical logic is what precipitates a racial division between Western man’s subjecthood and the colonial subject’s status as object (Chow 3). A reading of *Incorrigible* shows, in fact, the extent to which this legislation of race enacted *through* the governance of life, is inseparable from reproductive politics.

Social Conditioning and Racializing the Pre-Human

When Demerson reflects back upon her 1939 pregnancy, she recalls,

My environment has taken over my entire being – there is no spirituality, no romance, only pragmatism. My heaving body has separated me from others. I feel like an animal that needs reprieve from suffering. No one ever told me that I’m carrying a human being inside me and I don’t acknowledge its existence. There’s a silent conspiracy to undermine that reality since I have antagonized the state by my monstrous behaviour.

(17)

In this scenario, Demerson reads her pregnancy as a measure of the state’s intrusion into her life, referencing a shifting index of meaning with respect to the pregnant body as a social entity. Demerson’s reflections reveal how pregnancy is a socially complex phenomenon based on a process of legitimation, and remind us too, of Elizabeth Grosz’s

claim that bodies “are materialities that are uncontainable in physicalist terms alone” (*Volatile Bodies* xi). As I read these lines, I am struck by the shifts the narrator conveys in her sense of bodily habitus,⁶⁴ the entire grammar of cognitive and affective dispositions that encompasses her subjection. She tells us that her spatial and social isolation from others denies her access to the longings, loyalties and desires that bound her to her fiancé and that could have, in turn, bound her to her unborn child. Indeed, her “loyalties have dissolved in a sea of turmoil,” subsumed by her vulnerability and “lack of access to [her] physical needs.” The condition of captivity reconfigures Demerson’s relation to her own body as well as her intimate social relations. She maintains that she “was not born in captivity,” but the experience of confinement reduces her to her body’s physicality, and rewrites her corporeal and affective disposition toward others. In this respect, Demerson’s physical sense of precarity and social marginalization “undo the stabilities of identity, knowledge, location, and being” (Grosz 3). Grosz states the crucial importance of processes of materialization in shaping the emergence of individual bodies out of their environments. In a similar sense, the physical violations and social disciplining Demerson experiences disarticulate her from the life she had made for herself prior to her incarceration.

In a striking reversal of her assertion that the state is a “punitive monster” in the beginning of the autobiography (2), Demerson equates her own behaviour with monstrosity. Writing that her “heaving body has separated [her] from others,” the narrator highlights how her pregnancy is naturalized as a symptom of her “monstrous behaviour.” She moves from feeling like a wounded animal who “needs reprieve from suffering” to observing that the “human” she carries within her suffering “animalistic” body is socially unacknowledged, given that she has “antagonized the state by [her]

⁶⁴ In his discussion of the place of habitus in shaping individual action, Pierre Bourdieu notes that the social field structures itself around a subject, producing habitual states, “especially of the body,” predispositions and tendencies which cannot be understood apart from his/her conditions of existence (214).

‘monstrous’ behaviour” (17). I want to suggest that these shifts from animality to the human to monstrosity are revealing on a number of different levels. Demerson’s liminality, her place outside of normative femininity and correspondingly, her incarcerated location inside of the institution, positions her precariously across the registers of the social, and this vulnerability is a constitutive feature of her pregnancy. Indeed, if, as Demerson believes, being pregnant with a mixed-race child actually makes her more vulnerable to the vagaries of the medical establishment, then it is also necessary to consider what forms of social existence and social death such a racial condition implies.

The register of estrangement that the above passage tracks is thus significant because it occurs at the level of the *pregnant* body and shows the extent to which pregnancy is a social process. In another insightful moment, Demerson asserts that the lack of social recognition of her pregnancy facilitates an inability on her part to also acknowledge the impending birth of her child. This lack of acknowledgement is perhaps best captured by the fact that her own mother fails to mention the baby’s impending birth upon her visits to the Mercer:

[My mother] must be aware I’ll be going into hospital soon to give birth but this isn’t discussed. The word *baby* is never mentioned. I don’t think about it either. I don’t anticipate the future. I exist only for myself in the present. I have no feelings but fear. The disgrace of being pregnant out of wedlock and the physical pain I’ve experienced blot out any consideration for my baby. (75-6)

Demerson attempts to inform her mother of the excruciating pain she experiences during the medical procedures, but her plea for help falls on deaf ears, another sign of her family’s complicity in her incarceration: “I’m accustomed to [my mother’s] digressions – she acts as though she doesn’t hear me. My suffering probably adds to her

expectation that I'll have a miscarriage or the baby won't be born alive" (71). Significantly, Demerson connects her mother's deliberate silences on the topic of the unborn child to the hope that the baby will not survive. In this respect, *Incorrigible* is instructive because it reveals one moment in which the foetus is socially cast as a non-entity, its life and liveability pre-ordained by norms of recognition that place Demerson's pregnant body outside of the social and political order.

The contemporary pro-life contention is that the foetus is already human, and it equates the foetus with "life" and life with "supreme value" (Duden 2). I depart from this perspective to suggest that the unborn in the autobiography highlights the highly constructed nature of this equation of the foetus with life. In contrast to contemporary pro-life debates that treat the foetus as a legal subject that also has a social and sacred claim, in the autobiography the foetus is negated within the mother's body. Its status as a future child goes unacknowledged, and this takes place precisely because the unborn child is racialized as mixed-race before birth. In her study of race and reproductive politics, Carol Mason argues that the foetus (as human) is racialized white in contemporary political discourse. She points out that even though pro-lifers employ anti-slavery rhetoric, the foetus nevertheless gets treated as white in this narrative:

The critical study of the fetus often eludes discussions of race, despite the fact that pro-lifers consistently discuss the fetus and the unborn as slaves, abortion as lynching, and anti-abortion activists as abolitionists. In the historical context of the United States, all of these comparisons appear to racialize the fetus as black. However, in the context of the political alliances, common practices, and philosophical similarities among pro-lifers, the New Right, and the far right, the fetus is often racialized as white. (159-160)

The contemporary debate about reproductive politics conflates the life and liveliness of the foetus with whiteness. The example of Demerson's pregnancy suggests the reverse of this signifying process, revealing how the racialization of the unborn as mixed-race alters the terms of the debate: in this case, the foetus is assigned to social death even prior to its birth. Demerson says as much when she notes that her body is animalistic and her behaviour monstrous: her body is animalistic precisely because she is pregnant and her behaviour is monstrous because her pregnancy is a result of inter-racial mixing.

The question of silence is also an important one here because it conveys the mode of subjectivation in which Demerson is interpellated, not in the traditional Althusserian sense, but through a set of discursive silences. Drawing on anthropologist Joao Biehl, we might infer that discourses of "pathology, normality, subjectivity, and citizenship" establish the discursive and textual silences around the pregnancy⁶⁵ (5); later, these constitute and hinder the narrator's ability to lay claim to the child through the bureaucratic maze that she navigates. Time and again, the narrative brings the reader's attention to Demerson's lack of knowledge about the facts of her life and her pregnancy – information that she only later recuperates, or in the case of Harry junior – knowledge that she never gains access to. The lack of institutional, familial and social support for her pregnancy thus augments a set of discursive silences around Demerson, a treatment of her body that makes possible only retroactive access to certain knowledges about pregnancy, birthing and children. Indeed, Demerson's lack of knowledge about the events constituting her life are a testament not to her youth but

⁶⁵ In *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*, Biehl examines how Brazil's medical economy, pharmaceuticals, and the family unit form an intricate set of relations that individuals must negotiate in giving an account of their physical and mental health. Noting that spaces of social abandonment are arising everywhere on the margins of Brazilian cities, Biehl examines how social and economic shifts have given rise to these spaces that the unwanted and the unproductive are consigned to. Demerson's social and economic precarity similarly reflects how the legislation of race during this period produces similar spaces of abandonment, here institutionalized through the incarceration of young, working class women.

to the fact that discourses of propriety and scientific knowledge are actively shaped in the moment, revealing the disjuncture between the knowledge that bureaucrats were disseminating about “motherhood” and the kinds of everyday knowledges that young women actually acquired and were able to effectively utilize in the event of pregnancies, or in their encounters with various legal and medical bodies. While much of Demerson’s narrative points to the limits of language – limits created, in part, by the limit-points of Demerson’s knowledge about her own life-narrative – the question of her bodily subjectivity must also be examined in light of her view that her behaviour is monstrous and her body is an animalistic thing. What is even more remarkable is that *Incorrigible* also introduces a crucial difference between animality and monstrosity: the fact that Demerson *feels* like an *animal* because of her *monstrous* behaviour.

In moving metaphorically between the animal, the human and the monster, Demerson questions how the pregnant body is the site where shifting ideas about humanness and the nonhuman come together. Indeed, it is telling that Demerson foregrounds the *feeling of feeling like an animal* because, as Lynda Birke indicates, “women have long been denigrated by animal epithets . . . mostly loaded with loathing” (430). The association of women’s bodies with animality is an old one, recycled and repackaged time and again (Haraway, *Simians* 59). Unsurprisingly, the animal, also understood as a biological entity, re-locates women as biological subjects in patriarchal discourse. The monstrous similarly shares in this set of associations; tracing the Western philosophical tradition back to Aristotle, Margrit Shildrick observes that “for Aristotle, the female form was an intrinsic deformity” (156). Shildrick states that both women and racial others embody difference and this difference, articulated against the demands of white masculinity, is figured in terms of a morphological difference that is also monstrous (2-3). Demerson, however, introduces an important distinction between animality and monstrosity: she associates her body (a biological entity) with animality, and her actions (“immoral” conduct) with monstrosity. The suggestion in *Incorrigible* is that monstrosity is rooted in conduct, and pregnancy is the sign, the symbolic effect, as

it were, of the narrator's behaviour. Thus, by characterizing her body in animalistic terms and her behaviour as monstrous, the narrator also inversely marks her own displacement from the human.

The racialized relation of Demerson to her child is significant because it also hails Harry into the world, conditioning the formative scenes of his entry into subject-hood. The specter of disease and physical injury haunts Harry from the very beginning, and the circumstances of his botched circumcision and the severe eczema he develops as an infant can both be traced back to Dr. Guest and the different medical treatments and experiments Demerson undergoes. The language of eugenics recasts his ability to survive and indeed, to live. One doctor diagnoses Harry in the following way, asserting that "[t]hat child should never have been born" (135). As a kind of phantom figure in the narrative, whose birth, life and even death remain shrouded in mystery, Harry Yip junior thus comes to the fore from within the text most remarkably as the figure without language, the child who is shuttled between parents and institutions and whose narrative emerges from the interstices of textual evidence. He spends his adolescent years in the foster care system and dies by drowning at the age of 26. In fact, while Demerson pieces together information clarifying her treatment at the hands of Dr. Guest, she is unable to fully discover the effects on Harry of the drug treatments that she is given while pregnant and later, the circumstances of his botched circumcision. As an articulation of narrative incompleteness, Demerson's telling of Harry junior's life moves toward an enunciation of Butler's assertion that "a vector of temporalities" both coincides with and precedes and follows the "I" that "appears again as the narrative perspective" (*Giving an* 35-39). In the text, this death represents a relation that cannot be recovered and an account that cannot be given: he haunts the pages of the book as an irrecoverable subjectivity. Next, I explore Harry's birth and Demerson's marriage, to examine how Harry's figure ultimately complicates and contests the racialized discourse of citizenship.

1.4.2. The Paradoxes of Racial Citizenship

In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben proposes the figure of bare life in order to theorize the limits of citizenship. Contesting Foucault's claim that "life" was politicized only with the onset of modernity, Agamben posits that the production of life has always been central to the workings of sovereign power, but modernity marked the nation-state's gradual incorporation of biological life from its perimeters into its center. He argues that sovereign power functions through the state of exception, which takes place in the form of an inclusive exclusion: "[t]here is a limit-figure of life, a threshold in which life is both inside and outside the juridical order" (27). According to the Agambian formulation, nation-states employ the principle of exception to simultaneously ingest and regurgitate those who become its threshold subjects. This regulating principle brings two categories into being: one designating natural rights, the rights that pertain, properly speaking, to all human beings, and consistent with the simple fact that humans are born and exist; and the second conferring the rights and privileges of belonging territorially to a given place. The problem with this, however, is that the rift between these two categories produces a set of violent exclusions which reduce humans to bare life, that is, to forms of life that are barely recognizable as human.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Agamben's argument relies on Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, who argues that human rights discourses fail specifically because the human only has meaning insofar as he/she has political rights. When people are stripped of their citizenship status and are placed outside of the mechanisms of sovereignty, they lose the very qualities that make them human: "The conception of human rights, based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such, broke down at the very moment when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people who had indeed lost all other qualities and specific relationships—except that they were still human. The world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human" (299). For Arendt the figure of the refugee represents the ultimate failure of such definitions of human rights, for when human beings lose their political rights, the very fact of living which is supposedly meant to provide them immunity from violence, in fact exposes them to it.

Agamben's argument brings to mind the history of Canadian immigration and the state's regulation of its borders through its use of Chinese labour. While feeding its economic need for railway workers, for instance, the Canadian nation-state delimited the Chinese Canadian claim to belonging through a set of legal exclusions. One such measure – the Chinese head tax – adopted under the Chinese Immigration Act in 1885, functioned through the inclusive exclusion logic described by Agamben. Explaining how the policy shifted over time, Lily Cho asserts that the “head tax functioned as a policy of inclusion under the rhetoric of exclusion, and [eventually] exclusion in 1924 came into legislation under Mackenzie King's rhetoric of liberal inclusion” (“Rereading Chinese” 76). The head tax was a system of indenture, Cho explains, which meant that Chinese labourers were responsible for the full amount of the head tax not at their arrival in Canada, but were held liable for the tax by the labour brokers and ship captains who paid the full amount first (72-73). Consequently, even as the House of Commons increased the head tax first in 1900 and then in 1903, the “number of Chinese immigrants continued to rise in response to the need for labour” (73). These legislative acts contrast with the 1924 Chinese Immigration Act, which put a stop to virtually all Chinese immigration, but was framed in very different terms: that of permitting only “desirable Chinese, merchants and students” into the country (73-74). Hence, this logic of “enlightened inclusion” bears a striking resemblance to the language of exclusion that first framed discussions of the Chinese head tax: but while the head tax was a pretext for allowing the influx of Chinese labourers it sought to disallow, the 1924 legislation almost completely disallowed Chinese immigration, even as it presumably allowed the entry of “desirable” immigrants.

Such acts of legislating race produced their own states of exception, but what is particularly striking is that a definition of Canadian citizenship first emerged from immigration policy, rather than directly from Canadian citizenship law. Under the Revised Statutes of the 1910 Immigration Act, the term “Canadian citizen” referred to “a person born in Canada who has not become an alien” (2065). And an alien was anyone

who was not a British subject (2065). Sarah Buhler observes that “‘citizenship’ terminology” was used in the 1910 Act to construct the notion of “alien” (96). Along with providing this definition of “citizen,” this statute also outlined the infamous Continuous Journey clause.⁶⁷ The passage that follows further restricts the landing of immigrants considered “unsuitable” for Canada’s political, socio-cultural, and climatic environment:

The Governor in Council may . . . prohibit or limit . . . the landing in Canada . . . of im-migrants belonging to any nationality or race or of immigrants of any specified class or occupation . . . or because such immigrants are deemed unsuitable having regard to the climactic, industrial, social, educational. . . or other requirements of Canada or because such immigrants are deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. (2083)

The above passage racializes the notion of Canadian citizenship, using the thinly veiled language of “unsuitability” to consolidate the country’s dominant racial identity around whiteness. That citizenship is defined in legislation about *immigration* illustrates the extent to which Canadian citizenship has been racially legislated from its early inception, defined and policed through immigration law.

⁶⁷ The Governor in Council may, by proclamation or order whenever he deems it necessary or expedient, (a) prohibit the landing in Canada or at any specified port of entry in Canada of any immigrant who has come to Canada otherwise than by continuous journey from the country of which he is a native or natural-ized citizen, and upon a through ticket purchased in that country, or prepaid in Canada; (Immigration Act 2083)

Prior to 1947, the legal status of Canadian citizenship was based on British citizenship law. It was only when the Citizenship Act of 1946 came into force in 1947 that the nation-state properly conferred citizenship status on Canadian subjects. In another article, Cho writes that, “Chinese immigrants residing in Canada were not given full citizenship rights until 1947 after Canada signed the United Nations Charter of Human Rights after the Second World War, thus prompting debates about the legality of Canada’s policies towards Chinese residents” (“Intimacy Among Strangers” 15). Cho points out that the international post-World War II human rights narrative apparently “remedied” the racial discrimination of the previous decades when Canada conferred citizenship on Chinese residents. A consideration of Canada’s immigration policies in the post-war context meant that these policies were read in an unsavoury light, and called for different measures for the exercise of sovereign power.

In contrast, Demerson’s case of lost citizenship status exposes the failure of human rights in legislating the claims of citizenship, for it highlights how the 1947 Act put various race and gender-based exclusions into place. As I have already discussed, Demerson and her unborn child share a connection that vicariously racializes each in relation to the other, a relation from which each is hailed by the medical and legal establishments of the day. This relation is once again reconfigured, however, upon the child’s birth and Demerson’s subsequent marriage to Harry senior. Legally speaking, the formal union results in the loss of Demerson’s citizenship status, adding another layer to her narrative of loss and dispossession. And yet, this family’s citizenship status is far more complex than even this articulation of loss might suggest. The 1940s were rife with meaning in this regard, and Velma Demerson’s case of citizenship illustrates how these years were a time of incredible flux, with respect to who didn’t get included under the rubric of citizenship status – and how. When Demerson learns of her loss of citizenship a mere two years after the act came into effect, we also discover that she became a stateless person because she married a Chinese man in 1940; she remained stateless until 2004.

Indeed, the 1947 Citizenship Act is a part of the same pool of legislation that policed racial relations through the grammar of patriarchy. Sandra Chu points that,

While the *Exclusion Act* was repealed in 1947, racist restrictions on the immigration of Chinese persons continued until the early 1960s. This legislative activity reflected a wider pattern of anti-Asian public policy in Canada. In addition to the head tax and the *Exclusion Act* legislation, Chinese immigrants were subject to more legislative control than any other migrant group in Canada. These included laws disenfranchising Chinese Canadians, taxes levied on rice and laundries, prohibitions against the employment of White women in Chinese restaurants, prohibitions against Chinese ownership of Crown land, segregation of schools, and prohibitions against entry to various occupations and professions. (403-404)

As Chu avers, the intent of these laws was to prevent the reproduction of the Chinese Canadian community. This is why, despite the notable absence of anti-miscegenation laws in Canada, “an informal and extra-legal regime ensured that the social taboo of racial intermixing was [also] kept to a minimum” (Thompson 354). In addition to forms of social policing, interracial relations were regulated indirectly through a whole host of other legislative acts, such as the Female Refuges Act I discussed earlier, and the nationality and citizenship laws that both Demerson and Harry are subjected to.

The violent legacies of modern citizenship continue to resurface in debates today about the values of birthright citizenship, belonging and statelessness. The Canadian conception of citizenship emerged through the colonization and displacement of Indigenous peoples, and through the historic exclusion of racialized minority groups. And yet, this history is not history per se, for the exclusions of citizenship continue to be legislated today, and debates over the tightening of citizenship law continue to

resurface. Bill C-24,⁶⁸ introduced in the House of Commons by the government in February, 2014, is the most recent incarnation of such debates, and if passed into law, it would drastically limit individuals' access to citizenship. Its many stipulations include stricter language and knowledge tests, and a clause that produces two categories of citizens; in the first class belong those who hold only Canadian citizenship, and in the second category are classified those Canadians who either do hold dual citizenship, or else may be citizens of another country according to that country's citizenship laws, by dint of luck or chance.⁶⁹ Both of these clauses resonate with earlier forms of nationality and citizenship law in Canada, which also legislated citizenship through a similar language of dispossession. In an important sense, Bill C-24 returns us to *Incorrigible*, bringing Demerson's story full circle: ironically enough, the bill proposes changes to existing citizenship law in order to grant citizenship to those who lost their citizenship as a result of the 1946 Citizenship Act, which produced the category of Lost Canadians that Demerson, too, was a part of until 2004. And yet, the bill also gives new life to the same categories of exclusion that mark Demerson's and Harry's peculiar narratives of citizenship.

Demerson's story reflects on the losses that accompany the loss of a legal identity, and the restrictions such a loss imposes on an individual's mobility and her ability to lay claim to her own life. But even more importantly, *Incorrigible* also demonstrates how such losses define and delimit the *multiple* status of family members, and their displacement and disenfranchisement in relation to one another. As Lois Harder and Lyubov Zhyznomirska write, "[k]inship rules of national membership keep us

⁶⁸ See full text and status of the bill at www.parl.gc.ca/legisinfo.

⁶⁹ As one *Georgia Straight* article succinctly puts it: "If you have a spouse, parent, or grandparent who is a citizen of another country, you may have a right to citizenship without ever having applied for it. The proposed law would put you at risk of losing your Canadian citizenship if the Minister asserts that you possess or could obtain another citizenship. The burden would be on you to prove otherwise to the Minister's satisfaction" ("If Bill C-24 passes, Canadian citizenship will be harder to get and easier to lose").

in our place, they let us know what our place is, and they underscore what it means to be ‘out of place’” (312). What is unique to Demerson’s story of citizenship is that a set of competing laws come into play in legislating both Demerson and Harry’s respective citizenship statuses. Harry is born on October 17, 1939 (Demerson 163). Demerson’s marriage to Harry senior takes place months later in 1940 (115). The hiatus between Harry’s birth and Demerson’s marriage generates a set of conflicting meanings about who belongs and when, and according to which law.

Demerson only learns of her loss of citizenship from an RCMP official years later in 1949 when she attempts to procure a Canadian passport at a Toronto Citizenship and Immigration office. For the purposes of exploring the particulars of nationality law during this time, I thereby focus primarily on the decade-long period beginning with Harry junior’s birth and ending with Demerson’s application for a passport in 1949: “because my husband is a Chinese National, [I am told] I am a citizen of China by marriage. He writes down ‘Chinese citizen.’ Then . . . [he] takes my hand and presses my little finger on a pad and moves it to another for imprinting, which he also does with every finger” (139). The officer takes an impression of each of Demerson’s fingers, marking the narrator’s bodily trace into the identifying papers. In this moment, the officer retrospectively authorizes the 1914 Act respecting British Nationality, Naturalization and Aliens, which classified a woman’s citizenship under that of her husband’s. The wording of the Naturalization Act is as follows:

The expression ‘disability’ means the status of being a married woman, or a minor, lunatic or idiot; (298)

Placing married women under the category of “disability,” the statute further defines the national status of a married woman in the following way:

The wife of a British subject shall be deemed to be a British subject, and the wife of an alien shall be deemed to be an alien. (292)

The officer's claim is based on the fact that Demerson lost her British nationality upon her marriage to a Chinese national, as stipulated by the 1914 Act. Thirty-three years later, this loss of nationality would have been re-codified in law as a *loss of citizenship* by the Citizenship Act. The 1946 bill also stipulated that a person would be taken to be a "natural-born Canadian citizen" if "he" was born in Canada or on a Canadian ship and *has not become an alien at the commencement of this Act*" (68). As its language reveals, the Citizenship Act upholds and in fact, re-enacts the precedent established by the earlier statute, re-entrenching the patriarchal logic of the earlier legislation.

To return to *Incorrigible*, the RCMP officer also reinforces the Naturalization Act by closing another legal loophole for Demerson. The official asks Demerson to sign a Declaration of Intention which, she believes, is an application for citizenship (139). This declaration, however, when read alongside the language of both the Naturalization Act and the Citizenship Act, is likely a Declaration for the *renunciation* of Canadian citizenship (293, 73). The wording of the Citizenship Act suggests that natural-born Canadian citizens may also renounce their citizenship if they become citizens of another country through the laws of that nation:

17. (1) Where a natural-born Canadian citizen, at his birth or during his minority, or any Canadian citizen on marriage, became or becomes under the law of any other country a national or citizen of that country, if, after attaining the full age of twenty-one years, or after the marriage, he makes, while not under disability, and still such a national or citizen, a declaration renouncing his Canadian citizenship, he shall thereupon cease to be a Canadian citizen. (73)

The above clause stipulates that an individual who becomes a national of another country through marriage may renounce "his" Canadian citizenship. Following up on the officer's statement that she is now a Chinese national, Demerson subsequently heads to

the Chinese embassy to apply for a Chinese passport. But her request is ignored by an official there as well, who is mainly puzzled by the young woman's application (139). The embassy's noncommittal response to the request not only counters the Canadian official's claim that Demerson became a Chinese national through marriage, but also reflects the production of an entire category of stateless people through the Canadian Citizenship Act. Unable to acquire a passport from either country, the narrator travels to Vancouver to reapply for a Canadian passport under her maiden name (139). In this instance, Demerson's acts of citizenship indicate a set of practices and counter-practices with respect to the narrator's personal history of citizenship and disenfranchisement, one that also highlights her resourcefulness in negotiating both the claims of citizenship and the address of the law.⁷⁰

Since citizenship is crucially about the sorts of claims and rights we may have as citizens, it also raises questions about how we come to belong (or not belong) as individuals to a designated state-territory. In reading this as a narrative about the paradoxes of racially-bounded citizenship, I take my cue here from Butler's discussion of the contingencies of dispossession and her suggestion that "we are not only constituted by our relations but also dispossessed by them" (*Precarious Life* 24). For Butler, this means that we are compelled to assert our autonomy in the political sphere, but that the assertion of this autonomy is nevertheless always-already insufficient:

[W]hen we hear about "rights," we understand them as pertaining to individuals. . . . And in that language and in that context, we have to present ourselves as bounded beings—distinct, recognizable, delineated,

⁷⁰ As Chariandy reminds us, it is important to be mindful of how minority subjects serve as active scripters and narrators of citizenship: "we often run the risk of narrating citizenship, in Canada and elsewhere, in ways that automatically figure blacks (and non-whites in general) as either passive or else outright worrisome inheritors of citizenship, and not active and, at times, crucial definers of it" ("Black Canadas" 328).

subjects before the law, a community defined by some shared features. Indeed, we must be able to use that language to secure legal protections and entitlements. But perhaps we make a mistake if we take the definitions of who we are, legally, to be adequate descriptions of what we are about. (24-5)

The experience of estrangement and defamiliarization, of loss and injury in *Incorrigible* makes this all the more clear. As the text suggests, regardless of Demerson's own conceptions of herself as a particular kind of *woman* and a particular kind of *citizen*, she becomes mired very quickly in the messiness of the law when she comes under its purview. The important point here is not just that Demerson inherits an affectively charged sense of dispossession, but also that she inherits a rights-based discourse of disenfranchisement that she hadn't been subject to before. This dispossession thus necessitates for Demerson a set of negotiations that would not have been possible, let alone imaginable, prior to her marriage to Harry senior.

By contrast, Harry junior's example offers an even more ambivalent case study. In accordance with the Naturalization Act, Harry, too, would have been a natural-born Canadian citizen, born on Canadian soil to a Canadian mother. But even as Harry is born on Canadian soil, his legal status as a Canadian citizen would have come under contestation from the moment his parents married. According to the Naturalization Act,

Where a person being a British subject ceases to be a British subject, whether by declaration of alienage or otherwise, every child of that person, being a minor, shall thereupon cease to be a British subject, unless such child, on that person ceasing to be a British subject, does not become by the law of any other country naturalized in that country. (292-293)

The above clause stipulates that a child would lose his status as a British subject should his responsible parent also lose her status as a British national. Since Harry was born out of wedlock, his responsible parent was Demerson, and upon her marriage to a foreign national, Harry, too, would have become a Chinese national. This clause is reinforced by the 1946 act:

18. (1) Where the responsible parent of a minor child ceases to be a Canadian citizen under section sixteen or section seventeen of this Act, the child shall thereupon cease to be a Canadian citizen if he is or thereupon becomes, under the law of any other country, a national or citizen of that country. (73)

Mandating against dual citizenship, the clause dispossesses those who might have been born in Canada, but who might be considered citizens of another country. Although Chinese citizenship during the first half of the twentieth century was also indefinite, the principle of blood lineage (*jus sanguinis*) was established by the Qing dynasty to determine Chinese nationality in 1909 (Dan 12). Shao Dan observes how the “blood line principle, which transcend[ed] both temporal and spatial boundaries” caused nationality conflicts for people who had diasporic connections to China, but who lived in other parts of the world (21). Although both the Canadian and the Chinese legal definitions of citizenship are consistent when we examine Harry’s case, *Incorrigible* offers another take on what could otherwise have been a strict application of citizenship law; Demerson explicitly identifies Harry as a Canadian citizen in the autobiography. When he travels to Hong Kong alone, for example, there is public outcry when both Chinese and Canadian reporters learn that Harry had not been received by anyone at the Hong Kong airport (136-137). One newspaper reminds people that Harry “is a Canadian despite his mixed-up parentage” (137). Eventually, Harry is united with his caretaker in Hong Kong, and Demerson follows Harry to Hong Kong months later on a Canadian passport in her maiden name. Upon reaching Hong Kong, Demerson proves that she is

Harry's mother at the Canadian consulate, another indication that Harry's citizenship status is first defined through Canadian law (144). Harry's example thus suggests how in practice, citizenship was authorized for subjects through conflicting legal interpretations, and such practices yielded to two defining principles of citizenship.

The 1946 Citizenship Act created a series of elisions which call into question the very principles of citizenship and in particular, highlight the contradictory role that the legal concepts of jus soli and jus sanguinis played in shaping these prohibitions. Like many other countries, Canadian citizenship law is based on the twin principles of jus soli (Latin for right of "soil") and jus sanguinis (Latin for right of "blood"). Taken together, these concepts signify how the metaphor of birthright forms an origins-based narrative about civic life. Remnants of ancient notions of citizenship, they continue to play a formative role in contemporary forms of biopower. The two principles frame the concept of birthright, rooting citizenship in a lineage that gets passed on either through "land" or "blood." In this respect, birthright also functions as a structuring myth that reifies citizenship as a dual practice of property rights and patriarchal lineage. In *Cradle of Liberty*, Caroline Levander writes that the child represents a racial narrative that is central to myths about national citizenship and "functions as the point of origin for the human" (6, 3). Like others, Levander stresses that modern citizenship is inaugurated through the birth of the child (7). Agamben similarly explains that "the element of birth [is inscribed] in the very heart of the political community" (128). Demerson and Harry's respective citizenship statuses highlight the uncanny ways in which this myth of citizenship takes shape, and showcases the contradictions of modern citizenship.

Ultimately, *Incorrigible* demonstrates how the principles of jus soli and jus sanguinis get racially applied. Historian Christopher Lee explains that these legal principles "played [a complex role] in negotiating situations of multiracial identity under colonial rule. These concepts have acquired a central role in understandings of modern citizenship, and they continue to inform criteria for citizenship status in a number of

countries” (“Jus Soli and Jus Sanguinis” 507). What especially distinguishes Demerson’s case, however, is that although she is stripped of her citizenship rights, the same civic principle adjudicates Harry junior’s right to citizenship: he becomes a Canadian citizen at birth since he is born on Canadian soil. In Canada, the birth of the child in the form of the citizen is a legal legacy that highlights the ironies of racial citizenship, which is racially inspired to mandate against interracial marriages, but gets legislated through the grammar of patriarchy. Harry’s example is perhaps the more intriguing of the two because he retains his citizenship despite the fact that his mother loses hers: together their examples show how racial citizenship ends up permitting what it seeks to disallow, giving way to the losses and complexities of social, political and legal identity.

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter examines Demerson’s experiences of racialization by proxy and the shifting racialized modes of eugenic and social hygiene regulation at the time. In this context, I claim that the legal and moral imperative of incorrigibility functions affectively in the text and reveals that a specific arc of racial grief – a trajectory of fear, despair, shame, anxiety, emotional numbness, and ultimately, anger – discloses a vital paradigm for understanding the fraught relation of emotions to speakability. As I suggest, the language of emotions and feelings articulated in the autobiography reflect the ways in which the narrator suspends her emotions and emotional attachments to first learn about, and then write about her life. This arc of feeling is nonetheless inconsistent with the text’s formal challenge, which invests in a politics of fear to narrativize the subject’s humanity. But this contradiction is an important one, I argue, because the narrative’s failure to narrate Demerson’s humanity ultimately reveals insight into the specifically gender and race-based forms of social death that Demerson and her son are exposed to: these result in profoundly fraught and alienating conditions of liveability and unliveability, social existence and social, cultural and political death.

Chapter 2.

Body Histories and Feeling Memories in Hiromi Goto's *Hopeful Monsters* and David Chariandy's *Soucouyant*

Human life can have a biological meaning, a social meaning, and an existential meaning. In an assessment of the modifications that disease inflicts on the living human being, all these meanings can equally be retained.

(Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological* 121-122)

[I]f it is precisely by virtue of one's relations to others that one is opaque to oneself, and if those relations to others are the venue of one's ethical responsibility, then it may well follow that it is precisely by virtue of the subject's opacity to itself that it incurs and sustains some of its most important ethical bonds.

(Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* 20)

How can we engage Judith Butler's ethics of accountability in a biologically precarious time, when human bodies are exposed to new forms of vulnerability, violence through old and emergent technologies of war, global displacements of people, the genetic manipulation of different life forms, and insidious contact with everyday toxins and chemicals? It is commonly acknowledged that the cellular environments of our bodies are in constant states of flux: we age, change and transform in response to stimuli and social and environmental triggers. But how do bodies respond to radical ruptures in their social, cultural and political environments? What stories do they tell, and how? In the above epigraph, Butler contends that because we are socially

conditioned, we can hold ourselves accountable only by acknowledging the limits of our self-knowledge. Elsewhere, she asserts that we share a condition of precarity because “the body is constitutively social and interdependent” (*Frames of War* 31). Crucial to Butler’s argument is her point that the body has a history that exceeds self-understanding. In this chapter, I turn to Hiromi Goto’s *Hopeful Monsters* and David Chariandy’s *Soucouyant*, two works of fiction that propose readings of bodily life that exceed the conscious articulation of memory and emotion. Both Goto and Chariandy offer narratives about women whose conditions of pregnancy, biological mutation and disease defy narrative intelligibility. The maternal body is prominent in both works of fiction, and its biological and affective conditions are not fully accessible or narratable in language. In staging an encounter with the scientific discourses of motherhood, medicine and disease that frame understandings of pregnancy and dementia respectively, both writers explore how these discourses leave little room for narratives of loss, trauma and forgetting that signify beyond the limits of language and representation. Writing on the challenges of narrating trauma, Cathy Caruth avers that individuals “become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess” (5). Traumatic experiences not only defy the workings of narrative, but they are experienced in ways that blur the distinctions between the past and the present (153). This chapter examines bodies whose mysterious symptoms are intimately connected to devastating experiences of loss, re-experienced and narrated through intergenerational structures of memory and feeling.

Goto’s collection of short stories continues my discussion of eugenics in the previous chapter. The title story “Hopeful Monsters” in particular, takes the language of eugenics and its contemporary form, genetics, to reflect on the socially determined role of motherhood and the promise of happiness that gets attached to pregnant bodies. The story’s protagonist Hisa, gives birth to a baby girl with a tail. Examining Hisa’s revulsion and despair at this monstrous birth, I explore the potential of hope when it is placed in the same affective economy as negative feelings such as revulsion and panic.

“From Across a River,” the second story I examine, offers an alternative take on the subject of motherhood with its narrative of a grieving woman who has lost her child, and whose encounter with a faceless neighbour returns us to Butler’s query: how do we ethically engage with others in spite of our fear, rage, guilt and grievances – and in the absence of the most fundamental of signifiers – the face? The narrative draws parallels between individual psychic structures of grief and mourning, and larger social and collective conditions. Specifically, I read the faceless figure in this story as a commentary on the post-9/11 narrative of terror, which privileges, in Lauren Berlant’s words, the embodiment of the emotion (terror) in a figure or person at the same time that the “emotion . . . has no shape” (“Affect in the End” 73). I argue that for Goto, the neighbour both fulfills this expectation by evoking the spectral image of a terrifying other, while simultaneously resisting this expectation with a face that rejects identification.

I then turn to a discussion of *Soucouyant*, a story about a woman who is slowly dying from dementia. By suggesting that Adele’s dementia is rooted in a traumatic incident from her childhood in occupied Trinidad, the novel reveals Adele’s disease to be a symptom of a larger colonial narrative. With Adele’s story, Chariandy reverses the terms of sociality Butler highlights. The disease surfaces memories of the past for Adele, for whom the forgetting of everyday objects and relationships is accompanied by the return of repressed remnants of her past. In his exposure to Adele’s gradual deterioration, Adele’s son, the narrator, confronts the familial narrative (or the prehistory) that conditioned his *own* formation as a subject (Butler, *Giving* 78). Adele’s trajectory of forgetting and remembering seems to suggest that if some parts of our lives are necessarily opaque, then in those rare occasions when we do re-activate our repressed memories, we also lose access to social aspects of the life we live in the present. Questioning how traumatic memories are embodied, transmitted and narrated, Chariandy explores the interconnections of Black Caribbean diasporic history and the South Asian labour diaspora. The novel opens up a space from which to consider a

politics of memory in relation to one of feeling, suggesting how individual forms of *body memory* (here, the mother's) map larger *familial* "structures of feeling" (transmitted to the narrator). In this respect, Chariandy reveals the signifying circuit of two different forms of memory – body memory and postmemory – at work in the novel.

To consider these two texts, this chapter draws on feminist theories and discussions of science. In doing so, it straddles the divide between the bodily history of surplus that Butler speaks of and its contrast with the discourses of science, which not only function as "social texts," disseminating and naturalizing science-based forms of knowledge, but also seek to contain understandings of the human body and subjectivity (Haraway, *Simians* 203). Donna Haraway explains that biomedicine establishes the terms by which human bodies become intelligible and normative. "Bodies . . . are not born; they are made," she writes (208):

The power of biomedical language – with its stunning artefacts, images, architectures, social forms, and technologies – for shaping the unequal experience of sickness and death for millions is a social fact deriving from ongoing heterogeneous social processes. The power of biomedicine and biotechnology is constantly re-produced, or it would cease. (203-204)

Although, as Haraway points out, biomedicine's power to shape bodies cannot be underestimated, it is also important to consider how biomedicine, too, produces surplus bodies that exceed its regulatory apparatus. The implication of this is that the body is a biological system that also inevitably "generate[s] what is new, surprising, [and] unpredictable" in dynamic interaction with the social and cultural world (Grosz, *Volatile Bodies* xi). In its attention to the mobile interplay of body, biology (as object of study and discourse) and world, this chapter questions what the relation of medical discourse, medicalization, and biological bodies is to memory, affect, emotions and feelings. Bodies

are not only socialized through medical discourse, but they also deeply unsettle its frameworks when they draw attention to ways of feeling and knowing differently.

I take my cue from Jennifer Harding and E. Deidre Pribam who observe that rationality and emotion were consolidated as two distinct aspects of subjectivity through the gradual discipline of the modern body (6). In this, they follow Ian Burkitt, who notes that from the Renaissance onwards, the body “becomes more closed to others and to the world, and its feelings more finely regulated and differentiated” (51). The body’s discipline, regulation and production as a source of life, highlighted in Foucault’s point that modern governance gradually started to invest in the reproduction of life, takes place alongside the regulation of emotions, too, as effects of discipline and power. Foucault notes, for instance, that Western modern states recoded the human body through scientific discourse. In becoming subject to the scientific gaze, the human body gradually becomes a biological entity. According to this model, over time the body and mind are subdivided into component parts: the body becomes biology as well as the seat of feelings and emotions, while the mind is considered to be the seat of cognition and rationality. Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills offer a similar discussion of the body’s role in expressing emotions, noting that “[e]motions are presented as occurring spontaneously within the feeling subject . . . and . . . manifesting themselves externally through the body.” In this view of how emotions function, “emotions [are] regarded as being acculturated only [in] their ‘expression’” (21). Gouk and Hills point out that this model became the predominant mode through which to understand emotional subjectivity, which localized affect within the individual and viewed emotions as a natural expression of the bounded subject. In contrast to this model, I understand the categories of biology and affect, cognition and rationality to be disparate, but corresponding effects of discipline and power, rather than natural and given components of human experience.

Goto and Chariandy draw attention to narratives that toy with the edges of the possible, offering narratives that exceed the subject's own self-understanding, and ask us to read the "modern bio-history of the human body" (Harding and Pribam 6) through the gendered and colonial apparatuses of illness and medicine. Foucault posits that the term bio-history refers "to the pressures through which the movements of life and the processes of history interfere with one another" (*History of* 143). Foucault asserts that "life" is not outside of history, because a wide scope of political technologies have invested in establishing the health of bodies and their lived habitus (143-144). More than anything, ill and dying individuals are often captured in the promises of hope, future happiness and the attendance of despair. And as such, they stand in trenchant critique of "the emotions different categories of subjects are permitted to experience and express at any historical juncture, and how both individuals and collectives are brought into being through specific articulations of emotion" (Harding and Deirdre 13). Following this train of thought, each of the sections in this chapter examines how subjects might negotiate loss, despair and hope in their negotiations with birth, sickness and death. Goto does this specifically by writing about eugenics, motherhood, the affects of promise and happiness, as well as the hysterical and feminine subjectivity of melancholia that Freud is infamous for diagnosing.

Taken together, both of Goto's stories complicate assumptions about race and gender by exploring bodies that defy identification – as with the case of the baby's tail in "Hopeful Monsters" and the faceless neighbour in "From Across a River." In contrast, Chariandy's novel marks disease and trauma to be symptoms of a larger colonial and race-based politics of the spectacle, one that shapes the psyche through epistemic and aesthetic means, while exploring how this history surfaces through different forms of memory. As I suggest, both Goto and Chariandy explore structures of feeling and remembering by extending and transforming psychic trauma in unexpected, ordinary and extraordinary ways, through a dialectical engagement with the body's movement across numerous scientific, social and cultural registers.

2.1. Forms of Address and Narrative Incompletion

In *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Judith Butler writes that we are called upon to give an account of ourselves time and again. According to Butler's model of intersubjective relations, when subjects offer a narrative of their lives, there is an opacity built into the structure of that telling, because we come to be social creatures through relations we cannot ever fully remember or explain (20). The notion of narrative is central to Butler's argument: we are compelled to give a narrative account of our lives even as such an endeavour is necessarily and continually incomplete (*Giving* 79). This model of ethical accountability presupposes that the subject is neither self-contained nor is she individualistic in the Western philosophical sense of the term. And this point ultimately lays the ground for examining the relationship between the subject and her body, and for taking this relation as a starting point for contemplating how we are implicated in networks of science, biology and disease that extend beyond the individual. As Naoki Sakai and Jon Solomon assert in their suggestion that culture and language are biopolitical forms of life, "'address' indicates a *social relation* (that between addresser and addressee)" (7). Examining how narrative accounts and accountability take shape *within* the structure of prose fiction is crucial, I suggest, since writers such as Goto and Chariandy highlight the limits of narrative accountability. Their texts push Butler's theory of address beyond her specifically linguistic and discourse-based model of accountability, suggesting the extra-linguistic means by which bodies give an account of themselves, capturing symptoms and diagnoses that gesture beyond the structure of language.

If Butler privileges narrative in her account of power relations, then she does so by foregrounding the discursive production of subjectivity. As she asserts in *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, we are constituted as subjects through language, and this is why modes of address – how and why we are addressed, called upon or interpellated – can either sustain or threaten the body (1-2, 5). In other words, we are

recognized as subjects through linguistic exchange. In *The Psychic Life of Power*, Butler argues also that it is imperative that we acknowledge the difference between the category of the subject and that of the individual; the two are marked by the crucial point that language inaugurates one into subjectivity:

The genealogy of the subject as a critical category . . . suggests that the subject, rather than be identified strictly with the individual, ought to be designated as a linguistic category, a placeholder, a structure in formation. Individuals come to occupy the site of the subject (the subject simultaneously emerges as a “site”), and they enjoy intelligibility only to the extent that they are, as it were, first established in language. The subject is the linguistic occasion for the individual to achieve and reproduce intelligibility, the linguistic condition of its existence and agency. No individual becomes a subject without first becoming subjected or undergoing “subjectivation.” (10-11)

The Butlerian model posits that language is a structure that exceeds the liveability of the subject, that we are born into a language that exceeds the temporality of life, as well as any account we may provide of it. But at the same time, Butler also asserts that language itself shapes the domain of speakability. There is a fundamental relationship between survival and speakability and this relation is marked by the need for subjects to coincide with “implicit or explicit norms” (*Excitable Speech* 137). A “compulsory discursivity,” according to Butler, establishes what claims are understood as political and legible (136-137).

Explaining the form of address further, Butler asserts that “being addressed by another carries other valences besides fear. There may well be a desire to know and understand that is not fuelled by the desire to punish, and a desire to explain and narrate that is not prompted by a terror of punishment” (*Giving* 11). As these lines

indicate, the mode of address is implicated in feelings: emotions can motivate the form of the address aimed at you and language, in turn, also conveys the valences of desire, fear or anger that shape the account we are compelled to give. Even though Butler acknowledges that the form of address and emotions share an important relation, she does not go far enough in explicating the place of the body in her account. In *Agency and Embodiment*, Carrie Noland takes Butler to task for not sufficiently accounting for somatic experience in her model of subject-formation. Calling for a more nuanced model of the processes by which the body becomes socially legible, Noland critiques Butler for failing to be more attentive to the ways the body feels as it performs “the movements that discourse” dictates and interprets (180). Noland’s approach foregrounds gesture which, she states, complicates Butler’s reliance on discourse, and shows the productive tensions and dissonances that might arise between social meanings articulated in language, and the body’s kinetic-kinaesthetic performances in embodiment (192). Noland also observes that “in [Butler’s] stringently antiphenomenological axiomatics, feelings are always mediated by words that make those feelings available while alienating us from them” (176). For Butler, language mediates our relationship to our feelings so that our access to them is embedded in a language-based model of communication. Butler’s understanding of emotions, however, overlooks an alternative way of understanding the role of the body in transmitting memory and feelings.

As we will see shortly, the promise of happiness that gets attached to pregnancy and motherhood generates effects at the level of desire, hope and despair in “Hopeful Monsters.” However, this promise also gets rewritten and contested when a monstrous birth challenges the protagonist to confront a history of her own body that she did not know existed. In contrast, in *Soucouyant*, the intersubjective structure of melancholia formatively binds the narrator to his mother: this inherited relation historicizes melancholia in its proper colonial and diasporic context, suggesting the extent to which melancholia reflects the protracted effects of trauma and displacement; here it is

replicated in the condition of dementia, and dementia's unravelling of Adele's life story through patterns of remembering and forgetting. I consequently argue that it is imperative that we go further in conceiving of how bodies give an account of themselves, that is, through body histories that exceed the linguistic norms of a narrative account. For instance, Adele's case of dementia surfaces body memories which complicate and blur subjective boundaries, signalling the ways that memories, stories and feelings are transmitted inter-generationally through unlikely and uncanny symptoms and bodily gestures. Upon her son's return home after a two-year absence, for example, Adele recognizes him when he displays the clickiness of his bones, and she informs him that he has "strange bones . . . Quarrels deep in he flesh He grandmother too" (8). The narrator's inheritance from his mother, and her mother before her, is in his bones. Such body histories call for a more nuanced reading of narrative accountability than Butler provides room for.

Soucouyant also asks us to consider how traumatic histories are passed between generations through the affectively-charged transmission of bodily and postmemories. The transmission of memory through feeling states such as melancholia, not only offers a response to Butler's model of accountability, but also shows how bodies give an account of themselves in ways that defy narrative intelligibility: the body's affective states cannot be simply understood as pre- or anti-discursive formations, but exist in a complex, intertwined and sometimes incommensurable relation to language in the first place. In these ways, this chapter also considers moments of subject-production in order to ask, what if we also become subjects and non-human or recognizably human through intersubjective forms that are extra-linguistic or that exceed narrative? If language, emotions and body histories are all structures that exceed the subject, then Goto and Chariandy both suggest that the subject can be opened to the social through the body as the site of both the micro- and the macro-political: it collects and records these excesses, revealing ruptures in the fabric of social relations.

Even as they explore how bodies themselves offer symptoms of stories that are difficult, if not impossible to narrate, Goto and Chariandy also imagine alternative models of narrative accountability at the level of the texts' formal qualities. Specifically, the texts draw attention to the heteroglossic nature of discourse, of multiple narratives becoming ravelled and unravelled in the texts. I extrapolate from Mikhail Bakhtin for this insight, who has influentially argued that literature (for him namely the novel), reveals the numerous social registers that comprise intersubjective linguistic exchange. For Bakhtin, it is important to trace how prose captures forms of unofficial culture which pose trenchant critiques of hegemonic expressions of power and "resist official culture, political oppression, and totalitarian order through laughter, parody, and 'grotesque realism'" (Leitch 1187). In a novel about unspeakable losses and a devastating childhood experience of trauma (during which Adele accidentally sets her mother on fire), Chariandy, for instance, introduces the figure of the soucouyant to relay the rift between official "stories" such as that of Canadian multiculturalism and the unofficial story Adele tells as she slowly dies. Adele's unofficial story is, in turn, mediated by the narrator whose words frame the text proper. The soucouyant has a unique textual imprint, a written trace from the narrator's childhood which appears at the beginning of each chapter. At times the word is incomplete, half-written, and at others, presents a differently spelled version of itself. The movement between different discourses reveals – to borrow from Bakhtin – "a multiplicity of social voices" that interconnect in the novel (*The Dialogic Imagination* 263).

As I will explore further in my later discussion of the novel, the figure of the soucouyant has a doubled function; it morphs a long-standing Trinidadian legend into a mediating form that exposes the reader to the violent ruptures of a colonial legacy. A sign of narrative incompleteness or ongoing recreation, the soucouyant is one way in which Chariandy explores dementia itself to be a form of story-telling in the novel. In brief, the soucouyant is traditionally understood to fulfill the role of an evil spirit or a female vampire who finds her prey at night. She sheds her skin and "travel[s] across the

sky as a ball of fire” and sucks her victim’s “blood as he sleeps, leaving him with little sign of her work except increasing fatigue” (135). As we are told, the soucouyant lives in “the skin of an old woman,” leading an inconspicuous life on the outskirts of the town by day. Indeed, the soucouyant’s play with presence and absence in the narrative shadows the bodily history of trauma that is so closely associated with Adele’s story. When Adele encounters a soucouyant as a young girl, its presence becomes synonymous with the horrors of war. At the same time, however, the novel complicates this association by speculating how the character of the elderly woman (in the form of the soucouyant) actually serves as a scapegoat figure: “you might try finding out where a soucouyant conceals her disguise of skin . . . Cover her skin with plenty of salt and The burning of salt under her skin. A guise now strange and painful. The suffering of a monster that deserves no pity at all” (135-136). This alternative conception of the soucouyant as a suffering creature – flips the perception that the soucouyant is a monster and therefore meant to be feared – on its head. Indeed, as I will discuss later, the soucouyant’s burning skin also approximates the burning of Adele’s mother, and *her* association with monstrosity in the novel. The soucouyant’s duality consequently indicates how Chariandy employs the trickster figure to open the text to dialogism, in Bakhtin’s sense of the word, and to explore alterity as the site of conflicting meanings. Since the soucouyant is closely associated with the narrator’s retelling of Adele’s childhood incident, it is also the ghostly trace of that incident, bridging trauma and dementia in the narrative.

For Goto, the trickster figure is the kappa, a creature from Japanese folk legend that primarily dwells in water, and whose actions range, somewhat like the soucouyant, from harmless fun to a malicious intention to harm human beings. The second story in the collection “Osmosis,” stages a dreamlike encounter between the narrator and the kappa, and this imaginary dialogue between the two facilitates the narrator’s hope for a better tomorrow. Her imagined dialogue with the kappa skirts between the possibility and impossibility of such an encounter, even as she thinks she imagines the kappa into

presence: “I could call out. But I don’t even know your name. You don’t know I’m here. And I may have imagined you as I have imagined myself My head breaks the surface and I start swimming to the other side of the lake. I imagine I hear a voice softly murmur, ‘Kappa’” (20). For Goto, the kappa is a figure of promise, and “Osmosis” perhaps represents Goto at her best as she moves seamlessly between her use of the pronouns “I” and “you,” a process through which the narrator addresses herself, the subject of her address, the kappa, and the reader. In his reading of Goto’s work, Roy Miki observes that the kappa “allows for the living body . . . to become the constantly changing medium of language and narrative. It’s life-affirming water . . . becomes the reservoir out of which Goto’s narrator draws the agency to move beyond imposed myths of patriarchy, colonialism, and heterosexism” (*In Flux* 166). To take this even further, the kappa also becomes the medium through which Goto renders strange and defamiliarizes the site of language, a strategy that effectively rewrites the subject’s inauguration into language. But the kappa is merely one trope through which Goto imagines and complicates subjective boundaries, an angle I take up in more detail in the following section. Up to this point I have discussed how Chariandy and Goto employ the trickster figure to introduce alternative narratives of trauma and becoming in their respective texts. In the following section, I examine Goto’s “Hopeful Monsters” and the story’s challenge to the promise of motherhood.

2.2. Hope, Motherhood and the Promise of Happiness in “Hopeful Monsters”

In this section, I examine how Hisa’s experiences of pregnancy and childbirth fail to conform to the traditional ones of motherhood, challenging the heavily policed medical discourses of pregnancy and mothering. Her dismay, hysteria and revulsion propose an alternative model for understanding motherhood, a rewriting, in other words, of cultural narratives about motherhood as the “promise of happiness.” I borrow

the term from Sara Ahmed who argues that happiness is an ideology that affirms “some life choices” at the expense of others, and thus functions as a technology which avows a normative identity and disavows others (*The Promise of Happiness* 2). It is also future-oriented in the sense that the promise of happiness “direct[s] us toward certain objects” defined as “social goods,” such as the wedding day which is *meant* to be the happiest day of our lives (“Creating Disturbance” 34). The experience of motherhood functions along similar affective lines, as both a responsibility women have toward their offspring and a guarantee of happiness: in other words, ensuring the child’s happiness is a mother’s responsibility, but having a child is a guarantee of happiness in and of itself. Goto’s text offers a critique of the hyper-medicalization of pregnancy and the discursive circulation of “motherhood” in such affective economies of promise.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Ahmed proposes that we understand emotions in terms of an economy “where feelings do not reside in subjects or objects, but are produced as effects of circulation.” “The circulation of objects,” she writes, “allows us to think about the ‘sociality’ of emotion” (8). Following Marx’s formulation of production and labour, Ahmed contends that emotions, too, accrue “affective value.” But in contrast to Marx who maintains that emotions that are displaced as objects *gain* value, Ahmed contends that emotions are produced within the same economic systems of circulation (11). Substantially complicating Marx’s formulation by considering the production of emotions as “effects of circulation” between subjects and objects, Ahmed argues that emotions function affectively to create surfaces and boundaries: they “create the very effect of an inside and an outside . . . emotions are crucial to the very constitution of the psychic and the social as objects” (10). Rather than positing that emotions themselves circulate, Ahmed asserts that emotions produce and are produced through the circulation of objects which become “saturated with affect” (11). In contrast to Ahmed who asserts that emotions create boundaries and surfaces between objects and subjects, Graham Richards asks *what* the boundaries of “emotion” are (51). The “category ‘emotion’” is unstable, he writes, asking us to be attentive to how emotions

are historical, and subject to change over space and time (62). In light of Richards' argument, I would like to extend Ahmed's analysis by pointing out how emotions are amorphous even as they create boundaries, transmuting and blending into one another on a spectrum of feeling-states.

To consider how structures of feeling both create and dissolve boundaries, is to consider, as Carrie Noland proposes, how emotions also offer the potential to destabilize rather than define the subject, an angle that Goto explores in "Hopeful Monsters" (218). Like some of the other stories in Goto's collection, Hisa finds herself in a situation where she must contend with feelings of loss, anger, disgust and dismay. In this regard, my discussion of "Hopeful Monsters" continues the previous chapter's historical look at the regulation of female bodies, and by extension, motherhood. But unlike Demerson's autobiography, Goto introduces a different spectrum of feelings in her fiction, ranging from humour and despair to hysteria and hope. In addition to exploring "extreme emotions" like anger and grief, her work also encompasses "irritation, boredom, impatience, mild amusement, transient frustration, resignation, apprehension . . . contentment, affection, slight feelings of envy and vague dissatisfaction," all of which, according to Richards, are more typical of "our quotidian emotional lives" than are extreme emotions (51). At the same time, the extraordinary elements of magic realism in her texts punctuate the quotidian, an example of what Jane Bennett calls the "marvellous erupting amid the everyday" (*The Enchantment of 8*). In what follows, I suggest that Goto shifts the promise of happiness associated with motherhood by reimagining what it means to hope through an exploration of this range of somatic experience. The body is reimagined as an effect of this affective circuit, and this act of imagination returns Goto's narrator to the earliest scenes of her own subject-formation.

2.2.1. Mutation, Monstrosity and Motherhood

In her title story “Hopeful Monsters,” Hiromi Goto begins with an epigraph from the American evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould’s 1977 article, “The Return of Hopeful Monsters”:

Goldschmidt did not object to general microevolutionary principles, however, he veered from the synthetic theory in his belief that a new species develops suddenly through discontinuous variation, or macromutation. He agreed that most macromutations ended disastrously, with what he called “monsters.” Nonetheless, Goldschmidt believed that a small percentage of macromutations could, with chance and luck, equip an organism with radically beneficial adaptive traits with which to survive and prosper. These he called “hopeful monsters” . . . (Goto 135)

In this passage, Gould explains the controversial biologist, Richard Goldschmidt’s claim that mutations in “developmentally important genes could produce large phenotypic effects,” resulting in the ability of an altered species to persist despite and because of these changes (Dietrich 71). For his part, Gould recuperates Goldschmidt’s work from the 1930s and 1940s to argue for the concept’s potential, while writing against Goldschmidt’s rejection of Darwinian theory. Like the dominant view, Goldschmidt posits that mutation is monstrous, but he departs from others by investing hope in macromutation, the process of spontaneous generation which equips mutated organisms with the ability to survive. Goto’s use of Gould’s explanation, and Goldschmidt’s metaphor of “hopeful monsters” is especially significant because their works take part in the development of genomics, the science that many consider to be the modern day equivalent of eugenics. In *The Material Gene*, Kelly Happe argues that the hereditarianism of genomics naturalizes “social and economic relations” and furthermore, its eugenic inclinations are even more difficult to pinpoint today: “genetics

never abandoned its investment in the normalization of bodies and the larger social and economic order, even as it set out to reinvent itself after the demise of the eugenics movement” (5). In its attention to disease inherited genetically, genomics science often ends up replicating the same diachronic views of race and gender as eugenics, coding economic and social relations – that is, disease resulting from economic and social disparities – into pathology: such an approach naturalizes these disparities by attributing them to pathological bodies; the assumption in this model is that pathological bodies recreate themselves through established kinship networks (6). In contrast to the diachronic view, a synchronic approach takes into account the numerous and innumerable factors that materialize embodied experience (7).

There is a relation between knowledge production and life, Georges Canguilhem argues. In *The Normal and the Pathological*, Canguilhem asserts that any understanding that we have of normal bodies derives from the relation that the “living being” shares with its “milieu” (127). He argues that what we understand as “pathological” is conceived in the context of the “normal,” which “has no properly absolute or essential meaning,” but which nevertheless institutes the norm (127). Canguilhem’s observations on genetic mutation suggest the perils of allowing a genomics that does not account for its own function as a kind of milieu, one that enacts a form of social Darwinism (126). By paying attention to how a relation of norms takes place, Canguilhem is among the first to provide a salient critique of medical and scientific practices that efface their own contingent boundaries in the goal of objectivity. In his view, an anomaly only becomes pathological “in relation to a milieu of life and a kind of life . . . the problem of the pathological in man [*sic*] cannot remain strictly biological, for human activity, work, and culture have the immediate effect of constantly altering the milieu of human life” (128). Noting how these different spheres of life correspond to and shape one another, Canguilhem argues that the pathological is not only biological, but also social and cultural. As he points out, the anomaly turns into the pathological only when it gets regulated as a disease, and thus according to a different set of norms than those for

“healthy” bodies. In other words, the “pathological state —is not the loss of a norm but the aspect of a life regulated by norms that are vitally inferior or depreciated,” and the pathological body is assumed to be the diseased one (131).

Although both Goldschmidt and Gould focus primarily on evolutionary principles, scientific theory and biological mutations, Goto’s short story places the metaphor of “hopeful monsters” in an alternative topology, one in which the female body is an interactive and shifting site, and hope emerges from the interstices of social and biological life. In short, “Hopeful Monsters” is the story of a woman who gives birth to a baby girl with a tail, and who then must confront the knowledge that she, too, was born with a “caudal appendage.” By exploring the implications of Goldschmidt’s contention, Goto specifically interrogates views about women’s bodies and motherhood through the lens of monstrosity and mutation, a language that is also closely associated with that of race in the story. Certainly, the first lines of the story immediately establish a correlation between the epigraph on Goldschmidt’s theory about genetic mutation and the experience of pregnancy: “Hisa started experiencing nausea the third week after fertilization and tested positive in the fourth. She couldn’t eat anything in the mornings and had to forego her single cup of coffee” (135). The implication of this contrast – the rhetoric of mutation, monstrosity and hope in Goldschmidt’s theory of genetics with the condition of pregnancy – calls on the reader to question how the female body is framed in scientific discourse. The story follows Hisa during the last stages of her pregnancy. As a chronicle of the “monstrous” birth of a child whose tail is medically defined as a “caudal appendage,” the story thus resurfaces eugenic-based sentiments about abnormality and monstrosity.

The narrative reflects on the surveillance of female bodies and motherhood by explicitly engaging with the pregnant body as the site of hyper-medicalization. In *Disembodying Women*, Barbara Duden argues that pregnancy has come to be “intensely medicalised” in the contemporary moment (27). She writes, “its character and quality

[is] diagnosed, its progress [is] seen in relationship to a physician” (27). In many respects, the story reflects this process, since Hisa’s own experiences of childbirth are so frequently explained by others. The story right away highlights how Hisa navigates the medical establishment during the course of her pregnancy. During a regular check-up, the doctor’s advice to Hisa about doing her pelvic exercises and about any symptoms of “prolonged pain,” is followed by the comment that “[t]here’s nothing to worry about.” As he tells her, “You’re about to embark on the most natural journey of life. A commonplace miracle” (137). This advice mirrors the counsel Hisa receives from her mother, who says, “This is your first baby, . . . You must have good thoughts. Bad thoughts will travel down the umbilical tube and affect the baby . . . ‘And don’t you fight with Bobby. The bad energy might cause your baby to have psychological problems”” (136). The intermixing of medical advice about pregnancy with cultural notions of childbirth come together as pop-psychology in Junko’s advice. This form of advice given to pregnant women is of course, commonplace in our society, which incorporates claims of scientific validity into common sense advice about motherhood. What is even more telling, however, is how the doctor’s medical expertise combines with his concluding assertion that childbirth is “the most natural journey of life. A commonplace miracle” (137). But as we continue reading, we see how “the most natural journey of life” is anything but and that the body has a life of its own, which exceeds the doctor’s teleological advice. His comments not only have the effect of disconcerting Hisa, but also as soon as the doctor leaves the “baby churn[s], digging a knee or elbow. She could see her skin give, as if an alien was trying to burst out of her belly even while she watched: alive and horrified. Ridley Scott had a lot to answer for, she thought” (138). The feeling of the baby defamiliarizes Dr. Armstrong’s statement, and Hisa concludes her visit to the doctor with the decision that she would find another doctor, should she have another child in the future.

If anything, Hisa’s unsatisfying appointment with Dr. Armstrong reflects how central a body schema is to our sense of individual identity. Jane-Maree Maher observes

that in western societies, subjectivity is meant to align with the bounded body: our ideas about who we are, are deeply attached to a body schema. Pregnancy, on the other hand, upsets this configuration because it reveals the messiness of the originary process of subject-production, during which one body contains and eventually separates into two:

The passage of fluid inside the pregnant body, backwards and forwards between the pregnant woman and the foetal entity, enacts the process of contagion as it constitutes the movement toward the moment of birth – the separation into two subjects with body boundaries properly restored. (201)

In a parallel vein, Emily Martin also suggests that pregnant bodies are “hybrids,” because the foetus is a “foreign” entity that inhabits the body (133). Hisa similarly experiences her body in terms of its otherness during her pregnancy; however, upon the baby’s birth she is further disoriented in her sense of her own body, and this experience of discombobulation is closely tied to the fact that the baby is born with a tail. I turn to the scene of childbirth next to explore how this takes place.

2.2.2. Shifting the Promise of Happiness

The scene of childbirth is one of the most fascinating moments in “Hopeful Monsters” because it highlights the discourse of normativity and naming that so intensely polices the time of birth. Indeed, as soon as the child is born, the language of abnormality immediately collides with that of race and gendering. The scene is comic, as Hisa quickly begins to condition herself as a new mother:

Hisa sighed. Something maternal crept, blossomed in her heart and spread through her chest Bobby started crying. Hisa smiled bravely. He must be so moved. So very happy, she thought. She raised her chin . . .

I am a mother, she thought proudly. Bobby turned away. Her heart lurched. Gasp “What’s wrong!” (145)

Hisa begins to experience maternal love as soon as she hears the baby’s cry. However, this sense of motherhood is immediately ruptured by the possibility of the baby having been born with an abnormality. Reading Bobby’s body language – he turns away when he see the baby – Hisa thinks to herself, “Dear God, she hadn’t checked for any defects. She was only thirty-one . . . Lord . . . [s]he couldn’t bear it if the child was severely handicapped” (145). In this instant, the baby’s birth effectively deconstructs the promise of motherhood, as Hisa’s maternal love turns into panic.

And yet, this moment not only ruptures Hisa’s socialization as a new mother, but also reflects the multiple discourses that socialize a child’s body at birth. Interrupting Hisa’s thoughts about the possibility of a monstrous birth, the doctor identifies the baby as a girl. “It’s a girl,” the doctor proclaims. In the brief moments after the birth and before the doctor attributes gender to the child, the urgency of identification situates the baby between two different violations: one of abnormality and the other of gender attribution. Transgender theorist Susan Stryker has argued that “[a] gendering violence is the founding condition of human subjectivity; having a gender . . . makes one’s personhood cognizable” (253). As Stryker points out, naming through gender is the first mark of identification a child acquires at birth, but for Hisa’s baby, this process of socialization also extends beyond gendering. Ignoring the doctor,

Hisa grabbed the tattered blue threads of [Bobby’s] collar and held his face to hers. “What’s wrong with it?” she whispered hoarsely. “Is its head misshapen? Does it --?” Hisa gulped. “Does it have really slanted eyes?” (146)

Although Hisa’s query is about whether the baby has an abnormality, Bobby, misreading her question, inadvertently racializes the baby: He “stared at her, perplexed. Glanced at

the corners of Hisa's eyes. 'No!' Hisa hissed. 'Not slanted like mine!'" (146). In this scene of misrecognition, in the first instance, Hisa positions the baby in relation to the language of deformity and in the second, Bobby racializes the child as Asian. This movement between deformity and Asianness, between the shifting registers of the pathological and the racial, socialize the baby instantly following her birth. This exchange is then followed quickly by the doctor's intervention in the conversation, who asserts that there is nothing wrong with the baby besides "a very minor superficial abnormality" (146). The doctor's comment once again situates the baby within the frame of abnormality; the tail stands in for racial difference through this conflation of processes of racialization with abnormality.

Despite the incorporation of the tail under the sign of race, however, the tail also functions as a shifting signifier gesturing toward a set of complex and intersecting processes of socialization that condition a child's entry into the material world. Tellingly, by first ignoring the doctor's proclamation that the child is a girl, and calling the baby "it," Hisa also suggests the complex ways these processes work together to code identity; bodies become variously legible or illegible through these coding systems. And yet, the fact that the tail is situated somewhere between the signs of gender, race and abnormality also suggests that it has the potential to subvert and contest all of these. As Margrit Shildrick argues in *Embodying the Monster*, "any being who traverses the liminal spaces that evade classification takes on the potential to confound normative identity, and monsters paradigmatically fulfil that role" (5). The baby's tail disrupts notions of bodily integrity, and illustrates, like Canguilhem, how mutation reveals the precarity of life, showcasing the "normal" to be a highly unstable and contested threshold of difference (135). As we will see, the monstrous birth further unsettles Hisa's identity because she is compelled to confront her own bodily history, one that exceeds the conscious workings of her memory.

Although the scene of childbirth ruptures the promise of motherhood, a later moment in the story re-establishes an intergenerational connection between Hisa and her child. Indeed, in spite of the fact that Hisa's experience of giving birth centers on the shock of having given birth to a baby with an abnormality, the greater blow is delivered by her mother, Junko:

"You had a tail, too." The room ballooned, a sudden vacuum. Captured. Then, every sound resonated as isolated overblown entities inside Hisa's mind. The fluorescent light buzzed with frenetic electrons. Granules of dust slid across the glass window, one tiny mote after the other. The furnace clicked with the change of temperature, the pipes expanding atom by atom. The baby's breathing split into air, heart, blood, haemoglobin. Hisa gasped. The world cracked. Then the shards slid back to create an entire picture once more. (155)

Junko's disclosure re-establishes a form of kinship between Hisa and the baby, and compels her to face the loss that conditioned her own subjectivity at birth. Eventually, she goes looking for the scar of the missing tail on her body. Her "flesh pimpling with fear and revulsion," Hisa hysterically thinks to herself that her body is "foreign, her own foreign body" (160). And yet, as she discovers the scar, Hisa's hysteria and self-disgust gradually give way to grief at the loss of her tail, one of many psycho-somatic transformations she undergoes during the course of the narrative. This moment reveals a kaleidoscope of emotional responses; finding the scar, Hisa's feelings transform from revulsion and disgust into a desire for the missing appendage: "'Give it back!' she rasped. Mama! Mama who had to tell her now!" (160). This change of heart is an important moment in the narrative because Hisa becomes aware, for the first time in her life, of something that she had always felt was missing.

Indeed, Junko's revelation compels Hisa to "remember" an experience of loss that had always been a part of her life, but which she had never quite apprehended. As she tells herself, "[s]he had been an amputee her whole life, without knowing it. What did that make her? . . . Hisa thought back as far as she could remember. Where family photos blurred with experienced events. Hadn't she always felt that something had been missing?" (160-161). This act of remembrance not only returns Hisa to the earliest moments of her life, but also makes her conscious of the limits of her own self-knowledge. Thinking back to childhood draws attention to how memories are sometimes indecipherable from the content of family photographs, while our apprehension of events is shaped by much that exceeds representation. As Annette Kuhn observes,

Sometimes family secrets are so deeply buried that they elude the conscious awareness even of those most closely involved. From the involuntary amnesias of repression to the wilful forgetting of matters it might be less than convenient to recall, secrets inhabit the borderlands of memory. (2)

According to Kuhn, secrets linger at the edges of consciousness, and for Hisa, the secret of a genetically-passed on tail resurfaces with the birth of her own baby. The return of the repressed in this way exposes the pre-conditions of Hisa's subjectivity, while pointing to the possibilities of reimagining the loss of her tail.

The narrative's final scene best encapsulates such an act of imagination. While escaping the hospital with the baby's tail intact, Hisa senses the phantom limb balancing behind her:

She could feel something behind her.
Hisa's heart clenched.
She did not look over her shoulder.

A weight. A balance. A graceful length that slid through air, weaving a subtle pattern. (168)

This sensory experience of the tail suggests the body's potential to record and perform acts of memory and imagination. The body is, as Rosi Braidotti tells us, an "enfleshed memory-system" (97); its history has the potential to rupture the coherent narratives we shape about our lives. While I explore the notion of body memory in more detail in my reading of *Soucouyant*, here I would like to point out that Goto's story highlights how acts of remembering are acts of imagination as much as they are instances of recall.

In contrast to Hisa's initial responses of skin-crawling repulsion to the baby's tail, this moment also reroutes the monstrous birth into an alternative affective economy, returning full circle to the story's title, "hopeful monsters." What does it mean to hope, the narrative asks, in the context of a story about deformity, mutation, and monstrosity? The coupling of "hope" and "monster" in this story destabilizes the affective economies that both terms circulate within, bringing hope as an affect and a feeling into conversation with the emotions of revulsion and disgust associated with "monstrosity." Goto questions how affects such as "hope," which I understand as falling into both the category of an individual psychic experience and collective discursive practices, can be articulated in the context of biological processes. Darren Webb explains that hope is a "socially mediated human capacity"; it is particular to an individual's location at the juncture of specific historical and social constraints, and consequently experienced differently given a person's position in a space-time set of coordinates (68). Indeed, "Hopeful Monsters" returns us to a key turn of this chapter: what terms can we use to talk about the relation of medical discourse, medicalization, and biological bodies to affect and feelings? How are certain medical discourses responsible for, or take part in producing and maintaining specific affective economies? Goto sees potential in the notion of hope when it is placed in the same affective

economy as negative emotions such as revulsion and panic.⁷¹ The baby's tail disrupts any facile understanding of the human body as a biologically stable entity, resituating the monstrous within the frameworks of agency and hopefulness.

The baby's tail and Hisa's post-birth discovery of her own "lost" tail become ways of articulating agency and disrupting established regimes of truth in the text, a portrayal of bodies that defy the parameters of both racial and gender-based signification. As Hirokazu Miyazaki argues, hope is an epistemological project; it ruptures established filiations and associations: "hope presents a set of methodological problems that in turn demand the temporal reorientation of knowledge" (9). By drawing attention to mutation and biological and bodily transformation, the narrative suggests a form of *becoming*, in Elizabeth Grosz's sense of the word, in which the body's materiality – understood through longstanding ideas about the female body as a kind of biology – is made provisional and open to transformation. In this respect, Goto shares the same vision as Grosz who argues for the need to account for "biology" as a referent in the doubled sense of the word: "'Biology' designates not only the *study* of life but also refers to the body, to organic processes or activities that are the *objects* of that study" (*Time Travels* 13). According to Grosz, it is important to engage with the discourse of biology because the matter of biology – our bodies as biology – is an inextricable part of lived experience. As she questions, "how does biology, the bodily existence of individuals (whether human or nonhuman), provide the conditions for culture and for history, those terms to which it is traditionally opposed?" (14). Feminist theorists have been justifiably suspicious of scientific discourses about women because of women's

⁷¹ In *A Philosophical Analysis of Hope*, Jayne Waterworth explains that hope is relational and it has a "relation to positive and negative phenomenon" (31). She explains further that "the aversion in fear produces a metaphorical, if not always literal, withdrawing from the object . . . fear can be seen to display a mobility similar to that of hope, though its direction is opposite to that of hope" (43). For Waterworth, it is imperative that we examine how the notion of hope relates to other feeling states.

historic lack of access to power within medical institutions; however, in Grosz's view, it is crucial to engage with ideas of biology since notions of what it means for us to be biological bodies are so intertwined with cultural precedents about what it means for women to be women, mothers, daughters and wives. "Hopeful Monsters" provides a unique take on the cross-section that Grosz references, the intersectional space where established knowledge about human bodies comes up against and is contested by the bodily life of an individual.

In an interview with Sook C. Kong, Goto contends that it is necessary to examine our "own monsters" because we live in a naturalized "state of horror" (28). The AIDS epidemic in Africa, ethnic cleansing" around the world and the privatization of water are all developments which we must question, Goto insists, but instead we too often perceive them as being "mundane" and "banal" occurrences in our lives. Although "Hopeful Monsters" is a story about one woman's experience with childbirth, an example that seems disconnected from the AIDS epidemic, ethnic cleaning and the privatization of water, Goto's comments suggest the need to examine the precarious place of individual female bodies from the perspective of global politics. Keeping this in mind, I now turn to another story from *Hopeful Monsters*, in which Goto explores how the melancholic and hysterical maternal body prefigures terror – the affective relation that so overwhelmingly accounts for racialized subjectivity in this post-9/11 political moment.

2.3. From Mourning to Terror: the Faceless Neighbour in "From Across a River"

Brian Massumi argues that post-9/11 political power has effectively melded "itself to . . . [a] threat [that] is unknowable," an act of governmentality that enables certain subjects (more so than others) to be read within a lexicon of fear ("Fear" 35). He

argues that the state's production of affect with its manipulation of the media disseminates fear through the general populace. What is striking about Massumi's observation is the point that *threat* – itself an abstract notion -- becomes equated with *certain subjects*. In *Fear of Small Numbers*, Arjun Appadurai also argues that the "ethnic" exists in a state of "social uncertainty." He asserts that social and political uncertainty "is intimately connected to the reality that today's ethnic groups number in the hundreds of thousands and . . . their movements, mixtures, cultural styles, and media representations create profound doubts about who exactly are among the 'we' and who are among the 'they'" (5). This uncertainty is especially relevant given media treatment of minority groups after 9/11. The increase in hate crimes against Muslims and Sikhs, to cite one example, demonstrates how minority groups in North America are positioned in a vexed and troubled relation to both domestic and international terrorism.

Terrorism is racialized, and this racialization frames subjects who are "affective and affected entities that create fear but also feel the fear they create" (Puar 174). According to Jasbir Puar, a "new visual category, the 'terrorist look-alike' or those who 'look like terrorists,'" suggests the ongoing importance of the visual in the interpellation of subjects:

The turban is accruing the marks of a terrorist masculinity. The turbaned man—no longer merely the figure of a durable and misguided tradition, a community and familial patriarch, a resistant antiassimilationist stance—now inhabits the space and history of monstrosity, of that which can never become civilized. (175)

Individuals who resemble the terrorist are associated with monstrosity, Puar explains. But even as these bodies have an ocular relation to affect, "the biopolitics of population" is not entirely restricted to the visual and the affective (174, 175). For Puar,

this means that even though racial profiling occurs through numerous informational and surveillance patterns, the racialization of bodies as terrorist occurs through intersecting informational, visual and affective nodes of power. In a similar sense, Katarzyna Marciniak asserts that racialized subjects after 9/11 are called on to “occupy the place of a ‘clean’ . . . humble, disciplined, [and] ‘invisible’” subject (34). Marciniak argues for “immigrant rage” as an empowering affective state, even though this “modality . . . seems [politically] intolerable,” now more than ever (34). Indeed, given how intimately racialized bodies figure in relation to the politics of fear, terror and anger, literary treatments of this relation are urgently needed.

Goto treats this question in her short story, “From Across a River.” In the story, a day of mourning in one woman’s life culminates in a devastating encounter with her new neighbour, who finds herself confronted by the phantom figure of her dead child (Tara) in the form of the stranger. The twist in the narrative is that the new neighbour has no face and yet nonetheless gets racialized and gendered by the protagonist even before she meets her. What is also fascinating about Emiko’s encounters with the neighbour is that she projects her own guilt, grief and anger onto her. In the moment when they finally come face-to-face, however, the neighbour’s lack of a face presents itself as a terrifying and sublime rebuttal of the possibility of any communication. Melancholia and terror come to mirror one another in this way in the story, discursively connected through the figure of the neighbour. The relation between the two figures is a significant one too, as Slavoj Žižek, Eric Santner and Kenneth Reinhard point out, since the neighbour is a referent of the “multiculturalist notion of tolerance” (*The Neighbor* 3). What dissonances does the neighbour spark in multiculturalism, the neoliberal rhetoric of racial inclusion that takes place through the inclusion of ethnic “diversity?” What sorts of limits to this political ideal does the neighbour expose? The challenge of the neighbour is that she/he/it is not always assimilable, but instead signals the limits and indeed the impossibility of the multicultural model.

Goto's story offers precisely such a response I argue, by asking us to consider the connections between grief, mourning, the hysterical maternal figure, and the radical otherness of the neighbour. I find Goto's story compelling because it provides a way of reading racialization in terms of not only dominant white – non-white relations, but also traversing within and across minority subject-positions. What does it mean to read such a story set in Canada, about a woman who can be read as Asian Canadian, and her encounter with her elusive and unidentifiable neighbour? Especially since Emiko takes such pain to “see” her neighbour, first out of curiosity, and then out of rage? The neighbour offers a fitting reply, presenting a faceless face that exceeds both racial and gender-based identification even as she meets the hyper-real expectations of figures who supposedly transmit and embody terror and fear – the terrorist, the veiled woman, or the turbaned man. Certainly, the short story reflects how all sorts of fears and anxieties about race, gender, and origin of birth can get localized onto those who stand out as strangers. In first examining her treatment of the maternal body, I argue that Goto's text suggests how the female melancholic, with its traditional associations with hysteria, prefigures discourses of terror, both of which rely on feminizing monstrosity.⁷²

⁷² Of course, anti-terrorist narratives also circle around the question of the feminine and feminism. Military excursions in the name of “liberating” Iraqi, Afghani, Muslim and other “repressed groups” of coloured women from their male-dominated societies, often mobilize anti-terrorism rhetoric. As Puar points out, terrorist masculinities are often feminized even as they convey monstrosity (88, 175). I take up these connections specifically by continuing my discussion of how, in traditional western thought, femininity have been closely linked to monstrosity. As Shildrik points out, the “relationship between the monstrous body as other and the feminine as other, both implicitly in relation to the masculine subject . . . speak[s] to . . . a deep and abiding unease with female embodiment” (29). This unease with female embodiment maps onto the hysterical maternal body.

2.3.1. Gendering Loss: Race, Mourning and the Hysterical Body

In brief, the story follows a day in Emiko's life, a young mother who accidentally hit and killed her daughter with her car one day. The narrative is set in the aftermath of this event and follows Emiko as she ineffectually copes with the demands of caring for her other child, Kelsey. Emiko wakes in the morning, attempts to prepare Kelsey for school, is reproached by Gordon (her husband) for failing to communicate with him, and then goes grocery shopping. On her way to the store, she finds herself slipping on the snow when she attempts to see the face of the new neighbour – but instead, only sees her turned back. Instead of helping Emiko up off the ground, the new neighbour ignores her and continues on her way (102-103). In this scene, in trying to catch a glimpse of the stranger, Emiko immediately attempts to determine the race and gender of the new neighbour: “Her, Emiko thought, though nothing would give any clue to the person's sex. The clothes looked mannish, but the bow-legged steps reminded Emiko of her aging mother” (102). Having “ascertained” the neighbour's gender, Emiko judges that she “[m]ust be an immigrant How could she stand to be bundled like that, Emiko wondered. She must be from a hot country” (102). At that very moment, Emiko slips and falls in the snow (102-103). Emiko has another surreal encounter with her neighbour later in the story when she chases her neighbour in the ally to force a confrontation; in both encounters, her neighbour is essentially a passive rather than an aggressive figure, who attempts to evade confrontation. But, as we will see, Emiko projects her assumptions about race and otherness onto the stranger, and these projections serve as a frame for the storyline.

At the end of the narrative, Emiko awakens to an empty house and imagines she hears her daughter Tara's cry. Running outside to find her but realizing instead that she had heard only the mewing sound of someone's cats, Emiko sees her new neighbour peering at her from the other side of the fence. The rest of the story describes Emiko's

attempt to catch up to the woman and once she does, to see her face. Grabbing her, Emiko screams: “‘What’s the matter? . . . Don’t you speak English? . . . Look at me! . . . It wasn’t my fault! I don’t know who told you! I couldn’t see her! Do you understand?’” (110). The moment when Emiko attempts to explain her guilt to her neighbour, who she assumes already knows about how Tara died, is the second moment in which Emiko racializes her neighbour. Emiko’s accusation – “Don’t you speak English?” – subjects the stranger within the field of power, a linguistic act that also draws our attention to how English itself functions as an instrument of interpellation. Moreover, Emiko’s question to the stranger is also consistent with, as Michael Davidson has written, the moment in which a person is no longer seen as “a private individual” but rather “become[s] [an] object of the immigration gaze” (85). Although it is unclear whether Emiko conflates English with whiteness here, her injunction against the stranger nonetheless reminds us how often English operates racially and that English is not, and never has been, a neutral vehicle of communication. It is also imperative to note that Emiko herself is a Japanese Canadian woman who is married to a white man, and this mixing and meshing of identities draws attention to the racial terrain of a “multicultural” framework, one that ultimately proves to be untenable in the story.

Before examining the most crucial aspect of Emiko’s encounter with the stranger in more detail – the moment of radical “facing” in the story – I consider how Emiko’s grief gets gendered in the narrative. This is crucial because Emiko’s domestic and familial life stands in direct relation to her interactions with the neighbour. The excessiveness of grief in the narrative is important because the story pushes the experience of loss to its limits. First, I question the limits of models of racial identity, which frame racialization in terms of constitutive loss by also considering how the threat, or protest of racial minorities gets contained through a politics of terror. Second, the short story explores the feminization of loss, challenging the Freudian framing of hysteria and mourning.

Many critics have clarified the connections between melancholia and terror. There are links between the melancholic subject and the “could-be terrorist,” as Sara Ahmed informs us: the “figure of the melancholic migrant” can convert into the “could-be-terrorist. His anger, pain, and misery . . . become[] ‘our terror’” (*The Promise of Happiness* 144). In an article on Dionne Brand’s *What We all Long For*, David Chariandy also observes that an anxiety about multiculturalism, when read through the lens of fear, can associate minorities with terrorism; according to this reading, such a strategy precludes other ways of reading second-generation diasporic subjects’ “melancholia.” Responding to an article by Allen Gregg in *The Walrus* entitled “Multiculturalism: A Twentieth Century Dream Becomes a Twenty-first-century Conundrum,” Chariandy notes how Gregg uses a politics of fear to frame second-generation visible minorities’ sense of “un-belonging” to Canada (“Fiction of Belonging” 819). This economy of terror, he writes, occurs precisely because “the disaffection or isolation of second-generation visible minorities” remains unintelligible as a structure of feeling for second-generation diasporic subjects (828). “From Across a River” adds to these debates, not only positing a connection between melancholia and terror, but also indicating how the two ultimately get feminized within racializing discourses. Maternal loss is the frame through which we must consider the ethics of our neighbourly relations, Goto contends.

Emiko’s sorrow at the loss of her child turns very quickly, or is turned into, an extra-familial form of mourning that exceeds the logic of domesticity. This explicitly takes place through her husband Gordon’s censorship of her grief. “[W]hat kind of mother are you?,” he asks when Emiko fails to adequately care for Kelsey. This utterance signposts Emiko’s grief as excessive when she violates her responsibilities to her other child (100). Gordon’s reproach is a form of address that turns Emiko into a melancholic figure, one who is perpetually gripped by the memory of her lost child and unable to move on. In this way, Emiko’s narrative also carries obvious resonances with the psychoanalytic distinction that Freud draws between mourning and melancholia. In his well-known essay “Mourning and Melancholia,” Freud points out that while both

mourning and melancholia are often “reaction[s] to the loss of a beloved object,” in melancholia the subject faces an inability to recuperate from that loss (312). And yet, as Freud implies, the more obvious distinction between the two resides in the fact that melancholia has come to be diagnosed as a “pathological condition” and mourning has not, “despite the fact that it [too] produces severe deviations from normal behaviour” (311). “We rely on it being overcome after a certain period of time,” he continues, “and consider interfering with it to be pointless, or even damaging” (311). That Emiko’s grief turns and is turned into melancholia is indicative of this artificial divide between mourning and melancholia, thus suggesting how easily mourning can slide into melancholia. Gordon’s condemnation serves a significant purpose in the narrative because it gives voice to the address that turns Emiko’s mourning, a “normal” part of the grieving process, into something that is extra-familial and therefore out of the ordinary. Ultimately, Emiko’s grief at the loss of her child – a potentially grievable loss – gradually turns into an ungrievable one. The implication of this seems to be that it is not *whether* we mourn that matters, but *how* we mourn that is important. By the same token, Emiko’s grief may be framed *as* a melancholic formation, but need not be.

Melancholia is a feminine condition, David Eng points out. And although more recently it has become an analytic tool that “encompass[es] a wide spectrum of subjectivities exceeding any gendered distinctions,” Freud’s framing of “hysteria as pathological female subjectivity – as the uncontrollable ‘wandering womb’ – continues to endure” (1275). Although melancholia and hysteria can be considered separately, in Goto’s story hysteria gets mapped onto the protagonist’s loss, whose melancholia also translates into aggression. This is tellingly evidenced by the fact that Gordon leaves the house with Kelsey, and this departure is prompted by Emiko’s violent outburst during which she throws her boot at the back door window. Emiko’s actions are a response to Kelsey’s reaction when Emiko returns home covered in mud after her fall: “‘Look!’ Kelsey giggled. Mom pooped her pants!’ Blood pumped upward into Emiko’s head though she couldn’t say, later, exactly why. But the boot . . . was in her hand, and she

threw it at the back door, fracturing the glass” (104). In this hysterical rejection of her second daughter, Emiko’s grief turns the spectre of maternal loss onto itself, an action that fulfills the Freudian expectation that melancholia is consumptive – it leads to the melancholic’s unrelenting consumption of the lost object. But here, what gets consumed, destroyed or eaten is the promise of motherhood, the promise that motherhood is a never-ending reserve of love. The literal and metaphoric departure of the family unit following Emiko’s action is also important because the family’s absence from the rest of the narrative is replaced by something else – her encounter with the figure of the neighbour. The conflation of maternal loss with melancholia and hysteria thus provides a useful lens through which to read the final scenes of the story – and the experience of horror which feeds into the experience of loss.

2.3.2. When the Neighbour has no Face

In the story’s final and most noteworthy scene, Emiko runs to confront her neighbour. The stranger refuses to turn to Emiko, but Emiko forces a confrontation that ends in a rather alarming manner, with Emiko seeing that “the woman had no face”:

Furious, Emiko yanked her around . . . but when the stranger had been turned 180 degrees, Emiko was still staring at the back of her head. The hair on Emiko’s arms, her neck turning to water, no, Emiko mouthed, no, how could this be? Emiko spun the woman around, she must see her face. Faster and faster, Emiko spun the stranger, desperate to catch up But every way she turned her, the woman had no face She watched the stranger clatter away on puppet-string legs, walking away as she would always walk away. (111)

In this final encounter between Emiko and the stranger, Emiko’s desperation, her vehemence and aggression toward the neighbour, transform into horror as the

neighbour reveals that she has no face. This hyper-real “facing” not only confronts Emiko with her own vulnerability, undermining the terms by which she addresses the stranger, but also paradoxically asks: does the encounter reveal that the neighbour has no face, or does it suggest that Emiko is unable to see it?

Emiko’s address to the stranger assumes that the neighbor is human, or that humanness presupposes the neighbour. As she tells herself, if she could but see her face, she would be able to explain what happened the day that Tara died: “If only Emiko could see her face, she could convince her. Please” (110). Emiko’s compulsion to narrate her loss is made all the more disconcerting by the second noteworthy dimension of the encounter: that the neighbour turns away repeatedly from Emiko’s address and refuses to receive her guilt, grief and anger. This rebuttal leads to the most visceral element of the encounter, the moment of facing that neatly turns Butler’s model of address and accountability on its head. What is implied in Butler’s argument is that the act of hailing comes from the other, and that the norms of our speakability are determined by the norms “that govern[] the scene of recognition” (23). In the case of Goto’s story, the act of hailing comes from elsewhere, from somewhere beyond the immediate exchange that occurs between the two characters, and is subsequently re-directed at the stranger by Emiko. The neighbour’s adamant silence in response to Emiko’s desire for communication suggests a lack of common ground between the two, indicating the limits to the social and political frames that mediate social relations.

In rejecting Emiko’s desire to give an account of herself, the neighbour fractures the premise that the face-to-face encounter forms the basis of an ethical relation to the world. In his version of ethics as a basis for human sociality, Emmanuel Lévinas maintains that the face signals a level of vulnerability to the “other” and that this exposure is the precondition for an ethical engagement with the world (80-81). According to this formulation, the face-to-face encounter actualizes the responsibility that the self has toward the “other” (213-214). And yet, Goto’s narrative points to the

limits of this paradigm, for in her story the neighbour completely *lacks* a face. From this, we may infer that Emiko's address is refuted by the neighbour for one of two reasons: that in the first instance, the neighbour does not conform to the norms of recognition that govern communication for Emiko. Or, in the second instance, that Emiko herself is not intelligible to the stranger; the stranger is either unable to or else does not care to listen. In this respect, Žižek provides a more apt way of reading the missing face or loss of face in his critique of Lévinas. As he writes, the face functions as "the nonlinguistic point of reference" in the symbolic order (*The Neighbour* 146). In spite of the fact that the face fails to signify language, or to be more specific, because the face is non-linguistic, it both intervenes in and sustains the symbolic order. According to Žižek, Lévinas fails to account for the inhuman dimension of the face-to-face encounter, of how the face of the other essentially signals pure excess, and how in certain circumstances we fail to "discern in his face . . . his or her vulnerability, addressing us with the infinite call of our responsibility—what we get is a kind of blank wall, a lack of depth" (*The Parallax View* 113). Observing that any definition of the human is premised on something that is inhuman or, in other words, refuses incorporation in any narrative account of what it means to be human, Žižek contends that the Lévinasian argument overlooks those individuals who are reduced to inhumanity itself (111-112).

Goto's story subscribes to the Žižekian perspective more so than it does to the Lévinasian one, suggesting how, in this era of supposed multiculturalism and "tolerance," of ever-reaching and insidious forms of racism, the imperative to connect with one's own neighbour ultimately fails. The figure of the neighbour is a signifier of imagined relations in the social body, but Goto's neighbour rewrites this relation, revealing it to be a fiction. Indeed, the idea that the human face opens intersubjective relations to the question of mutual connectedness and exposure is also explored by Butler, for whom Lévinas's account of ethics and violence becomes a way of thinking about how individuals are variously humanized and dehumanized (*Precarious Life* 141). Butler posits that "dehumanization . . . can also take place through the face" even

though the face alone cannot be equated with being human (141). As she points out, frames of reference condition our ability to “respond to a face as a human face”: “The possibility of an ethical response to the face thus requires a normativity of the visual field: there is already not only an epistemological frame within which the face appears, but an operation of power as well” (*Giving* 29-30). According to Butler, the face cannot be taken as the basis for an ethical engagement with the other, because the face is embedded in visual, cultural and anthropocentric regimes that implicitly shape how we relate to others. This is why in “From Across a River,” the ethical moment in the text emerges when Emiko fears that she, too, has lost her face.

Interestingly enough, Emiko is drawn back into the fold of everyday humanness by another neighbour who discovers her in the alley:

“Oh god, girl! You’re okay. You’re okay.” . . . He opened his arms to enfold her, the scent of baby powder mixed with sour brine stench rising from his housecoat. He smelled so bad, Emiko thought dimly . . . Emiko shook her head inside the stinking warmth of his humanity. Oh god! She had been so close. So close. “M-m-my face!” Emiko gasped, shuddering with terrible fear. (112)

This final exchange returns Emiko to her own body; she looks at her arms, torn “from elbows to wrists, blood caked dry and brown . . . [and] the missing fingernails . . . the beauty of the raw flesh speckled red and white” (112). Seeing her wounded arms and hands, Emiko realizes that a new day has dawned, and with it, “[s]he could see” (112). This return to sight is significant because it reveals the anxiety underlying Emiko’s encounter with the stranger: that her inability to perceive the neighbour’s face was based on an inability to see. The story highlights the limits of perception in this way, but even more importantly, it also establishes a connection, however tenuous, between Emiko and the stranger. There is a second important turn in this passage, and it also

turns on the question of perception: “‘M-m-my face!’ Emiko gasped . . . She sobbed, raising her tattered hands” (112). Emiko’s sudden fear of having lost her face after seeing the neighbour’s missing face, suggests that the encounter establishes a form of affinity between the two. This violent affinity, represented in the horrific possibility of losing one’s face through association and contact with the other, turns Emiko’s loss into terror.

In “Promising Transnational Births,” Tara Lee reads the ending of “From Across a River” as fleshly, arguing that flesh “circulates . . . to insist that the body is the tool for both oppression and resistance . . . flesh and . . . body,” she writes, serve “as agency”⁷³ (207). Lee also claims that the “pain of her revealed physicality reminds [Emiko] that change lies within her” (206). While Lee reads Emiko’s encounter with the enigmatic stranger as an enlightening one, one in which physical injury opens the subject to the possibility of change, I read the short story in slightly different terms: that the story’s conclusion indicates that our terms for understanding this encounter are inadequate. The encounter fails inasmuch as it refuses the terms of engagement Emiko proposes, foregrounding instead a search for an alternative set of terms for thinking through the political and cultural legacies of loss. As my analysis in the following section will demonstrate, Chariandy offers precisely such an alternative conception in his exploration of subsumed forms of knowledge through the intergenerational transmission of memory in *Soucouyant*.

⁷³ Lee asserts that works such as Goto’s “challeng[e] a history in which the racialized female body has served as the naturalized Other to a national Self by reworking their own relationship to this generative body” (26). In her larger project, she explores how contemporary Asian Canadian literature writes the body to move past a destabilized national frame (3-6).

2.4. Body Memories and Mediated Feelings in *Soucouyant*

While *Soucouyant* and *Hopeful Monsters* both focus on maternal bodies, the mother-child relationship, and the power of cultural narratives of science and medicine, they differ in their representation of diasporic communities. Goto writes specifically about the lives of Japanese Canadian women. She points out in an interview with Sook Kong that “the things which interest me continue to orbit the experiences of women, be they in the past, the present, or an imagined future” (28). A handful of characters in the stories are also part of the traffic between Canada and Japan, suggesting a need to read these stories not only from the perspective of gender, but also through a diasporic lens. In “Racialized Diasporas,” Christine Kim argues that it is important to examine a “common politics of feeling and remembering” among characters who belong to different histories of migration and displacement⁷⁴ (187). Following her cue, I would like to acknowledge the significance of reading *Hopeful Monsters* and *Soucouyant* in terms of diasporic interconnections and larger narratives of mobility and displacement.⁷⁵ Both Goto and Chariandy offer stories about characters who are diasporic in one way or

⁷⁴ In her article, Kim specifically reads *The Letter Opener*, a touching novel about Naiko, a Japanese Canadian woman who must deal with the loss of a friend after he disappears without any warning one day. What the two characters Naiko and Andrei have in common is that they both belong to histories of racialized belonging and non-belonging in Canada. Andrei, for instance, is a recent arrival in the country; his status as a refugee is a result of his panicked departure from Romania, and this allots him a precarious place at best on the margins of Canadian society. By contrast, Naiko inherits the traumas of Japanese Canadian history, and then ultimately bears the burden of Andrei’s story after his disappearance. Kim asserts that this relation conveys how we are affectively bound together through loss and memory not only within, but across different diasporic histories.

⁷⁵ While I acknowledge the importance of a diasporic approach to a study of minority writing in Canada, for the purposes of brevity I have not adopted the lens of diasporic theory as a primary means of interrogating the texts in question in this project. I consequently leave a more in-depth analysis of the diasporic dimensions of *Hopeful Monsters* and *Soucouyant* to a later project.

another, but they do so differently, for Goto positions the racialized female body within conflicting economies of promise and desire. In what ways, she asks, do the terms of gender, race, racialization and otherness get expressed affectively? While both of her stories engage with the promise of motherhood, “From Across a River” in particular, asks what the cognitive and epistemic limits of loss might be: what are the limits to how loss might be transmitted, narrated, and shared, not in moments of mutual vulnerability and interconnectedness but in moments of radical disconnection? Even as Goto disrupts how bodies and subjectivities become intelligible, Chariandy explores the mediation and re-narration of loss, drawing attention to a bodily archive of memory passed between subjects through a politics of feeling. *Soucouyant* posits a crucial difference from “From Across a River” with its suggestion that forgetting itself is an integral feature of narrative, and forms of remembering and telling are forms of forgetting right from the outset. In this respect, *Soucouyant* also parallels the return of the repressed in “Hopeful Monsters” and Hisa’s re-discovery of her amputated tail. In the novel, the spectre of loss materializes through disease, revealing a set of symptoms that link three generations of a family together.

Soucouyant is set in Scarborough, Canada after the passing of the Multiculturalism Act, and yet a diasporic memory-scape shadows the present, returning the protagonist to earlier moments in familial history, from his own childhood memories, to his mother’s arrival in Canada from Trinidad, and back even further to her tumultuous childhood there during the Second World War. The novel offers a rereading of the politics of multiculturalism, routed through the diasporic history of the protagonist’s familial story: set in 1989, the novel situates the narrator’s experiences in the 1980s, but it also moves between Adele’s childhood in Carenage, Trinidad during the American occupation of the region, her subsequent experiences as an immigrant to Canada in the 1960s, and the narrator’s childhood in the 1970s. This movement is especially significant because it enables Chariandy to draw attention to the multiple temporalities that shape the patterns of remembering and forgetting in the novel,

foregrounded in the text through the maternal body. The novel follows the story of Adele, a woman who is slowly declining from dementia⁷⁶ and her son, who returns home to her after a two year absence; as a second-generation child of immigrant parents – a Black Trinidadian woman (Adele) and a South Asian Trinidadian man (Roger) – the narrator is caught between his parents’ ghostlike memories of past displacements and the traces those displacements have left behind.

2.4.1. Body Memories and Diasporic Interconnections

To approach diasporic interconnections, Chariandy focuses on Black Caribbean diasporic history, but draws on its interconnectedness with the South Asian labour diaspora. The narrator’s father is of South Asian descent, whose ancestral story is marked by absences and fragments of remembered history. Reflecting on diasporic interconnections between Asian Canadian and black Canadian communities, Lily Cho argues that,

While slavery has commonly been understood as a foundational event of black diasporic culture, the relationship between Asian indentured labour to the Americas and Asian diasporic culture has yet to be fully explored. When slavery was "abolished" in European colonies in the mid-nineteenth century, there was a concerted effort to recruit indentured labour from India and China to take the place of slave labour many of the ships used to carry slaves across the Atlantic were used to transport indentured labourers across the Pacific. ("Asian Canadian Futures" 191)

⁷⁶ See also Wendy Roy’s “The Word is Colander” for an analysis of Canadian fiction on the topic of Alzheimer’s disease.

As Cho points out, ships represent the shared history of indentured labour and slavery;⁷⁷ the technology of the ship binds the two diasporas together under the umbrella of a common set of political and economic motivations. Robin Cohen explains that indentured labour and slave labour are connected because both are a part of the development of the global capitalist system: “after the collapse of slavery, the new milch cow was indentured labour” (64). He elaborates further that “[t]he extensive movement of Indians to faraway tropical plantations provides an instructive reminder of how far the planters were prepared to go in keeping their two desiderata for profitable production—abundant land and cheap labour” (64). In *Soucouyant*, this shared history is embodied and transmitted through an incomplete and half-remembered archive of knowledge.

Indeed, what is perhaps most revealing about these diasporic interconnections is that Roger’s familial history gets narrated through *body memory*,⁷⁸ that is, through involuntary acts of telling which both escape and defy his conscious articulation of personal knowledge and familial stories. The subtext of Roger’s narrative invites a preliminary reading of body memory, a genealogy which I trace in the novel with respect to the narrator’s sense of inherited feeling. Roger’s relation to his diasporic history is enacted through a topography of missing knowledge and half-remembered tales in an important passage in the novel:

⁷⁷ In *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Paul Gilroy writes that slave ships were “mobile elements” that reference the “discontinuous histories of England’s ports, its interfaces with the wider world” (16-17). Gilroy draws attention to the ship as a technology of slavery and a key element in the development of the world economy through colonization and industrialisation.

⁷⁸ Goto’s writing can also be considered in light of body memory, or bodily memories which exceed the subject’s consciousness. I focus on body memory more closely in my analysis of *Soucouyant* because of its significant engagement with another component of memory work – that of loss embodied in the process of forgetting.

He knows a few things. That his grandfather could speak Tamil and his ancestors came from a place called Madras The migration happened a long time ago, and it didn't involve circumstances that anyone had thought important to remember and pass on Hushed stories of desperate flights, of cutlasses and sweat. Bodies broken in the canefields. Some surviving rituals of belief, though Songs that continued to be sung with sincere feeling even though the meanings of the words had long been forgotten. His own lips moving involuntarily to the very beginning of some lullaby right now, the language pure breath and tongue now in its ancientness and obscurity. (79)

In this poignant passage, we learn that the original context of the lullaby Roger sings is lost to him, but it nevertheless conveys a subsumed form of knowledge about a larger diasporic condition of indentured labour. Roger's body memories tie back to a collective experience of diaspora, as stories of "desperate flights," "cutlasses and sweat" and "bodies broken in the canefields" rope him to a history of migrating bodies caught in the matrix of indentured labour. In doing so, the above passage moves between Roger's shared knowledge of fragments of "known" history and an affective process that exceeds his description of his own memories.

Roger explains away his fragmentary knowledge of personal history not as knowledge – "I don't know nothing" he says – but as a "scrap of something gone." And yet, in contradiction to Roger's assertion, this "scrap of something" returns in the form of a song to which his "lips mov[e] involuntarily," a body memory that conveys "the language pure breath and tongue now in its ancientness and obscurity" (79). This rhythmic line structurally echoes the slippages in memory and knowledge Roger conveys, suggesting how language incorporates into the body and breath, its social function slowly eroded and altered over time. Indeed, Roger's involuntary acts of memory reveal, as Georges Bataille states, how "[k]nowledge demands a certain

stability of things known . . . the domain of the known is, in one sense at least, a stable domain, where one recognizes oneself, where one recovers oneself” (116). In contrast to Bataille’s claim that knowledge stabilizes identity, Roger’s body memories rewrite “language” as a residue of knowledge, undoing the stability of language as a vehicle of communication. This passage ultimately reveals how an account the individual gives of himself is offset by forms of embodied knowledge and memory that cannot be easily explained through language.

According to Thomas Fuchs, body memory refers not to our “explicit recollections of the past,” or memories that are easily accessible, but to “the habitual structure of the lived body, which connects us to the world . . . [and] appears in different forms . . . [such as] situational, intercorporeal, incorporative, pain, and traumatic memory. The life-long plasticity of body memory enables us to adapt to the natural and social environment” (9). This definition suggests that body memory comprises the totality of an individual’s experiences over the course of her life, whose habits and bodily orientations develop through, among other bodily capacities, the “capacity to see, touch, [and] move” (10). Quoting Henri Bergson, Fuchs reiterates that this type of memory “does not represent our past, but enacts its” (10). Perhaps what is particularly compelling about the type of memory Fuchs describes is that the body has the potential to incorporate and denote the multiple temporalities we inhabit at a given moment in time. For Fuchs, body memory does not refer to the conscious workings of the mind – our ability to remember and retain the facts of our life and consequently to narrate them through autobiographical memory – but is embodied in ways that exceed our intentions in the present.

This understanding of body memory contrasts with deliberate memory projects such as Marianne Hirsch’s, which interrogates the connections between “the workings of trauma, memory, and intergenerational acts of transfer” (“The Generation of” 104). In what ways, she asks, does a generation “inherit” the memories of those who came

before them? Those who live in the aftermath of trauma contest the relation of memory to subjectivity, to the assumptions that ground memory within an individual subject and restrict the transmission of memory to linguistic modes of communication. A critical practice accounting for the “structure of inter- and trans-generational transmission of traumatic knowledge and experience,” Hirsch claims, demands that we look outside of “traditional historical archives and methodologies” (106, 104). Asserting that postmemory “approximates memory in its affective force” (109), Hirsch writes that postmemory is comprised of “‘flashes of imagery’ and ‘broken refrains,’ transmitted through the ‘language of the body’” (109). Beginning from the premise that the photograph reveals the complexity involved in the process of retaining as well as constructing memory and meaning between generations. Hirsch’s larger project contributes to Holocaust studies and the politics of memory-making, but her model of postmemory is also rich in its implications for *Soucouyant*.

Soucouyant plays on these working definitions of two different forms of memory – one that is embodied and comprises the totality of a body’s habituated and ongoing existence in the world – while the other is about transmission, and the passing of personal, familial and collective knowledge from one generation to another. In “Surviving Images,” Hirsch asserts that postmemory can get enacted through bodily memories when photographs act as the mediating device (15). For Hirsch, photographs play a crucial role in tying second-generation viewers to past histories, producing an affectively-charged space of “mutuality” between the two (15). In the novel, the narrator reflects on a similar experience of affinity when he comes upon a box of old photographs. He observes that some of the pictures are of relatives he does not know, “though their moods and postures seem strangely familiar” (114). This sense of familiarity echoes Hirsch’s assertion that photographs can trigger “bodily or sense memory,” in this case reactivating lost relations between different generations (“Surviving Images” 15). The vague sense of connection the narrator experiences in viewing these images contrasts, however, with another photograph from the pile of

images; this image conveys the narrator's deeply troubled relation to photographic representation, one that reminds him of one of his own childhood memories, and ultimately, a feeling of *disconnection* from the familial.

Shuffling through more pictures, the narrator contemplates one photo from his childhood trip to Carenage, and his memory of meeting his grandmother. Although he concedes that he remembers very little about the trip, the few moments he recalls are connected to his sense of horror at seeing his grandmother's badly scarred face and body:

One of the last photos is in colour but lightstruck and blurred . . . It's of an old woman with a small boy on her lap, and it first looks as though the photographer or the photo itself is grossly at fault. There's a plastic look to the old woman's face that can't possibly be right But the woman has in fact been burned. Her face is a mask and her skin has buckled with heat and then set into something senseless and hard The small boy on her lap is trying . . . his best to not panic and flee, but his face reveals his struggle. (115)

In what follows, the narrator sketches memories from the trip, all of which are intimately associated with his grandmother's disfigurement. "She was a monster," the narrator asserts, someone "who was careful not to brush too closely near, or bring her attention too forcefully towards me. That gesture of consideration somehow the most terrible thing of all" (116). In this scene, Chariandy provides a careful sketch of the child's feeling of terror at being around his grandmother. As we are told, he had been the one chosen by Adele to accompany her on her trip to see her dying mother, "so I would know," he points out (117). Chosen to witness this reunion, the child, however, fails to comprehend the significance of the visit and bears the impossible task of relating

to his grandmother (116). The woman's disfigurement – and the traumatic events that led to the burning – are utterly incomprehensible to the child.

The final scene in this medley of memories culminates in his grandmother taking his hand and showing him the similarity between their knees, and “[t]hat same rogue tendon, bunching against my touch and suddenly snapping over. With a click. Our body's trick” (117). Although the grandmother draws attention to a form of kinship that binds the two of them through their “[s]trange bones, [and] quarrels deep in we flesh,” it is important to note that what the child inherits is a sense of horror at being touched by his grandmother; the following day he desperately washes his hand again and again to wash away the memory of her touch (117-118). The wound on the skin reflects the incommunicability of trauma, Hirsch points out (*The Generation of 80*). In his experience of horror, the narrator conveys the burden of receiving trauma through touch and proximity. This moment resonates with that other moment in the novel when the narrator reminds his mother of the clickiness of his bones in order to remind her that he is her son (8). I mentioned earlier in this chapter that this act of memory draws attention to a shared sense of bodily history, thus prompting the familial connections that Adele has forgotten. This second moment I have just outlined reflects the complexity of these intergenerational relations, with its suggestion that the narrator also acquires an inherited sense of feeling in his role as witness: a sense of horror, of terror, and as we will see shortly, of melancholia. That he throws away all the photographs at the end of the novel reveals a deep sense of ambivalence about this inheritance (153).

In what follows, I will explore an alternative way in which memory is transmitted in the novel. In contrast to Hirsch's focus on the photograph as a primary means of transmitting memory, memory is transmitted through dementia in *Soucouyant*, which functions as an embodied form of remembering and forgetting in the narrative, and offers insight into a charged space of “mutuality” that is not restricted to photographic

representations; the interplay of remembering and forgetting and of involuntary surges of memory takes place between two figures, the narrator and his mother, as she slowly dies from dementia. Indeed, for Chariandy, body memory *is* intergenerational and as such, he goes further than both Fuchs and Hirsch in elaborating the mechanisms by which memory is performed through the body, while simultaneously functioning within and across intersubjective relations. Ultimately, this interplay of memory located in the body and forms of forgetting and remembering suggests a way of reading the relation of trauma and loss to lived experience in *Soucouyant*.

Intergenerational Feeling and Narrativizing Dementia

Adele's dementia leads to involuntary acts of telling in the narrative, and these acts of telling bind Adele and her son together in an affective circuit of exchange. Certainly, since it functions as a form of mediated knowledge, her dementia also ties to larger colonial and diasporic conditions of loss and displacement. As Kelly Happe proposes, "disease exceeds, both symbolically and materially, mere physiological changes that distinguish the normal from the pathological state of the body" (6). Happe argues that any account of disease must take into account the narrative-producing effects of medicine: the fact that it, too, reproduces and naturalizes existing socio-political disparities between people. In *Soucouyant*, the narrator expresses a similar sense of dissatisfaction with his mother's diagnosis, observing that "[m]y parents never felt satisfied with how the medical specialists were articulating Mother's new being" (40). Citing the words from a pamphlet given to the family by a doctor, the narrator remarks that he "is determined to see her my own way" after reading its words: "*One must especially be cautious when dealing with the uneducated and/or ethnic minorities. Often enough, an SWR test administered to these people will result in a clear positive when, strictly speaking, cognitive dementia . . . is not truly in effect*" (emphasis in original; 41). Outlining the medical description and treatment of the condition, the narrator refuses its pejorative and racist tone, a conclusion that echoes his parents' refusal of medical authority. In contrast to the words of the pamphlet, the novel offers a

series of insights into the condition of dementia, shedding light on the complexities and mysteries of the social and material contexts of the disease.

A forgetting of language and common sense knowledge⁷⁹ increasingly marks the advancement of Adele's dementia, but the disease stands in for much more than the degeneration of a single life. It demarcates a history of trauma, grief and loss, and what surfaces amidst Adele's forgetting is a half-remembered and fragmented tale of trauma: "She began to forget the laws of language and the routes to salvation and the proper things to do with one's body. She began to excuse herself from the world we knew" (12). As she abandons the symbolic terms that condition ordinary existence, Adele's son witnesses her gradually losing her memory throughout his childhood, even as she shares stories about a life lived elsewhere:

There are ironies, of course. Mother can string together a litany of names and places from the distant past. She can remember the countless varieties of a fruit that doesn't even grow in this land, but she can't accomplish the most everyday of tasks. She can't dress herself or remember to turn off taps and lights. (47)

In an interview with Kit Dobson, Chariandy notes how dementia functions as a creative failure in communication in the novel, one that the narrator must cope with: "the son . . . is now dealing with the return of the past—not as straightforward communication, but as obscure references, lingering and almost inexplicable moods or feelings, even 'foreign' references and words themselves (like soucouyant)" ("Spirits of Elsewhere" 813). Adele's dementia allows the son to explore not only her loss of memory, but also

⁷⁹ American anthropologist Clifford Geertz defines common sense in the following way: Common sense "represents the world as a familiar world, one everyone can, and should, recognize, and within which everyone stands, or should, on his [*sic*] own feet" (91). For this reason, it is crucial to interrogate the ideological conditions of common sense, since it is a "cultural system" that suggests "which kinds of lives societies support" (92, 93).

memories that she would have otherwise kept hidden from him. In this respect, her dementia opens Pandora's box to the past, constituting an active engagement with the past through a condition that continually alters the temporality of a subject's life, interrupting her sense of herself in the present. If, as I suggest, dementia is a form of body memory in the novel, then the condition also raises questions about what it transmits and how – not merely “facts” about her life, but an inheritance of feeling that links to the family's larger condition of displacement and trauma.

The interplay of remembering and forgetting is inextricably tied to the protagonist's sense of inherited loss and melancholia in the narrative. By exploring this relationship, the novel offers insight into the ways that the transmission of memory functions affectively for second-generation receivers of familial traumatic history. As the recipient of his mother's personal history and her fragmented memories, the narrator is described as “[a] boy so melancholy, melancholy despite the luxuries that she'd worked so hard for him to enjoy. A boy moping for lost things, for hurts never his own” (194):

At a crucial and early point in my life, something seeped into me, (is that how to explain it?) Some mood or manner was transmitted, though my parents tried their utmost to prevent this from happening. Afterward, things became a bit more complicated. I couldn't always control the signals that my body gave off. I couldn't always produce the feelings that were expected of me, or else translate my thoughts into meaningful statements. (101)

I read the narrator's inability to perform the socially appropriate “feelings that were expected of [him]” as signalling a vulnerability to a past that remains untranslatable. The affective dissonances the novel explores – the narrator's inability to either perform the “feelings that were expected of [him]” or to articulate his thoughts into words that make sense (101) – asks the reader to shift the terms by which we conceive of the

relationship between emotions, language and memory. As Martha Nussbaum asserts, emotions are cognitive: they convey a kind of intelligence, “incorporating nonlinguistic cognitions, social norms, and individual history” (7). In the novel, the narrator’s melancholia represents the prehistory that conditioned his formation as a subject. As we are told, it seeps into him at a “crucial and early point in [his] life,” even though his parents try to prevent its transmission. In this respect, melancholia is an intergenerational condition that binds the narrator to his parents, and all of them to a larger diasporic narrative of trauma and displacement. Indeed, *Soucouyant* surfaces the temporal distinction between body memory and postmemory, ultimately subverting the terms and limits of both: the mother whose body memory and past history of trauma get articulated through forgetting and remembering, and the son’s inherited melancholia (in the form of postmemory), which gets performed as body memory. Adele’s son shows melancholia to be a form of critique, in conjunction with Antonio Damasio’s assertion that emotions are “just as cognitive as other precepts” (*Descartes’ Error* xv). Writing on cognitive science, Damasio argues that feelings are a part of human cognitive processes, and moreover, as an information component of the body, are a crucial part of human experience. We may infer from this that emotions – or their lack thereof – can also function as critiques of the dominant social order.⁸⁰

Soucouyant suggests that the connection between memory and feeling cannot be taken for granted, especially when memory is transmitted inter-generationally from

⁸⁰ Damasio’s point differs from Slavoj Žižek’s proposal that there is a crucial hiatus between the cognitive and the emotion; if we take Žižek’s suggestion that “‘being human’” means to be “grounded in [a] gap between cognitive and emotional abilities,” then we can also assume along with Žižek, that “this very gap itself functions as an ‘emotional’ fact, giving rise to new, specifically human, emotions, from anxiety (as opposed to mere fear) to (human) love and melancholy” (*The Parallax View* 228). Although Damasio and Žižek are arguing for different understandings of emotions in relation to cognition – Damasio suggests they are integrative and informational, while Žižek posits that the disjuncture and slipperiness between emotions and cognition give rise to emergent emotions, both suggest that the two are inextricably entwined.

one individual to another. In taking on the affective burden of his mother's past, the narrator becomes an active listener of a perforated tale, transmitted through a "struggle to forget" (32). This form of postmemory is inexplicably enacted through body memories for the narrator, "some mood or manner" inherited from his parents, one that gains further purchase as he increasingly dwells on his mother's story, and "mop[es] . . . for hurts never his own" (194). The narrator's compulsion to unravel narrative and to re-narrate her story to his mother, also reveals how postmemory counters and perhaps revises the biography of our lives. It is necessarily about our capacity, and indeed our need to imaginatively recreate histories of trauma which impacted those who came before us, and which are incomplete for precisely that generational difference. For instance, when the seventeen-year-old narrator explains his reasons for leaving to Adele, he attempts to re-narrate her story to her: "'Are you still listening to me, Mother?' he asks, "'I'm leaving you now, but I'm telling you what I know, what you accidentally told me...'" (184). The narrator's need to explain his decision takes expression through his desire "to settle the past" (180). And yet, this account he gives of himself through *her* life story is countered by the fact that Adele has forgotten what details she shared with him: "'What else I tell you?' she asked" (180). The suspicion and fear that mark Adele's question return her to the present and pose a challenge to the narrator's own acts of narrative. They reflect her conscious and concerted efforts to also shape her life story even as it slips away from her. Žižek writes in *The Parallax View* that "consciousness is always also self-consciousness: when I know, I simultaneously know ('feel') that it is I who knows, because I am nothing outside this knowledge – I am my knowledge of myself" (225). According to Žižek, consciousness is the same as our awareness of ourselves – there is no outside to our knowledge about ourselves. In the same way, the exchange between Adele and her son illustrates that her dementia must be understood not as a loss of consciousness. Instead, it reveals the double-ness with which Adele inhabits time, as dementia produces its own acts of narrative and storytelling.

2.4.2. Dementia and the Spectacle of Trauma

In the context of the novel, the narrator's affective ambiguity is also a response to the multicultural production of happiness. As Sara Ahmed argues:

Happiness is good to think with given how it mediates between individual and social, private and public, affective and evaluative, mind and body, as well as norms, rules and ideals and ways of being in the world. Happiness will allow us to consider how 'feeling good' becomes attached to other kinds of social good. ("Multiculturalism and" 124)

Following Ahmed, I also see the narrator's melancholia, and his inability to perform socially appropriate emotions, as a form of disruption that unsettles the social relations inherent to the performance of English. In this section, I consequently examine the connections the novel establishes between early childhood trauma, dementia and modern day multiculturalism in Canada. The correlation of colonial Trinidad to Canada in the 1980s draws attention to the larger problematic of knowledge the novel grapples with. Linking Adele's childhood trauma to dementia in adulthood, the novel brings the two places and temporalities together, implicating each through its relation to the other. As I will suggest, this relation is made more explicit through Chariandy's exploration of alternative and dominant epistemologies in the novel, represented by the figure of the old woman, the *soucouyant*, and later, scientific discourses about dementia. Daniel Coleman points out that *Soucouyant* tackles the possibility of epistemological alternatives to dominant ways of knowing and framing subjectivities ("Epistemological Cross-talk" 69). By drawing our attention to different forms of knowledge at work in the narrative, *Soucouyant* questions how power relations structure perception for racialized subjects.

Adele's dementia is rooted in a childhood incident during which she accidentally sets fire to her mother; World War II and the American military base in Chaguaramas

serve as a backdrop to this moment. The narrator explains that Chaguaramas was a strategic site for the allies during the war and the Americans “leased the site from the British” in 1940 so that “American ships would pass safely through the [Panama] canal” (175). During the course of its operations in the region, the military displaces the local inhabitants of Chaguaramas to Carenage, an old village near the military base. The young Adele is one of many who is removed to the village with her mother, and the novel makes it clear that this “removal” is part of larger processes of colonization in the region:

a significant number of the blacks and South Asians who were expelled from Chaguaramas during the construction of the base were never properly compensated Agricultural skills passed on for generations were suddenly useless. Extended kinship links were broken, and surviving families were plunged into new forms of poverty without trusted networks of support. (178-179)

The above passage offers insight into the far-reaching consequences of colonial displacement, and notes the extent to which the forced removal of people devastated the social and economic ties in the area. It is in the midst of this social and economic upheaval that Adele’s mother finds herself performing sexual labour at the military base in order to survive.

The base has an ironic legacy, we are told, not only because “[p]eople trapped in the aftermath of slavery and colonialism had the chance to encounter the modern world, and to find their place in it” (179); but also because it gave rise to contradictory and often opposing forms of knowledge. For instance, the American engineers draw on earlier colonial knowledge from the Spanish, the French and the English in their research on the area, a process that continues and reanimates these earlier acts of colonization by epistemic means (176). Furthermore, the tension between colonial knowledge and

local knowledge is perhaps best represented by the figure of the old woman in the novel, whose healing capacities counter some, if not all of the toxic effects of the military base: “The old woman of the village could do so much . . . She could patch a wound with spider webs. She knew so many things. But she had limits. She couldn’t do much against the ancient moods of terror and sorrow. And she couldn’t do much at all, really, against the banality of evil” (183). The old woman has an important part to play in the novel not least because she treats the villager’s illnesses and injuries, and her healing knowledge counters some of the devastating consequences of the soldiers’ activities. As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, the figure of the elderly woman is also connected to the folk legend of the soucouyant, and the recurrence of this connection in the novel establishes an alternative epistemology to the imperial one at work in the characters’ lives.

The soucouyant is the trope through which Adele narrates childhood trauma throughout her life. Years later, when she inadvertently shares the day’s events with her son, she tells him that she saw a soucouyant on the morning of the incident: “I see it then, the creature. It using water in a rusted oil drum as mirror. It putting on she skin, syrup sounds and soft elastic snaps. Gloving on she fingers when it roll she eyes” (190). A trickster figure from folk legend, the soucouyant is thought to disguise itself in the skin of an old woman who sheds its skin at night, transforms into fire, and sucks its victims’ blood. A preliminary reading of this moment suggests that the creature is meant to be feared by humans – when Adele comes upon the figure, for instance, it “smiled and beckoned her to horrors” (173). Moreover, the soucouyant’s traditional association with fire and its ability to prey upon humans as they sleep also feeds this symbolic role into the fire-burning incident that shortly follows Adele’s encounter with the creature. But the creature plays a far more ambivalent role in the novel, for as we see soon enough, the real horror Adele experiences occurs at the military base. In this regard, I read the soucouyant as a more hopeful figure in the narrative who, in heralding what is to come, also warns the child of what might occur there. The description of the soucouyant –

caught putting its skin back on – also signals the creature’s vulnerability, an indication that the creature plays a complex role in mediating local forms of knowledge expressed in folk legend, and the cognitive and epistemic rule that takes place through colonial politics. In this respect, the soucouyant offers the possibility of a redemptive politics in the narrative, even as it remains implicated in the traumatic incident that follows its appearance.

In one of the most devastating scenes in *Soucouyant*, Adele sets her mother on fire. A number of things are striking in this scene: firstly, Adele’s mother becomes inhuman in Adele’s eyes, caricatured and made into a spectacle. Secondly, this moment parallels another moment in the novel when Adele herself turns into a spectacle, and is witnessed as such by her son. These two moments shed insight into how, as Rey Chow has argued, social difference is shaped through “aesthetic/cognitive difference” (*Writing Diaspora* 61). Chow explains further that “[b]eing ‘automatized’ means being subjected to social exploitation whose origins are beyond one’s individual grasp, but it also means becoming a spectacle whose ‘aesthetic’ power increases with one’s increasing awkwardness and helplessness” (61). According to Chow, women and the colonial subject are both subject to automatization in the visual field, and this process is at once aesthetic and cognitive. What I find remarkable about the two scenes is that they highlight how power shapes the viewing relations of the two children, and reveal how these viewing relations function epistemologically, sharply inflecting the children’s perceptions of their respective mothers’ bodies. This process takes place in both Chaguaramas and Scarborough and implicates the women’s offspring, too, in the viewing relations that turn both women into something more and less than human.

In the first instance, Adele’s mother discovers that an American soldier has “befriended” her daughter (an ominous sign of pedophilia?) and she flies into a rage. It is in this context that Adele runs to the nearby military base to get away from her

parent. What is especially striking about this moment is that it highlights the extent to which Adele is literally unable to see her mother:

And then Adele notices it. Her mother's chiffon gown, the image that she had fled since dawn. It has cornered her here. A garment without a body, animated through terrible magics. The jerked and slouching movements as if borne on damaged feet. The emptiness where a head and face should be The dress spots Adele and flies toward her as if borne upon storm-winds. (191)

Adele's mother disappears into her dress and the dress takes on life through this disappearance. Young Adele is unable to see her mother as human because their estrangement takes place through the estrangement of viewing relations, a process that is at once affective and cognitive. This moment bears a striking resemblance to the concluding scene in "From Across a River," and Emiko's inability to see the neighbour's face. As Anne Anlin Cheng points out in *The Melancholy of Race*, racialization involves "the internalization of discipline and rejection—and the installation of a scripted context of perception" (17). Reading a scene from Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, in which a white storeowner does not see a little black girl wanting to buy candy from him, Cheng notes that a dynamic of seeing / not-seeing underlies racialization (16). In the case of *Soucouyant*, the extreme viewing relations taking place at the military base lead to a shattering moment of violence.

This moment of violence not only structures Adele's perception of her mother's body as inhuman, it also collapses the metaphors of soucouyant, dress and skin together. The conflict that ensues between Adele, her mother, and the soldiers culminates in one of the men throwing a bucket of oil, tar and solvents on the two figures (192). Mere seconds later and using the lighter that one of the soldiers had given her, Adele inadvertently sets both of them on fire, and sees for the first time the human

inside the garment: “There is only a thin creeping of a flame in the light of noon, and inside this, visible now for the first time to Adele’s eyes, a human form” (193). This second switch – when her mother becomes human again in Adele’s eyes – also signifies as a decoding moment: it deconstructs the instrumental human / inhuman relation that shapes the process of racialization. And yet, it is disquieting that decoding happens through such devastating violence. The dress on fire recalls the soucouyant putting *on* her skin, but the animated dress is an awful reversal of the soucouyant’s magical ability to shed and don her skin, as it burns into the woman’s skin. In this way, the burning aligns the soucouyant with the grandmother’s disfigured body: the narrator notes decades after the incident that his grandmother is “a monster” (116).

Chow explains further that racialization and gendering both participate in a logic of the spectacle:

If we take visibility to be, precisely, the nature of the social object that feminism should undertake to criticize, then it is incumbent upon us to analyze the epistemological foundation that supports it. It is, indeed, a foundation in the sense that the production of the West’s “others” depends on a logic of visibility that bifurcates “subjects” and “objects” into the incompatible positions of intellectuality and spectacularity. (60)

While Chow takes visibility as a starting point for theorizing how modern technology “turns the human body into the site of experimentation and mass production” (105), Chariandy’s novel shows how Adele’s body also participates in a colonial politics of the spectacle. Adele becomes aware of being a part of a spectacle when her mother appears on the scene and begins to drag her away. She is “dragged like a doll . . . back toward the village and the life that awaits her there, and all about is laughter at this spectacle” (192). Adele’s own part in the spectacle shows the extent to which colonial subjects are mutually interpellated in relation to one another.

Although Adele's dementia is rooted in her childhood experience in Trinidad, it develops over the course of her life in Canada. In one of the scenes that references Canadian multiculturalism, the narrator refers to a newspaper editorial on the Multiculturalism Act, but does so by invoking the spectral presence of a monster:

I've forgotten how the monsters strike. Sometimes, you won't even hear the approach. Ripples will appear in vases and teacups. Chairs will buzz and glasses chime. With the fastest beasts, the passenger trains on transnational trips, you'll imagine the house itself tugging and swaying as if alone through the violence of sound A blur across the west-side window of the sitting room, and only if you already happen to be looking in that direction I'm in the sitting room floating my eyes over a newspaper, some heated editorial on the Multiculturalism Act passed over a year ago. (33)

Set in the Scarborough Bluffs, the narrator's family home is located close to Lake Ontario and a set of train tracks; the house literally trembles when the trains pass, but the narrator's home "all blasted with the sounds of passing trains" (59), is also a house of memory. In this scene, the protagonist's reflections on the decaying house feed back into his mother's memory-scape, which reminds him of the blessing his grandmother gave him as a child in Chaguaramas, when he goes upstairs from the family room to see if she is ok (34-35). This moment reminds us of memories, losses and grief that exceed the political frames of the present and the interpretive vocabulary of multiculturalism.

Another scene from the story resonates in a similar way when a Heritage Day Parade in the neighbourhood – in recognition of "not just Canadians," but also "people of multicultural backgrounds" transforms Adele's dementia into a grotesque and public parody when she appears only half-dressed in the midst of the parade participants (60-61):

I wanted to vanish. I wanted to get away, but then another parade seemed to start. Mother was now being helped somewhat unwillingly toward her home by an older man and woman. She seemed, magically, to grow to inhuman proportions. She swelled as big as one of those inflatable puppets you sometimes see on poles at parades. As looming and caricatured and awkwardly handled as that. Coming toward me. Coming home.

This moment eerily mimics the spectacle politics of the earlier burning scene from Adele's childhood, but this time it is Adele's son who sees her turning into a spectacle. The narrator witnesses his mother becoming a spectacle in these lines, growing to "inhuman proportions," "swelling" like an "inflatable puppet," turning into a caricature and being "awkwardly handled." He freezes in the face of this humiliation, unable to walk forward to his mother, but in place of empathy the neighbours offer a sweeping racist judgement: ". . . his *mother*, for god's sake. And he just *stands* there. I mean, what kind of people are we allowing to live here, anyway?" (62). In her reading of Heritage Day in *Soucouyant*, Jennifer Delisle observes that the parade highlights how official multiculturalism "enabled new forms of racial exclusion or marginalization" (13). As she points out, the parade's superficial celebration of diversity only adds insult to injury, accentuating the narrator's experiences of racism over the years (12). Delisle focuses on second generation belonging in her reading of this narrative, but I am left wondering about Adele's dementia and its uneasy fit with the racial discourses that (attempt to) contain it. In the scene discussed above, racism is directed at and channelled through Adele's condition of dementia. Adele's subjectivity is doubly illegible to her white neighbours, first on account of her blackness, and second as a result of her illness. At the same time, the novel links Adele's childhood scene of trauma to the spectacle of her dementia later in life, suggesting the overarching paradigm of race and colonialism which frames both the initial site of injury (in childhood) and later experiences of racism (in adulthood). If, as the novel suggests, Adele's dementia is at

once an articulation and a response to the legacies of loss, violence and displacement, then her dementia also offers an *account* of trauma which rewrites such legacies through compulsive acts of forgetting and remembering.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter looks at how psycho-somatic conditions such as genetic mutation and dementia – rooted in scientific language about human biology – mutate and recreate the possibilities of narrating loss in Hiromi Goto's *Hopeful Monsters* and David Chariandy's *Soucouyant*. Both writers call into question models of address that rely on language alone. They excavate how structures of feeling are not ahistorical, but are deeply implicated in the narrative forms we employ. I thus argue that all three stories complicate the poststructuralist orientation of Butler's argument. By asking how the body reconstitutes itself over time, they show how an account of oneself can exceed the structure of language. Ultimately they suggest that bodily histories of disease, trauma, loss and remembering are forms of account in and of themselves, ones that emerge at the limits of the intelligible and normative body.

Chapter 3.

Inhuman Subjects and Nonhuman Feelings in Rita Wong's *forage* and Roy Miki's *Mannequin Rising*

As I examined in my first chapter, eugenic and social hygiene discourses in the first half of the twentieth century transformed the liveliness of racialized or “incorrigible” bodies into matter. Medical treatments conducted on young, white women over fears of miscegenation belied an anxiety about what it means to live a meaningful social existence, and in turn, produced particular and contradictory conditions of social death. I understand the broad regulatory mechanisms aimed at Demerson and Harry junior to be eugenic directives, precisely because they were implicated in acts of governmentality, and used to police racial boundaries through the policing of social life, or rather, social life understood in terms of biological contamination. Demerson’s autobiography traces the affects that emerged from this experience, and roots them in the gendered politics of shame and melancholia. Apart from the fact that early eugenics troubled inasmuch as it established racial lines of life and death, this chapter asks, in what ways do lines of race, “life” and “nonlife” continue to intersect? If my first chapter examined the conditions of social death, unique to those moments when the temporality of human life becomes inconsistent with the social terms of its existence, then here I examine the margins of “life” from another perspective. Indeed, this chapter turns my first line of inquiry from chapter I on its head, for while *Incorrigible* highlights the human body’s vulnerability, its fragility in the face of

state and institutional control, experimental poets Rita Wong and Roy Miki reimagine our encounters with the world: they re-contextualize biopolitics – understood in the first sense as a nationally and geographically bounded exercise in political sovereignty – in terms that exceed the boundaries of the nation-state. In *Animacies*, Mel Y. Chen observes that a “lingering Eurocentrism” implicitly limits biopolitics to discussions of national bodies and human citizens (6-7). In *forage* (2007) and *Mannequin Rising* (2011) respectively, Wong and Miki explore how a biopolitics of life – intent on policing, manipulating and mining the parameters of human life and human sociality – consumes and melds into the material world. In examining the commodification, appropriation and consumption of *different* forms of life, these poets situate the human body within a vast network of globalizing processes, and the array of human and extra-human infrastructures underlying them.

As my reflections on eugenics in Chapter I and bodily histories in Chapter II reveal, it is important to locate contemporary expressions of loss, racialization and mourning in the emergence of a eugenic modality in the previous century. As with Chariandy’s *Soucouyant* in chapter II, the years leading up to, during and immediately after WWII also function spectrally in this chapter, reminders of the multiple temporalities at work in the texts I address in this project. Writers as diverse as Demerson, Wong and Miki reveal how medicalization and eugenics, multiculturalism and discourses of citizenship are shifting historic frames that converge to promote radically disparate realities and body histories. In doing so, they also demonstrate how today’s racial narratives and biological metaphors are recursive and thus necessitate a series of returns to earlier moments in Canadian history, even as this history is subject to revision through shifts in national and global forms of political sovereignty. Wong and Miki’s poetic texts are located in the space of these shifts. They question how changes brought about by globalization at the level of the local necessitate new creative and critical interventions for thinking about how we relate to one another, as well as the material environments that we inhabit.

I borrow my understanding of globalization from Saskia Sassen who writes that globalization marks “transboundary spatialities” that unsettle the “scalar hierarchy centered in the national state” (*A Sociology of* 14). Globalization reflects “massive trends toward spatial dispersal of economic activities at the metropolitan, national, and global levels” (“Locating Cities” 3). According to this model, globalization is, first and foremost, characterized by the rapid development of finance structures and communication networks that cross national boundaries, and even though, as Sassen writes, “Cross-border economic processes—flows of capital, labor, goods, raw materials, travelers—have long existed . . . [i]n the last hundred years, the political interstate system came to provide the dominant organizational form for cross-border flows, with national states as its key actors” (1). Globalization signals further changes in this model through deregulation and privatization in the global economy (1). As Sassen points out, the subnational and supranational scales of globalization coalesce to decenter the nation-state, and a whole host of extra-national factors impact the shape of economic relations at all levels (*A Sociology* 15). Neoliberalism is an ideological formation that is dominantly expressed within globalization processes. According to David Harvey in *The Enigma of Capital*, the discourse of neoliberalism emerged in the 1970s bearing the rhetoric of individual freedom, the pursuit of liberty, free trade and free market; its language of personal responsibility sought to legitimate privatization, ultimately consolidating and centralizing capital and power in the hands of a select few in countries such as the U.S. (10). There are many ways of conceptualizing the phenomenon of globalization, and although my project acknowledges its “newness,” it also situates the processes of globalization in an older genealogy of the movements of people and capital. Cindi Katz argues that globalization was “born” five hundred years ago, and “has been the signature dish of capitalism—a system of uneven social relations of production and reproduction nourished by uneven development across a range of spatial scales, from the local or regional to the national or supranational” (1213). It is in this sense of

globalization as “just another way of saying (and doing) imperialism” that I situate my reading of Wong and Miki’s texts (1214).

In Miki’s view, globalization introduced shifts in the political structure of the Canadian nation-state in the last decade of the twentieth century, making “its borders much more porous than they had previously been,” and reconfiguring the racialization of Asian Canadians in terms different from that of the previous decades (*In Flux* xiii). This moment is a critical one for Miki, who writes how, even as Japanese Canadians finally received an apology from the Canadian government for its internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, this historic political paradigm was unsettled in that very moment by an emerging economic order. As he observes, the previous century’s emphasis on Canadian citizenship and nationality gave way to transnational corporate power and free trade in the 1980s. In some respects, these economic shifts removed the container of the nation-state against which the political protest had been mounted (*Redress* 324). What does this formal apology mean, Miki questions, with the arrival of new economic formations and cultural narratives about citizenship?⁸¹ (224). Fears about the dissolution of the nation-state never came to fruition, of course, given contemporary debates about citizenship and its growing set of exclusions in Canada. But it is crucial to examine how the frames of globalization are bound up with historic narratives about race, racialization, and displacement.

In *forage*, Wong employs feelings of disgust and disaffection to write about a carceral and cancerous global political economy: she writes about disease and toxicity as

⁸¹ For Miki, globalization consequently offers new ways of thinking about Asian Canadians and their relation to the nation-state, given that globalization has, to an extent, undermined the nation-state that existed prior to the 1990s (*In Flux* xiii). As Tara Lee puts it, a literary engagement with the possibilities of globalization also reveals how “Asian Canadian has and continues to be a category that produces in excess of the artificial containment of national boundaries” (1). Lee argues for the need to “denaturalize” the boundaries of the nation-state in the face of interconnecting local and global flows (iii-iv).

symptom of global interrelations, rather than simply individual bodily conditions. In this way, Wong contextualizes human bodies in a political economy of waste by focusing on our relations with garbage and the rhetoric of disposability; this project galvanizes the political potential of feelings such as disgust to unravel the links between globalization and longstanding structures of colonization. One of the most fascinating aspects of this text is its intertextuality: it replicates the permeability of bodies and boundaries in the material world through its textual incorporation of other voices and fonts, which stitch the individual poems together. *Mannequin Rising* is Miki's most recent collection of poems, and it consists of a series of collage-poems; the collages and poems together convey fragments of residual histories and partial erasures of the past. Drawing out the numerous sensory and sub-sensory ways in which we move through our commodity-driven culture, Miki takes a different approach from Wong in his exploration of the political and social function of affects such as compassion and desire. And by exploring an entire constellation of images involving not only the human but also the non- and posthuman, Miki takes a proprioceptive approach to writing the body.

My analysis derives from new materialist and posthuman arguments for the need to decenter humanist conceptions of the "human" as sovereign. Jane Bennett, for instance, argues for the need to unsettle the "philosophical project of naming where subjectivity begins and ends [which] is too often bound up with fantasies of a human uniqueness in the eyes of God, of escape from materiality, or of mastery of nature" (*Vibrant Matter* 10). Arguing against the humanist desire to delimit subjectivity, Bennett proposes that inanimate things are also agential; for Bennett, understanding matter such as garbage or rubbish in lively terms destroys the myth of human exceptionalism. In a similar sense, Karen Barad also argues that it is necessary to question "the givenness of the differential categories of 'human' and 'nonhuman,' [and to examine] the practices through which these differential boundaries are stabilized and destabilized" (808). Following these discussions, I historically locate the "human" as a shifting socio-cultural, political and biological entity that changes in accordance with

technological and environmental shifts.⁸² As Cary Wolfe argues, the “human” is “fundamentally a prosthetic creature that has coevolved with various forms of technicity and materiality, forms that are radically ‘not-human’ and yet have nevertheless made the human what it is” (xxv). Extending this approach, I examine how both Wong and Miki turn a biopolitical lens to the human body’s imbrication in a vast of network of material and social processes, to examine how the body as a living system incorporates and dissolves into its material environment.

3.1. Asian Canadian Experimental Poetry and Affective Form

Wong and Miki explore issues related to embodiment and the limits of subjectivity in their creative writing. One key formal strategy at work in both *forage* and *Mannequin Rising* is that both poets posit the body as an affective entity, and in doing so call for new terms for theorizing a global geopolitics of power. On the one hand, Wong writes about disgust and malaise as a response to bodily and body histories that are interconnected through a “planetary commons,” while Miki, on the other, writes about affective structures such as desire and compassion in commodity culture. Both poets mobilize affect to draw attention to the intimate relations that globalization engenders – whether these be through malaise and disgust – or else through desire and the commodification of compassion. Joyce Davidson and Christine Milligan point out in “Embodying Emotion Sensing Place,” that “our first and foremost, most immediate and intimately felt geography is the body, the site of emotional experience and expression *par excellence*” (524). Davidson and Milligan argue that affect is an embedded feature of

⁸² I would like to emphasize that this chapter does not subscribe to the strand of posthuman theory that invests in maximizing or perfecting the “human,” a goal-oriented perspective which eerily resonates with the eugenic debates.

personal geographies, and yet, emotions also “link[] experiential geographies of the human psyche and physique with(in) broader social geographies of place” (525). Wong and Miki take on a similar task of tracing an affective movement between individual bodies and a larger geopolitical nexus of space and place. Certainly, this project allows both Wong and Miki to bring an affective poetics to bear on the formal aspects of their texts.

Asian Canadian literature contains an important body of works which can be best described as experimental writing that destabilizes conventional narrative realism, pushing the boundaries of form to contest power relations in language, its premise being that language, writing, and literature mirror some of the tensions and racial formations as the social. As Lauren Fournier observes, Asian Canadian experimental poetics is a “performative, ethically implicated, and politically productive space” which deconstructs “[n]arrative conventions that privilege cohesion,” and goes beyond the typical experimental text, traditionally associated with whiteness (93). While Wong and Miki continue the experimental project of interrogating racialization through avant-garde poetry, their texts do so by examining how older questions about racialization need to engage with more recent developments in globalized commodity culture, shifting economic processes, and emerging cultural and social regimes of power. To explore this poetics, it is first necessary to situate the place of experimental poetics within Asian Canadian literary studies.

Although the list of Asian Canadian writers⁸³ is growing, poets such as Roy Kiyooka, Roy Miki, Fred Wah, Larissa Lai, and Rita Wong are among a few who work in the tradition of experimental writing. Fournier asserts that there is “a highly experimental history with radical avant-garde poets like Fred Wah⁸⁴ and Roy Kiyooka working alongside the more realist narrative conventions of Joy Kogawa, Wayson Choy, and Evelyn Lau” (94). A look at this history reveals the mark of intersecting and overlapping influences, with a generation of poets marking their poetics through writing practices that span movement across multiple literary communities. Miki’s work, for instance, fits into a tradition of west coast experimental poetry – in conversation with *Tish* poetics, which derived its inspiration from the American Black Mountain poets (Marlatt 17-18). In his memoir of the movement, *When Tish Happens*, Frank Davey notes that the goal of the *Tish* poets (among them, Fred Wah, Daphne Marlatt, and George Bowering) was to write dialogic poetry, rather than poetry that was “univocal—texts in which the writer was visibly produced by discourse rather than only its clever producer” (324). These poets were responding to the modernist movement, destabilizing the lyrical speaking voice and foregrounding the textual “I.” These movements in language were “contagious,” as Miki puts it, a kind of opening up that

⁸³ According to Colleen Lye in “Racial Form”, writing on the relevance of form to Asian American literature, formally innovative literary works help to interrogate the relation between “race understood as representation and race as an agency of literary and other social formations” (99). Drawing on Lye’s argument for paying attention to formally innovative Asian American works, what I see emerging for Asian Canadian poetry then, is the question of how poetic practices might delink the Asian Canadian subject “from any one of the customary textual strategies from which it is so often adduced: author, narrator, character, thematic subject matter” (96). Lye writes that racialized minority writing is often situated within a racially defined literature according to the preceding criteria. These categories ultimately limit the text to thematic and ethnographic readings, an exercise that overlooks and consequently devalues the merits of a literary text for its treatment of language and genre, and the potential such treatments offer for resisting the hegemonic forces of mainstream culture.

⁸⁴ Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn point out, for example, that “Wah has created a wide variety of signature forms that transgress traditional generic boundaries of criticism, autobiography, poetry, and prose, such as strangles, rambles, biotexts, biofictions, photo-texts” (19).

feminist and racialized minority writers took up to address the intersections of politics and aesthetics, or in other words, “the politics of literary form”⁸⁵ (*Broken Entries* 39).

What sets an Asian Canadian experimental sensibility apart from a larger avant-garde movement is that Asian Canadian avant-garde poetry also actively contests the male dominated, white space of experimental poetics.⁸⁶ As Xiaoping Li points out, there has been an Asian Canadian “activist engagement with culture” since the early 1970s (*Voices Rising* 11). Pauline Butling and Susan Rudy explain in *Writing in Our Time* that the “relatively homogeneous group” of white male poets dominating the Canadian literary scene in the sixties and seventies would come to be challenged by “Feminist initiatives . . . with Fireweed, cv2, Room of One’s Own, Women’s Press, and Press Gang;⁸⁷ and Japanese Canadian redress, Black power movements, and First Nations activism in Canada and the USA were successfully foregrounding social justice issues” (xi-xii). Rita Wong, who participated in anti-racism and feminist projects from the 1990s onwards, brings this activism to bear at the level of form in her poetry (Butling, “Literary Activism” 244-245). Asian Canadian experimental writing is crucial to a better understanding of Asian Canadian literature in this regard, because the development of an Asian Canadian poetics is coterminous with the era of identity politics. Commenting on the late 1980s and early 1990s, Larissa Lai explains that the “notion of ‘breaking the

⁸⁵ As Lye writes about Asian American literature in her essay “Racial Form,” “a focus on form may provide an initial bridge between the notion of race as a representation and the notion of race as constitutive of literary and other social formations” (96).

⁸⁶ Writing on Asian American poetry, for example, Timothy Yu also writes that Asian American avant-garde writing marks an important critique of the genre of avant-garde poetry, since it “exposes some of the strains and limits in the political project of Language poetry, particularly around the issues of race and identity” (424). Although the Asian American poetry scene cannot be mapped onto the Asian Canadian one, Yu’s observation rings true because Asian Canadian avant-garde poets have been equally invested in dismantling language as the site of all sorts of relations of power.

⁸⁷ See, example, Christine Kim’s study of small feminist presses, women’s writing and social movements in Canada: “Press Gang and Women’s Press [are] distinguished from . . . other small publishers through their feminist politics” (“The Politics of Print” 23).

silence,' articulating histories that previously had no voice because they were beneath the notice of the hegemonic white mainstream" was significant for efforts to "reclaim identity" for women and people of colour ("The Identity of the Body" 137-138). Creative writing has been an important political vehicle in this respect, as Miki explains in an important collection of essays:

Minority subject matter, when encoded in forms adjusted to accommodate the expectations of the social majority, can willy-nilly lead to compromise, distortion, and misrepresentation. Formal disruptions, such as the generic crossing of fiction, history, autobiography . . . become strategies of resistance to norms. (*Broken Entries* 117)

As Miki points out, language is a "contaminated site." It is neither a transparent medium of communication, nor do conventional narrative forms lend themselves easily to the specificity of minority perceptions (117). Nonetheless, writing that draws attention to language as a site of ambivalence and conflict also "disrupts the social stability of conventional discourse and communication" (17). Acts of experimental writing also

resist the pull of dominant culture, and its capacity to neutralize the political potential of literary texts.⁸⁸

For his part, Miki's longstanding engagement with language as a site of both speakability and profound silences, of interruptions and capture, suggests a robust commitment to writing language palimpsestically. As the editors of *Tracing the Lines* point out, Miki's writing is multiply-situated and thus should be multiply-read vis-à-vis his various roles as "important activist, thinker, writer, poet, and editor, while at the same time tracing the lines of relation that extend to the communities that Miki has been, and continues to be, so much a part of building" (1). It is for precisely this reason that the palimpsest of his poetry cannot be adequately measured without a look at his critique of race-in-relation-to nation; Miki's critical engagement with a history of the dislocation and Internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, a personal history of activism in response to disenfranchisement, a critical treatment of "ideological constructs of ethnicity" through the political articulation of multiculturalism (Bannerji 11), and academic and community-based collaborations for anti-racist creative

⁸⁸ As writers of colour increasingly pushed the borders of public culture, writing against the narratives of official culture and offering representations of historically marginalized groups, such acts of writing also raised concerns about cultural appropriation and commodification. The eventual incorporation of minority writing into both the canon of Canadian literature and its appeal in the literary market means that work produced by minority writers "has often been regarded as autobiographical and thus of secondary literary status. Alternatively, it has been critiqued as 'stuck in the convention of literary realism'" (Ty and Verduyn 11). Such a positioning of minority writing is consistent with the ideology of multiculturalism, which frames ethnicity and "multi-cultures" as consumable products. Not only does Asian Canadian experimental writing circumvent both of these perceptions about minority writing, but it demonstrates how, from the outset, avant-garde writers have worked with literary forms that defy commodification. Poets such as Fred Wah, for example, whose poetry and critical writing play an influential role in the field of Asian Canadian literature, highlight "language as a material ideological site," and refuse a multicultural "politics of recognition" (Derksen, "Unrecognizable Texts" 150). Formal concerns and deconstructive approaches to questions of race, gender and class have been crucial to Asian Canadian poetics, reflecting how Asian Canadian experimental poetry, in turn, plays a formative role in defining Asian Canadian literary studies, influencing its self-reflexive and highly creative aspects.

and political work deeply inform his writing. In this respect, Miki draws the reader's attention to both the poet and the voice of the critic in his poems, complicating the generic boundaries of critical and creative writing. *Mannequin Rising* is the latest in a series of poetry publications – *Saving Face* (1991), *Random Access File* (1995), *Surrender* (2001, which won the Governor General's Award for Poetry), and *There* (2006) – that shift between discursive, visual and critical-creative registers.

3.1.1. Affective Poetics

In addressing histories and processes of racialization in their poetics, Wong and Miki perform experiments in form through an affective poetics. Indeed, both *forage* and *Mannequin Rising* transform the limits of genre, adopting different textual strategies for examining the governance of life through globalization, consumerism and expanding regimes of violence. In *Mannequin Rising*, the poet leads us through local landscapes in the Kitsilano and Granville Island neighbourhoods of Vancouver to Japan, Germany and Taiwan. The effect of layered histories in the collages defamiliarizes modern urban cityscapes and emphasizes another remarkable aspect of the images, the figure of the mannequin which is present in every photomontage in the book. The mannequins in the collages are taken from different city landscapes the poet visits and as such, they become emblematic features of his critique of global consumerism. Miki's palimpsestic juxtaposition of collages and poems playfully opens up the space of the page, an endeavour that unsettles different visual and linguistic regimes. In the collage themselves, mannequins move outside of the window display and onto the street, the beach, the trees, or other social geographies. Or conversely, the street and various scenes of nature come to inhabit the shop display, as with the collage below:



Figure 3.1. Collage from *Mannequin Rising* (page 60)

The collage above disorients the viewer: an image of a bird counter-poses that of a mannequin bust, and the city landscape behind the two figures is unsettled by images of the city from the past. Through the juxtaposition of these different sites, Miki brings to attention the social forces that shape subjects, drawing attention to the body as an affective, living, feeling and proprioceptive entity. A focus on writing through the body reveals, as Miki points out, the “effects of [his] own physical movement through” the spaces of the local (“Always Slippage” 151). And yet, in creating a palimpsest of a diverse range of images, the poet does not privilege the human body in his representation of space (see, for example, the barely perceptible human silhouette and bodies in movement behind the bird in the image above); rather, the sensory juxtaposition of bird and blurred humans displaces the primacy of the individual body and allows the poet to explore the limits of subjectivity. As Kirsten Emiko McAllister explains, a theme of fusion in the collages brings together “different orders of existence, different sites” (“Always” 150). In this way, *Mannequin Rising* destabilizes notions of a

coherent, teleological and transparent self (Joseph et al. 1). This project is even more urgent now because, as I will explore shortly, Miki's poetics shows how forms of power rely on targeting and manipulating a self that is non-coherent, affective, and fragmented.

In *forage*, Wong inventively forms a pastiche of voices and words, and she stitches poems together with marginalia, footnotes, photos and Chinese characters; different font types bleed together on the space of the page. By writing quite literally on the margins of the page, Wong offers a playful commentary on the trope of speaking from the margins, a writerly position that embodies the leakiness of subjective boundaries and the infectiousness of language. For example, in the poem "language (in)habits, *from and for UH*," Wong writes of "the gap between the crying line & electric speech" (34). The animation of language here, with its anthropomorphism of the textual line and electrification of speech, performs a bodily movement between "urbanization" and the country "fields" at the level of the page. In the line's tears and electric speech, language itself is lively. The title also corresponds to Wong's citation from Edward Sapir: "The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group" (34). Language is either *in* habits, the title tells us, or else *inhabits*, occupying the textual site, dwelling in and possibly intervening in the "habits of the group." Wong subverts the opposition of the self and the other, and the margins and the centre by also incorporating quotations from writers such as Muriel Rukeyser (53), Roy Kiyooka (55), and Rachel Carson (61) in the larger text. This dialogic exchange draws attention to the text's materiality, comprised of shifting meanings and intertextual sources which exceed the parameters of the page, bleeding into the poem on the next page, and displacing the poem's singular place on the space of the page. This interchange mimics the collection's overarching challenge to the reader to confront our feelings of malaise and disgust, a project I interrogate more closely in what follows.

3.2. An Affective Anti-Economy in Rita Wong's *forage*

In *forage*, Rita Wong reads diasporic histories of migration, displacement and labour through the lenses of toxicity, waste disposal, the patenting of life forms and genetic engineering, thereby implicating all consumers in global waste production. In the text, cancerous formations and toxic bodies emerge not as singular entities, but as a part of worldwide networks of oncogenic processes, expressed through the food chain, immune system breakdowns, agricultural principles, corporate ownership of rice, and the patenting of different life forms. In "Epilogue: A Conversation on Unfinished Projects," Wong asserts: "The journey starts with the human but doesn't end there. May there still be enough time for us to deeply learn and understand ecological interdependence." A view of the "human" held accountable to the material world is a central feature of Wong's writing. In tracing this motif in *forage*, I ask what form this type of accountability takes in her poetry, especially with her problematizing of the "human body" as a body "broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, and holidays . . . poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws" (Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy" 87). By exploring how the human body is opened to the hazards and movements of toxic chemicals, garbage disposal, and "increasing immune system / disintegration," Wong highlights the ways in which the material world integrates *into* the human body, ultimately reconfiguring and defamiliarizing our sense of our bodies, and our place in the everyday scheme of things (55).

3.2.1. Scaled Economies and Bodily Vulnerability

In this section, I examine how Wong positions the issue of bodily vulnerability within a poetics of globalization. As Moira Gatens tells us, the body is not indifferent to the many signifying practices and socio-economic processes it is embedded in: it is lived, animate and situated (11). Wong looks at the specificities of body histories through a

study of the global enterprise of commerce, an account which features the different kinds of work that bodies do. An analysis of labour, production and exposure to toxins in the south is taken up in the poem "*sort by day, burn by night.*" Here, Wong offers a commentary on Guiyu, China, four villages considered to be the largest site of electronic waste disposal in the world which imports, along with other key sites in Asia and Africa, 80% of America's electronic waste (Huo et al. "Elevated Blood Levels"). Adults and children from the villages and surrounding areas recycling the waste are exposed to increasingly toxic levels of heavy metal contamination. Writing of a "pulmonary commons called planet," Wong uses a set of tropes to highlight not only the body's vulnerability, but also that of the infrastructures that support and condition it (55), noting for instance that an "economy of scale / shrinks us all / global whether / here or there / collapses cancer / consumes en-masse" (47). Questioning her reader, Wong asks: "what if your pentium got dumped in guiyu village? / your garbage, someone else's cancer?" (47). But the problem of electronic waste is not as easily disposed of in the Third World as it may seem, Wong assures us, because "an economy of scale / shrinks us all." In sharing the world with others, we also share the intimacies of cancers that "consume[] en-masse."

Wong writes of an "economy" in terms of "scale," a term that Jeff Derksen tackles in pointing out that globalization has an uneven geography ("National Literatures" 16). Derksen, for whom the nation plays a significant historical role within a scale politics of capital accumulation, asserts that scale "is (and has been) central to capitalism" (6). David Harvey also insists in *The Enigma of Capital* that "[n]ew spaces and space relations are constantly being produced" even as the "geographical trajectory" of global capitalism continues to shift (143). According to Harvey, the *geography* of globalization must be mapped, so that we might consider what local politics offer in response to changes brought by global economic processes. The places that we inhabit,

he writes, constitute an “intricate physical and social geography⁸⁹ bear[ing] the imprint of the social and political processes, as well as the active struggles that produced it” (148). Here, Harvey asserts how local geographies encounter and are shaped by larger economic processes. In contrast to Harvey’s emphasis on the geographical processes of globalization, a project attentive to the contingent formations of globalization, Derksen’s goal is to make “space more material in globalization and the restructuring brought by neoliberalism” (10). Wong, perhaps, goes further than both by suggesting how scale itself shrinks and expands. She materializes the effects of globalization and does so by positioning the body in scale.

The poet marks how First World problems get displaced onto the Third World, all the while noting that cancer is kinetic; it collapses spatial differences *and* distances, so that our consumption patterns might lead to third world dumping, but the issue of pollution does not end there. In “fluorine,” Wong offers us another example of this kind of spatial proximity, which manifests through the symptoms our bodies exhibit – but only generations later. She tells us that there is “arsenic in calculators, mercury in felt hats,” and moreover, “informed crowded alloys detect no / health damage until generations later i / brush my teeth with nuclear intensity / the cavities i avoid destined for others / fall into hazardous-waste piles up as / i sleep smells though i don’t see it / transported across oceans” (14). Exposure to toxins in our everyday matter, on the one hand, and hazardous waste transported across the ocean, on the other, ties the two worlds together. The lower case “i” textually enacts our subsumption to these overarching processes, mirrored in movement by the “hazardous-waste pil[ing] up.”

⁸⁹ Irit Rogoff also defines geography as a “system of classification, a mode of location, a site of collective national, cultural, linguistic and topographic histories” (*Terra* 8). Rogoff argues that geography conveys a set of assumptions about belonging, identity and rights, thus affirming various fantasies about what means to articulate a relation between subjects and places (7).

The question of bodily vulnerability in both scenarios is consequently a way of collapsing, for Wong, the distances between the continents, and represents the “spatial proximity or adjacent connection” of four continents (Lowe 193). Lisa Lowe argues that the “intimacies of four continents” is a way of “discussing a world division of labor [that] emerg[ed] in the nineteenth century” (193). Wong examines how this world division of labour continues today, when she writes of “disposable factory girls” and the physical labour they perform (“chinese school dropout” 51). As Christine Kim has suggested, Wong’s poetry examines “how women’s bodies are disproportionately impacted by the toxins circulating in our water, air, [and] food chain” (173):

By scrutinizing byproducts of the global economy such as genetically engineered foods, overfilled garbage dumps and exploitative labour practices, the speaker underscores the need to examine different kinds of violence and complicity, some of which, like the international traffic in wombs encouraged to bear “emotional crops,” are specific to women. (*forage* 39) (“Ruscitations” 167)

As Kim points out, *forage* interrogates the different forms of labour women perform in the global economy, as well as how these forms of labour also make these bodies more vulnerable to the circulation of toxins.

Lauren Berlant writes that intimacy “names the enigma of [a] range of attachments, and more; and it poses a question of scale that links the instability of individual lives to the trajectories of the collective” (“Intimacy” 283). Although intimacy is traditionally understood as being particular to the personal, the romantic, the familial and the private, for Berlant intimacy unsettles the boundaries between the public and the private, disorienting the familiar spatial boundaries we move through in our daily lives. Berlant goes on to assert that intimacy is based on the “shifting register of unspoken ambivalence [it] reveals itself to be a relation associated with tacit

fantasies, tacit rules, and tacit obligations [which must] remain unproblematic” (286). Intimacy brings subjects together under the signs of desire, complicity and coercion. For Wong, the uneven geography of globalization creates intimacies as much as it creates material, economic, physical and social disparities. Her approach differs from Lowe and Berlant’s, however, with its focus on a “soma ethic,” a sense of bodily awareness that emerges if we take our bodies to be not inviolable, but vulnerable entities. She takes this approach in another poem on the relentless appropriation of life:

Poem 3.1.

chaos feary

pyre in pirate bio in bile
mono in poly breeder in
womb pull of landrace allo
me poietic auto me diverse
trans over genic harassment
over seas genetic as pathetic
as engine of disease socio
me catastrophe political and
eugenic organ as an ism
general as the mono startle
of a soma ethic under
trodden patent as in lies
hubris as in corporate
coalition as in American
military as a choking tentacle
as pollution erodes these lines
no sense in food or rhyme
resistant as in herbicide or
people lost and found field a
factory dinner a roulette
conquest as in seeds hands as in fist (37)

Tension gradually builds in each line of “chaos feary,” the movement of language replicating the poet’s critique. Words are reduced into their component or corresponding parts (“pyre in pirate”). Enjambment in the poem also defers, creates, and shifts meanings: “coalition as in american / military as a choking tentacle / as

pollution erodes these lines.” This strategy allows for the speaker to make room for a flurry of language, and to signal the conceptual links between different expressions of power and violence. Commenting on this poem, Miki writes that the “poet appropriates the language of [the massive changes taking place all around her], to expose their representational limits” (*In Flux* 195). For Miki, Wong’s appropriation of this language helps to “connect the dots” between, for example, American military practices, neo-colonialism and transnational corporations (194).

She writes: “pollution erodes these lines / no sense in food or rhyme,” while the “eugenic organ [is] an ism” (37). This line suggests the body’s inherent instability, mirrored in the loosening of grammatical forms and the separation of segments of words from their root meanings. Associative meanings emerge in the midst of this dissolution: there is “bio” in “bile,” an “ism” in “organism,” and these lines ask us to rethink how it is not so much that biotechnology takes the organism or individual to be coherent units of meaning, but that power appropriates and manipulates component parts of our bodies and other forms of life. Understood in another way, the poem also replicates in the structure of its words the ways in which the body, the organism, or food substances are being broken down and altered. Questioning if the organism is also an ism, or an *organ* is an ism, allows the poet to connect both organism and organ as referents of a self-regulating living system, to the suffix *ism*. This connection is one of dissonance, given that the suffix denotes a theory or doctrine *about* something – it is particular to human knowledge -- and as such, reflects how humans process the life contexts they are a part of. The word “eugenic” precedes “organ as an ism,” further situating the organ and organism within essentially flawed and destructive systems of human knowledge.

3.2.2. Fetid Life, and Life in Death

In this section, I examine how, in writing about the global circulation of labour and waste, Wong activates and in fact, *animates* the relation between the two. In the poem “perverse subsidies,” Wong exhorts readers to “disaffect, reinfect me”:

Poem 3.2. perverse subsidies

will pay for you to take my garbage away so i never have
to look at it, never have to imagine the roaches & rats
crawling through cucumber rinds, ragged underwear,
clumps of hair & crumpled up toilet paper. seagulls &
crows will feed on rotting leftovers, carrion will reek of
fetid life, full, wasteful, extravagant to extinction. fill my
car, our streets, with the corpses of iraqi civilians, the
ghost of ken saro-wiwa, the bones of displaced caribou.
it will clatter down the graveyard that masquerades as
a highway, emitting malaise to the tunes of eminent.
disaffect, reinfect me. (21)

Wong’s poetic study of the end results of consumption may be best described as tracing, in sociologist Zygmunt Bauman’s words how “[t]he ‘problems of (human) waste and (human) waste disposal’ weigh ever more heavily on the liquid modern, consumerist culture of individualization” (*Wasted Lives* 7). Bauman’s book is an incisive account of what he identifies as the accelerating production of surplus populations worldwide. In his view, imperial practices allowed societies to place their redundant populations elsewhere at the onset of modernization; however, the global spread of modernity now means that surplus populations are being produced everywhere (5-7). As Bauman argues throughout his book, groups such as refugees and migrant workers are socially conceived as “human waste” with little hope of being “incorporated into [a] new social body; and camps are a form of social death, a type of “dumping site,” as it were, where “there is no return and no road forward” (77). Mike Davis also echoes Bauman’s spatial thesis in *Planet of Slums*, taking note of the explosion of mega-slums in mega and hyper-cities (7). Davis asserts that populations are increasingly being

displaced to slums in cities as small economic and agricultural units get absorbed into larger ones. The displacement of people from rural communities to cities does not mean, however, that cities are either economically or infrastructurally equipped to provide for the mass influx of people. Instead, linking urbanization to deindustrialization in the “great industrial cities of the South – Bombay, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires, Belo Horizonte, and São Paulo,” Davis observes that economic, social and political disenfranchisement accompanies the growth of these cities (13).

Wong takes up a similar geography of dead ends in “perverse subsidies,” but she does so by mapping the “corpses of iraqi civilians” and “the ghost of ken saro-wiwa” onto the extravagance of “fetid life” in Canada. The Nigerian environmental and human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who campaigned against oil operations that were turning Nigeria into a “wasteland,” was executed by the Nigerian military government in 1995 (Amnesty 636). Following Saro-Wiwa’s execution along with eight others, the oil company Shell was also widely condemned for its complicity in the murders, and its ongoing involvement in human rights violations in the region. Wong draws the international political issues of military-occupied Iraq and corporate-occupied Nigeria together with the disposal of garbage in our everyday lives. As she suggests, both are issues that we sweep away and ignore, given that “perverse subsidies” pay to “take my garbage away so i never have to look at it” and moreover, never have to “imagine” what happens to it. In this way, Wong brings a global geopolitics to bear on the mundane disposal of “cucumber rinds” and “rotting leftovers” in the everyday, writing the disposal of our everyday lives together with the military disposals of lives in other parts of the globe. Wong extends her line of inquiry into the Canadian context in this way, offering a critique of global capital and race that includes Canada.

Wong’s poetic response to garbage, to carrion, and to cycles of waste points to a kind of relation that draws attention to the micro- and macro-dimensions of global waste production. In the poem, the speaking “I” becomes implicated in an act of

imagination, offering an inventory of garbage extending from “roaches and rats / crawling through cucumber rinds” to “carrion [that] reek of / fetid life, full, wasteful, extravagant to extinction” (21). Images of excess, of foul and stinking life abound in these lines, of living entities feasting on dead and decaying things, and of waste and wasted things themselves taken up by scavengers after having been disposed of by human beings. Wong’s “economy of scale” thus collapses together images of life and death, and of consumption and destruction. Following Georges Bataille, Achille Mbembe makes an argument for understanding politics as the domain that circumscribes life through death. He asserts that “politics [is] the work of death” and that the work of death is also intrinsic to sovereignty and subject-formation (16, 15). It marks the stink of life through “effusion and exuberance”: “death is the putrefaction of life, the stench that is at once the source and the repulsive condition of life” (15). In Wong’s poem, the transformations of “garbage” into “fetid life” are central to what Mbembe calls an “anti-economy”: “destruction, suppression, and sacrifice constitute so irreversible and radical an expenditure . . . [that death] is the very principle of excess – *an anti-economy*” (15). Although Mbembe does not use the term “anti-economy” further, Wong’s poem helps to explain how we should, in fact, understand the global political economy *as* an anti-economy.

In listing the household and bodily items that we dispose of – such as clumps of hair and toilet paper -- and moving outward from the domestic production of garbage to the global, Wong replicates French, Latin and Greek etymologies of the word “economy,” which define “economy” as “domestic management” (OED). However, the poem’s take on global politics reverses Michel Foucault’s claim that the reproduction and sustenance of life became central to Western forms of governmentality. Moving outward from the domestic production of garbage unsettles this framework, because it shows how the production of garbage can be logically extended to include “the bones of displaced caribou” in addition to the “corpses of iraqi civilians.” An anti-economy, the production of death in life, better illuminates the “sphere of life and [what] becomes

indistinguishable from it” (Agamben 11). In the case of Wong’s poem, the production of life is inseparable from the production of death, a process that is not the exception but the general rule for how the global political economy works.

By colliding images of “dead matter” with those of life, Wong highlights sights and images that are often unthought-of, ignored, or pushed away. And in bringing images of “fetid life” together with those of carrion and extinction, Wong collapses Jane Bennett what calls the artificial divide between “matter as passive stuff” and tropes of “vibrant life” (8). Arguing that even nonhuman things have the capacity to bring about events such as natural disasters, Bennett writes:

The quarantines of matter and life encourage us to ignore the vitality of matter and the lively powers of material formations, such as the way omega-3 fatty acids can alter human moods or the way our trash is not ‘away’ in landfills but generating lively streams of chemicals and volatile winds of methane as we speak. (8)

Arguing that we must think about how inanimate matter holds the potential to be an *actant*, Bennett asks, “[h]ow would patterns of consumption change if we faced not litter, rubbish, trash or ‘the recycling,’ but an accumulating pile of lively and potentially dangerous matter? What difference would it make to public health if eating was understood as an encounter between various and variegated bodies?” (9). Bennett asks us to subvert the terms by which we typically read the “dead” matter that we discard on a daily basis, and instead to understand object-matter as being forceful in its own right. Mel Y. Chen similarly asserts that it is crucial that we find alternative ways of “conceiv[ing] of relationality and intersubjective exchange” “to trouble the binary of life and nonlife” (11). To return to *forage*, Wong conjoins these questions of deadly matter with those of global justice for decimated populations such as those in Iraq and other parts of the world. In doing so, and as Christine Kim points out in her reading of Wong’s

poetry, Wong highlights the “workings of globalization” in order to “rearticulat[e] interrelations between people and places,” and I would add, between people and other bodies of matter (“Rita Wong’s *monkeypuzzle*” 64). Wong’s poetics asks us to be attentive to objects, things, and waste as mobile entities which are unpredictable and offer the potential to unsettle the material world. Moreover, it suggests that we understand the movement of racialized and gendered bodies in articulated relations with the movements of inanimate animate matter, or in other words, it asks us to think about both within a global economy of production and waste production.

3.2.3. Disaffection, Reinfection, and a Politics of Disgust

Poem 3.3.

perverse subsidies

will pay for you to take my garbage away so i never have
to look at it, never have to imagine the roaches & rats
crawling through cucumber rinds, ragged underwear,
clumps of hair & crumpled up toilet paper. seagulls &
crows will feed on rotting leftovers, carrion will reek of
fetid life, full, wasteful, extravagant to extinction. fill my
car, our streets, with the corpses of iraqi civilians, the
ghost of ken saro-wiwa, the bones of displaced caribou.
it will clatter down the graveyard that masquerades as
a highway, emitting malaise to the tunes of eminem.
disaffect, reinfect me. (21)

To briefly return to “perverse subsidies,” the poem concludes with the call to “disaffect, reinfect me.” This line is provocative because it suggests that we need to re-evaluate the things we dispose of and become “disaffected” in terms of our emotional orientations, sundering apart and ultimately interrupting the ties of sociality that bind us to larger economic and social practices. The play on “disaffect” and “reinfect” also invokes the verb “disinfect.” This circuit locates the poem within a larger narrative about contagion and disease. What is the significance of thinking about the affectivity of disaffect in the context of bodily infection? Reinfection and disinfection, as well as images of dead and rotting leftovers raise the specter of hygiene, disease and contagion

in the poem. The bodily condition of illness, conceived through infection, also suggests a case of proximity between humans and nonhuman others here. The speaker's car, filled with "the ghost of ken saro-wiwa, [and] the bones of displaced caribou" "emit[s] malaise to the tunes of eminem." Alison Bashford and Claire Hooker point out that the possibility of contagion reminds us of connections shared by humans with animals, organic objects, [and] inanimate objects," because it shows the potential of these things to interact with and modify human bodies (*Contagion* 4). Infection transmitted either directly through contact or else indirectly traverses bodily boundaries in unexpected ways, overturning the distinctions between "you" and "i" and moreover, between the supposed irrelevance of corpses, ghosts and dead caribou, and the ongoing need to consider their political status and affective statements, even in death.

Infection contravenes individual bodily subjectivity, Bashford and Hooker tell us (7). Anxieties are often attached to the possibilities of infection and the uncontrollability of contagion (2). But rather than reinforcing the boundaries between self and other, the speaker of "perverse subsidies" asks to be reinfected – a provocative call that both disarms and calls on the reader to join in. The speaker suggests her bodily vulnerability, even as the possibility of "infection" invites us to impose boundaries, precisely because infection is known to cross them, and to destabilize our sense of ourselves. In many respects, the poem's concluding line is alarming because the "[g]overnment of the healthy self has become, over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, not only an imperative of western and colonial states, but a deeply internalised expression and assertion of subjectivity" (Bashford and Hooker 7). The move from "disaffect" to "re infect" in the final line thus constitutes an unravelling and contestation of bounded subjectivity on a number of levels: reinfection itself becomes affectively-imbued. "Disaffect" turns into "reinfection," but this giving way also affectively frames the notion of "reinfection" by opening the body simultaneously to the corporeal vulnerability of infection and the emotive orientation of disaffection.

Wong's poem foregrounds a bifurcated logic; the former advocates a kind of disenchantment with or from others, conveying discontent, dissonance and the process of alienating others, and the latter indicates the biological vulnerability of the body, of things unseen but which render the boundaries of the human body and its barriers to the world increasingly fragile, connoting its connection to others. Similarly, the prefix re-suggests a circuitous sensibility, and reflects not only a biological and site-specific case of "re-infection," but also a return to an earlier instance of contagion. The poet is asking to be disaffected through reinfection; in this way and together, both terms in the poem's last line suggest a convergence of a critical *and* bodily apprehension of worldly conditions, or what Miki notes is the work of a "double-edged apprehensiveness" in Wong's poetry: "[it] functions as both affect and effect, invoking the conditions of fear and uncertainty" (*In Flux* 202). In a similar sense, the poem's turn to "disaffection" is an opening up. It employs longstanding metaphors of infection and hygiene to reconsider how, as the poet writes elsewhere, "your garbage [is] someone else's cancer" (*forage* 47). But the reader is left with the thought – what exactly is the speaker asking to be reinfected with?

I take the interplay between disaffection and reinfection in this poem to be a part of a larger politics of disgust at work in *forage*. Simply put, the poem lists a series of life processes that elicit disgust in people. The literal and metaphoric question of garbage disposal and how it gets consumed once it has been disposed of resonates with how certain populations become disposable. William Ian Miller notes in the *Anatomy of Disgust* that "[d]isgust rules mark the boundaries of self; the relaxing of them marks privilege, intimacy, duty, and caring" (xi). Wong's strategy is at once proprioceptive and perceptive, evoking disgust to interrupt a sociality of desire giving shape to "the internal frontier: my consumer patterns" (11). Sianne Ngai notes that disgust "seeks to include or draw others *into* its exclusion of its object, enabling a strange kind of sociability" (336). For Ngai, disgust is dangerous precisely because it can be contagious. Moreover, it is structured and robust in its assertion of itself (335). Unlike desire, which is

characteristically fluid, disgust asks us to draw lines and to reject the other, all the while revealing that it shares an affinity with desire. An object of desire can also be an object of disgust (335). In Wong's poem, a poetics of disgust similarly calls for agreement and invites recognition from another person, and as such, is both dangerous and contaminating: it allows no room for indifference as Ngai would have it. Wong employs disgust to its full affective potential in folding the reader into the poem in a doubled gesture – through the body's openness to connection through contagion – and through the spectrum of ugly feelings which fall under the rubric of disgust: malaise, boredom, repulsion and contempt, feelings we feel in response to the things we perceive as “disgusting.” “[E]mitting malaise” and sharing a sense of physical and mental discomfort with the reader, the poet thus employs a politics of disgust to breakdown “internal frontier[s],” a poetics that invites the reader to share in the text's affects. Strategies of writing disenchantment and disaffection through an attention to the human body's vulnerability, in its exposure to toxins, cancers, and infections, thus interrupt the “anti-economy” of global capitalism and indeed, its excesses. What's more, these structures of feeling become a way of intervening in the political economy of waste and surplus Wong traces in her poetics.

3.3. Political Feelings and Posthuman Subjects in Roy Miki's *Mannequin Rising*

Why, might we ask, is it useful to read Wong's poetic treatment of disaffection and disgust alongside Miki's exploration of the politics of desire? Perhaps because both are necessary components of consumer culture and address different parts of the same cycle, as Bruce Robbins notes in “The Smell of Infrastructure”:

Capitalism is often conceived as a shiny display of more or less desirable commodities. The inverse of this vision, infrastructure belongs to

capitalism as well—it makes possible the production and distribution of these commodities—while it also sustains life functions like the provision of clean water and the elimination of waste that are categorized as “public utilities” and are as yet incompletely commodified.⁹⁰ (25-26)

In *forage*, Wong writes about the “life functions” that sustain everyday life in the North, and her critique quite literally shows these to be not simply infrastructural utilities such as the sewage system, but larger economic processes that employ and appropriate the

⁹⁰ Explaining what infrastructure means in a capitalist context, Robbins reminds us that infrastructures regulating public hygiene and health such as sewage are the infrastructural prerequisites for establishing human rights. He explains that infrastructure is the “materialist version of the politics of human rights” (32). Infrastructure is as much a part of capitalism as is our desire for commodities, and according to Robbins, the question of infrastructure is one we should raise again and again as an integral part of public life everywhere: it is globally significant. In addition to the loss of lives, infrastructure is what gets deliberately destroyed when, for example, the Americans target key sites in Iraq, or when the Israelis bomb Palestinian banks, government offices, and water and agricultural systems in Gaza: “An orchestrated and systematic sabotage of the enemy’s societal and urban infrastructure network complements the appropriation of land, water, and airspace resources. Critical to these techniques of disabling the enemy is bulldozing: demolishing houses and cities; uprooting olive trees; riddling water tanks with bullets . . . ransacking cultural and politico-bureaucratic symbols of the proto-Palestinian state; looting medical equipment. In other words, infrastructural warfare” (Mbembe 29). Mbembe’s point illustrates how contemporary warfare is as much about the death of infrastructure as it is about the actual, physical death of civilians: it interrupts the biopolitical prosperity of an enemy population while at the same time, continuing the economy of exchange in free-market global capitalism, one example being the expanding circuit of weapons sales in sites of warfare around the world.

life and labouring capacities of the South.⁹¹ *forage* offers a creative intervention in this cycle; by exploring the production of social death across various spatial scales, Wong unsettles the dichotomies which we perceive to be the boundaries between us and the material world, and reverts the characteristics we attribute to life and nonlife. This disruption takes place through the poet's use of the feelings of disgust and disaffection which typically attend our affective responses to garbage disposal, sewage, and similar processes.

In *Ugly Feelings*, Ngai also proposes that desire and disgust are corresponding, albeit opposing components of commodity-culture: "the public sphere has become increasingly coextensive with the marketplace, the spectrum of desires is simply broader than that of disgust, offering a rich multiplicity of ways to define and express all sorts of attraction" (338). Although Ngai privileges disgust in suggesting that it fosters certain kinds of sociability that extend beyond the scope of desire, disgust does not confuse the boundaries between subjects and objects the way desire does (335-6). It is in this regard that Miki calls on his reader to revisit desire as the site of commodification, appropriation, subjection and agency. Indeed, acknowledgements like Miller's and Ngai's suggest how disgust and desire are part and parcel of the same process. In recent years, cultural studies and affect theories have privileged negative affects such as anger and disgust for their interruptive and forceful characteristics. My intention is not to

⁹¹ The destruction of infrastructures everywhere goes hand in hand with not only the engineering of sites of social death in some places, but the production of infrastructure in others. In her reading of Robbins' essay, Kim also persuasively suggests that we read racialization infrastructurally. As she writes, "In many ways, I see discourses of race as operating in analogous ways to those discourses that govern our collective relations to human waste. Such an approach allows us to trouble the conventional understanding of race as a phenomenon that operates on the exterior of the liberal subject and thus as a surmountable problem, and instead consider race as an infrastructure or as the conditions of possibility for the universal. For while racial infrastructures may exist largely out of sight and out of mind, hidden beneath universal surfaces, they continue to exert their presence in other ways" ("The Smell of Communities" 18).

downplay the significance of affects such as malaise and disgust for, as we have seen in *forage*, these play a crucial role in undermining our assumptions about the integrity and inviolability of our lives. And yet, if disgust and desire are two sides of the same coin, then it is imperative that we also more closely interrogate how desire pairs with not only affects such as disgust, but also others such as compassion. Desire as a notion poses difficulties because it is amorphous, Ngai tells us, but what is most fascinating is that it gains clarity and force when it *combines* with other affects, playing an intrinsic role in the modification and appropriation of structures of feeling such as compassion in public culture. *Mannequin Rising* clearly shows how we are assailed first and last through desire; it is part of a complex relay of subjection and subject-formation, and it modifies and shifts the political function of other constellations of emotion in everyday life. Moreover, desire in *Mannequin Rising* blurs the boundaries between subjects and objects, thus positing a notion of human bodies understood in decidedly posthuman terms. Before examining the ways in which Miki addresses these affective aspects, I would like to first situate my analysis of “the human” in posthuman discussions about the contingency of the very categories of humanism we hold to be true.

3.3.1. Proprioceptive Posthumanism

In what follows, I propose a model of reading through proprioceptive posthumanism which, I suggest, offers a way of exploring Miki’s affective poetics in *Mannequin Rising*. Broadly speaking, I see Miki bringing these two interlocking modes together in his poetry, one that has to do with a proprioceptive approach to language, and the other with the range of socio-political, cultural, technological and material processes through which human life gets modified on a routine basis. While posthumanism has spawned numerous interpretations of what it might be defined as, in the most common sense of the term, it is described as a theoretical frame for destabilizing “the human” and the humanism that underlies it. In Katherine Hayles’s cybernetic-driven investigation, it becomes a way of articulating the problematic of

disembodiment inherent in both humanist and informational and cybernetic systems of thought (11). The cybernetic vein of posthumanism relies on the figure of the cyborg to shed light on the constructedness of the nature / culture divide, on species-ism, and on technological thresholds that shift our understandings of “the human.” According to Cary Wolfe, posthumanism decenters the *epistemologies* that correspond to humanism:

Everything we know (scientifically, theoretically) and say (linguistically or in other forms of semiotic notation) about the body takes place within some contingent, radically nonnatural (that is, constructed and technical) schema of knowledge. The language (or meaning, more strictly speaking) that describes is of a different phenomenal order from that which is described. Paradoxically, that language is fundamental to our embodied enaction, our bringing forth a world, as humans. And yet it is dead. Rather, as Derrida puts it quite precisely, it exceeds and encompasses the life/death relation. (xxvi)

Wolfe characterizes Jacques Derrida and Niklas Luhmann as “exemplary posthuman theorists” because they reject the biological as the basis of understanding “the human” (xxvi). According to Wolfe’s conceptualization, therefore, the human is prosthetic and modified on an ongoing basis.

The posthuman perspective unsettles the practices by which human life is naturalized and “human nature” is considered to be inviolate. Miki asks us to dwell on these processes, and to do so through a proprioceptive attention to the body’s ongoing movement through time and space. Kaja Silverman explains in *The Threshold of the Visible World* that proprioception refers to “the body’s sensation of occupying a point in space, and with the terms under which it does so” (16). Proprioception involves “bodily sensation in general,” and includes “a nonvisual mapping of the body’s form” (17, 16). In this respect, it is essentially about our sense of our bodies in space and encompasses

our musculature and our movements in the tactile world. Brian Massumi similarly explains that proprioception refers to a body's engagement with object matter and its translation of that relation into muscular memory, memories that come to be retained in the body's movements (*Parables* 59). By his own account, Miki, too, acknowledges the significance of a poetics that "mov[es] 'beyond' the reproduction of dominant expectations of aesthetic correctness towards a proprioceptive reflexiveness for racialization" (*Broken* 212). In positing the body not as a singular entity, but one that is opened up in a field of perception, Miki addresses the psycho-somatic aspects of racialization, but with the intention of subverting it as the definitive, or only narrative that a minority writer can produce. He observes that racialized subjects always-already inhabit the frames of the dominant racial culture, or conversely, that these frames are always-already within: given this paradoxical and fraught psychic space, Miki asserts, it is important for cultural producers to at once expose "the race codes that bind" and in doing so, to evade the normative narrative forms such racial codes take (212-213).

In one poem, readers get a sense of how Miki performs such a creative exercise. Taking a synesthetic approach, he focuses the reader's attention on visual perception, writing that "[w]e are always at a loss when it comes / to the question of vision whether it is / better to fasten on a figure . . . / for optimal apprehension" (20). The poet reflects how vision is imbricated in the desire for apprehending and mapping the world, but the lines that follow quickly subvert this impulse to code the world through vision, turning to other modes of sensory experience – touch and subsequently smell – to chart the body's movements through space: "I slid down the face of the intersection / [. . .] / . . . led by the fierce tenacity / of a nose ever close to the window dressing" (20). Translating first vision into "the / ministrations of a healing touch" and then touch into smell, the poet ends in another act of translation, as the poem's stream-of-consciousness approach leads to a playful enactment of writing racialization proprioceptively:

Poem 3.4. Scoping (also pronounced ‘Shopping’) in Kits

to chalk up the losses to the prescience of
the mannikin who leaps out of the frame
breaking the mould for the typecast role
as a hanger on or even a model minority
breaking the synergetic bonds wide open (20)

In these lines, the frames of racialization rupture through a reflection on the body’s movement in everyday urban space, marking the poetic space as ductile, filled with seething contradictions. The lines metonymically play out the semantic associations of “mannequin,” “model” and “model minority.”⁹² Miki’s use of enjambment and his play on words animate and trouble the slippages between words. There is a “synergetic” relation between the two terms, we are told, and this relation reflects how bodies are racialized through objects. Chen argues that subjects are racialized in “affectively embodied ways” that unsettle the lines between human and nonhuman, and living and nonliving things (10). In ascribing movement to the mannequin, Miki draws attention to how racialized minorities are *modelled* after the characteristics of “silence, discipline,

⁹² In *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*, Miki observes that eventually “Japanese Canadian would enter the dominant (white) Canadian nation . . . becoming a model minority – more ‘Canadian’ than Canadian. These model citizens would simultaneously retain, in the folds of their memories, their historical connections to the experience of being marked” (*Redress* 256). According to Smaro Kamboureli, the model minority is a double inscription, a determination of “national imaginary” (111). As she writes in *Scandalous Bodies*, “[d]iversity is respected and supported only insofar as it is presumed to articulate subjects rehearsing collective identifications that are determined categorically and not relationally—precisely the point of the federal policy’s sedative politics” (112). The ideal community Kamboureli writes of asks racialized minorities to perform in a celebratory rhetoric very much in line with multicultural policy.

obedience”⁹³ (Phu 10). Troubling and breaking the “synergetic bond” shared by the terms, Miki, however, subverts this metonymic relation. And in doing so, he attributes a liveliness to mannequins, employing a proprioceptive approach that resurfaces the buried significations of racialization for the poet.

In light of Miki’s poem, I briefly trace the etymology of the term “mannequin” in the following section. As we see, the word’s etymology also reflects a series of slippages in meaning between humans and inanimate mannequins.

Historical Mannequins in Consumer Culture

A brief look at the history of mannequins suggests how mannequins emerged in consumer culture as a model for the performance of white femininity in the metropolis. As the word’s etymology suggests, “mannequin” has a doubled history, originally deriving from the mid-sixteenth century Dutch term “manneken” as a “diminutive of ‘man’” and then later from the mid-eighteenth century French term ‘manikin,’ often used in a deprecating sense to refer to “a dwarf, a pygmy” (OED). In the sixteenth century, “manikin” also came to designate a “small representation or statue of a human figure,” while in the latter part of the nineteenth century, a mannequin was also a “person employed by a dressmaker, costumier . . . to model clothes.” By the twentieth century, these two usages combined to refer to a “model of (part of) a human figure, used for the display of clothing” (OED). While in the contemporary sense of the term, a mannequin refers exclusively to a “dummy used to display clothes in a shop window” (Oxford Dictionaries), in the first decades of the twentieth century, the term

⁹³ Thy Phu also observes in *Picturing Model Citizens* that “the model minority myth seeks to remedy injurious exclusions from the full rights of political and social citizenship, dangling accommodation and assimilation as compensation for a history of exclusion and alienation. . . . [But the characteristics] of silence, discipline, and obedience – cause worry when they are construed as an inhuman penchant for deceptiveness and robotic hyperefficiency. Vilified as part of the Yellow Peril menace, the inscrutable Asian is . . . the obverse of the beneficent model minority” (10).

“mannequin” was used to refer to both an artificial replica of the human body (used for the display of clothes) as well as a human fashion model who *modelled* clothing. By this time, both forms of the mannequin represented a normative, white femininity and the invisibility of whiteness as a racial category (Conor 108, 136). The term thus took on a life of its own in the fashion and commodity-oriented world of humans as consumers, with each meaning of the word signifying in relation to the other.

Caroline Evans notes in her study of the New York fashion model that the mannequin paralleled the increased public presence of women in the city, and the fashion model, named a mannequin, “was variously represented as both an object and a subject” (261). As Liz Conor shows in *The Spectacular Modern Woman*, the mannequin became a globalizing phenomenon specifically because it was mass-produced to represent an ideal female form: “the Mannequin, as both a live fashion model and an inorganic replica . . . acted as a motif for the iconization of the feminine created by globalizing commodity culture” (11). Indeed, mannequins played a crucial role in a visual culture in which women were called upon to imagine themselves as visual objects, and to exercise individual autonomy in the public sphere. Writing specifically on the inorganic mannequin, Conor also notes that,

the Mannequin had existed prior to this period but was now transformed from wax moldings of body parts and dressmakers’ dummies, which had acted as clothing supports, into assembled, detailed, mass-produced reproductions of the idealized feminine body. The replica Mannequin embodied the primacy of the visual in characterizing women as modern in contemporary discourses. It also stood in for street presence, inviting women to strike a pose within the play of looks in the metropolis. (11-12)

According to this historiography, the replica mannequin, whose presence became pervasive in department stores in this period, was represented as a visual marker for women who were asked to not only be consumers but also to function as modern

women: the mannequin “was cast as host and guide to [women’s] street excursions. It not only gendered the department store as feminized space, but configured women as at home among commodities and even as part of the commodity and city spectacle” (Conor 114).

Following Jennifer Craik, Evans argues that the fashion model is “the technological body of the Western consumer,’ [one that is also] freighted with contradiction” (261). It is important to read this “technological body” in the doubled sense of the term because both forms of the mannequin served as models for the movement, display and performance of white femininity at multiple social and sensory levels. Indeed, both the fashion model and its nonhuman counterpart were meant to indicate a form of mastery over the social mores, cues, and bodily movements associated with the performance of femininity. In 1920, an Australian journal, for example, instructed women on “the mannequin walk,” one that involved “walking very slowly, placing weight first on the ball of the foot ‘and the heel an instant later,’ and keeping the upper body immobile, while moving with ‘correct poise’ from the hips” (Conor 115). As a consequence, mannequins alive and inorganic alike were pedagogical tools, inspiring a range of inflections placed on bodily motion (the mannequin walk) or stillness (for example, the mannequin pose). In this sense, mannequins (as dummies) were modelled after the bodies of women, but women, too, were encouraged to model themselves after mannequins. Certainly, this grammar of manners and mimicry also reveals the racialized dimensions of performing whiteness and inscribing gender visually in mainstream culture.

Viral Globalization

For Miki, a proprioceptive poetics does not take the body to be a self-contained entity. Instead, it is alert to how the body absorbs and is absorbed into the world. A fascinating poem from *Mannequin Rising*, which reflects on Miki’s arrival at the Narita airport in Tokyo in 2009 extends this poetic approach, and fittingly sutures the threads I

have tracked thus far in this dissertation: discourses of disease, hygiene, racial and interspecies contact, bodily vulnerability, global mobility, race, and ultimately, the contingent boundaries of the human:

Poem 3.5. Viral Travels to Tokyo

We are the guinea pigs the lowly relatives of the swine
targeted for the global ruckus disseminating we hate to
say it just like a virus that seeks a host (an us) to
reproduce its kind. Colonies of restless sojourners bent
on global migration to forge mobile identities.

In this surge of hybrid coalescence our bodies are
conducive to being human or not. Viral as infrastructure
finds voice in molecular networks in forms of 'social
distancing.' Instead of shaking hands let's bump elbows
and forget hugs and kisses. That's so pre-H1N1. Physical
contact of any kind is so socially passé.

The poem comments on the 2009 H1N1 scare, a particularly virulent strain of influenza that quickly spread across the globe, to showcase how fears about disease get dramatized in airport settings through a range of surveillance techniques. In America, for instance, the Swine flu immediately surfaced racial anxieties about diasporic Mexicans as carriers of the virus, since it first originated on Mexican pig farms. But this instance of scapegoating was not unique to the swine flu pandemic, given longstanding "cognitive scripts that blamed Latino immigrants for a variety of social problems" in the U.S. (McCauley et al. 1). The example of scapegoating in the context of American – Mexican relations is a familiar narrative about diseased racial minorities which erupts in Western societies every so often. Processes of racialization intensify during the outbreak of infectious diseases, stabilizing racial identities and national boundaries in the liminal

zones of airports and border controls.⁹⁴ Bashford and Hooker also note that in such instances the “‘dream of hygienic containment’ recurs, as fully justified fears of new viruses, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, inter-species mutations or biological warfare find expression, albeit in often unjustifiable ways: as homophobia, as racist restriction of immigration” (6). Miki’s poem, of course, considers the virus in the context of a global panic over the spread of disease around the world. The H1N1 pandemic also rather unsurprisingly, but dramatically highlighted anxieties about interspecies contact and the intimate interchange of viruses between humans and pigs.

In the poem, Miki explores this process of exchange between the two species, reversing the economic and cultural role that swine play in human food consumption around the globe. “We are the guinea pigs,” he writes, “the lowly relatives of the swine.” The interrelation of humans and pigs – our food consumption, medical experimentation and slaughter of them – returns us to Foucault’s point that biopolitics invests in the *production* of human life. Looking closer at the human non-human divide allows us to see the myriad ways in which this “production” takes place in relation to everything that enters the shadowy outer edges of human life: that is, the edges at which human life is as intensely policed as other forms of life are consumed. The slaughter of innumerable pigs, poultry and other animals in response to the threat of infectious disease is merely one example of this biopolitical terrain⁹⁵ (Blue 354). But Miki also asks us to examine how quickly this hierarchy gets unsettled when human bodies become the carriers of a virus found in pigs, exposing the uneasy inter-viral, bodily and

⁹⁴ See John Mckiernan-González’s *Fevered Measures: Public Health and Race at the Texas-Mexico Border, 1848-1942*, for a detailed history of migration, disease and medicalization in the U.S. with respect to Mexican Americans and other minority groups.

⁹⁵ In “Trans-biopolitics: Complexity in Inter-Species Contact,” Gwendolyn Blue and Melanie Rock propose another term for reading the relation of humans to nonhuman animals, calling the relation “trans-biopolitics”. Donna Haraway has also most notably offered salient critiques of interspecies contact, and the human commodification and consumption of animal life. See, for example, her treatment of animal patenting in *Modest Witness*.

genetic intermingling of the two species: humans and swine are “related” he tells us, and this relation is part and parcel of “global migration” and the “colonies of restless sojourners” that move virally across the globe, swine and human folded into one another. The “latest evolutionary phase” of globalization is viral globalization, the poet reflects, recasting the mould of migration and globalization in viral terms, that is, in terms of contagions and infections that defy national borders and the liveliness of the dead and deathly life forms that we consume. As Eugene Thacker writes,

Epidemics are an exemplary case of [a] de-scaling of the human, in which it is not simply a particular manifestation of the living (human host, microbial parasite, animal vector), but rather a whole network of vital forces that course through the human in ways that function at once at the macro-scale and micro-scale (global travel, inter-species contagion, protein–protein interactions). (“The Shadows of” 135)

Thacker observes that epidemics make visible human bodies’ interconnectivity with each other and with non-human matter at both the micro- and the macro- levels. Miki goes even further in his poetics of “mobile identities,” noting that “In this surge of hybrid coalescence our bodies are / conducive to being human or not” (75). These two lines offer significant insights for the twin elements of the proprioceptive and the posthuman threads I see at work in the text as a whole. The first line, “In this surge of hybrid coalescence our bodies are” also mimics global movement in its form, but questions to what extent the sweep and swelling of bodies in the heterogeneous rush of globalization raises ontological questions about being: “our bodies are” the poet tells us, introducing a pause and a breath in the stanza, a pause that for a mere second, returns us (the readers) to our own bodies. This reaching out from the poem from the present indicative plural of “be” returns us to the bodily instance of existence. The line’s rhythm echoes the rhythms of the body. The poem reflects the body’s continuous incorporation of the boundary-edge of language and other registers of meaning-making in this way,

marking language as a fraught site of inquiry. And yet this proprioceptive attention to language also shifts as our gaze moves on to the following line and its query about “humanness.”

The following line in the poem posits a fascinating query, attributing an inherent instability to the state of being human: “bodies are / conducive to being human or not,” the poet writes. The conjunctive “or” does not indicate a full stop or a conclusion: that our bodies are non-human as a consequence of our bodily and biological hybridity. Instead, Miki rather paradoxically retains the possibility of “the human” (after all, cultural debates about our “humanness” are not going away) but with a crucial difference: he highlights the instability and the movement between the human and the non-human, suggesting that our bodies are both. The negative “or not” alters the potential for “being human” offered by the first part of the line, suggesting the ambivalence of “humanness,” however we might choose to define its parameters – socially, culturally, temporally, politically, or indeed, biologically and scientifically. The poet concludes on this thought, writing that we live in a time of viral globalization, “A globalization all but / invisible and dependent on a host of monitoring devices / gone post-visual post-traumatic and tellingly post-pig.” That the 2009 H1N1 pandemic was also known for being an amalgamation of genetic elements from several different strains of flu viruses – human, avian and swine – also highlights the ongoing hybridization of interspecies interaction on a global scale. The poem’s concluding lines ask us to dwell on globalization not merely in terms of the global mobility of bodies, but the surveillance of those bodies through a “host of [invisible] monitoring devices.” Read in this way, globalization vis-à-vis surveillance, shows how such strategies not only shape our relation to the non-human (here, the pig in “Viral Travels”), but are constantly reshaping the spaces we inhabit, an aspect of the text I now turn to.

3.3.2. Historical Consciousness and the Forces of the Present

“We mean the sea trade has forged / the links that unite the earth’s / nations in a single marketplace,” writes Miki. In this short passage, Miki writes of commodity-culture through the history of European imperialism and its economic expansion across the globe. As Derksen argues, Miki is among a group of Canadian writers who address the spatial complexity of global flows, and who “articulat[e] the effects and discourse of neoliberalism from its global heights to its impact on bodies, identities, and possible social formations on the ground” (“National Literatures” 19). Kit Dobson also observes that Miki’s writing “suggest[s] ways of politicizing subjectivity as a strategy for dealing with the contemporary moment, one in which the dialectic between the nation and the world is renegotiated” (162-3). *Mannequin Rising* continues Miki’s larger project of recording, mining and sifting through the possibilities foreclosed by various processes of globalization, transnational capital and racialization, as well as exploring how creative acts might create room for agency (McAllister, “Between the Photograph” 217). In this section, I examine how Miki codes consumer culture through colonial and imperial history, providing a backstory to the foreclosure of certain feelings in contemporary globalized culture.

In an interview with Kirsten Emiko McAllister when *Mannequin Rising* was still in its preliminary stages of development, Miki notes that even though the text observes the disappearance of historical layering in Kitsilano, it is also attentive to how the local is being reconstituted in the present (“Always Slippage” 149-150). This approach, he asserts, allows for the emergence of a poetics that interrogates how the living human body is “a social being that is always in process, always producing as it is produced at the same time” (150). Commodity culture overwhelmingly conditions our bodies Miki notes, and *Mannequin Rising* channels a need to poetically address the historical processes that shape a place, while being attentive to the body’s contemporaneity (153). As Miki asserts, “[t]he concerns around social justice, memory, and the politics of

representation still remain strong for me. It's just that I think I'm working from a different approach . . . questions of ethics, intention, desire, and affect have become more immediate" (157). *Mannequin Rising* explores this tension between historical consciousness, the workings of memory and the ongoing and active constitution of the subject in the present:

Poem 3.6. Scoping (also pronounced 'Shopping') in Kits

We are consumers get used to
it we are here because you were
there and there is always a here

That brings fear of trembling to
the daily born exists that oft call
to the pause in the amber light. (13)

In these evocative lines, the poet draws attention to the postcolonial temporalities that structure space, referring to a "here" that's shaped by "a there," and a present that's structured by the "there" from the past. Certainly, this line recalls the postcolonial critique, "we are here because you were there." Placing the discourse of consumerism in a wider discussion of time - space materialities, the poem suggests that the materialism of our everyday patterns of consumption must be opened to a more disjunctive notion of time. To use Homi Bhabha's words, attention to the "time-lags" in the present also opens "humanity [to] its differentiations – gender, race, class" (341). Bhabha's point is that a dominant understanding of humanity gets authorized through whiteness in modernity, and that this temporality must be opened to historical contingency so that we can then conceive of a postcolonial or subaltern form of agency (339-340).

The attendance of different temporalities at work in *Mannequin Rising* is also apparent in the collages, and Miki specifically focuses on how places are rewritten over time, and this rewriting itself gives birth to time-space lags from which to consider how specific histories get erased. In the collage on page 71, for instance, Miki transposes

archival images onto a water front photograph of Vancouver. In contrast to the water front picture below (right), the collage (left) incorporates an image of a mannequin behind the Erickson building in False Creek and pictures of pigeons to the left. The more important aspect of the collage, however, is that Miki transposes archival images from when First Nations residents still inhabited the water front site onto the contemporary scene. Conversely, the Erickson building, marketed for its unique contribution to the Vancouver skyline and for its luxury condos, is still under construction in the collage.⁹⁶ Its construction suggests that the landscape itself is under reconstruction or better, deconstruction, a process that writes over the past histories of the place. Miki writes on the adjacent page that the buildings are not the only indicators of this elision of indigeneity, but that water has also been turned into territory and territory, by extension, into the “modal call of the ages” (70). This line refigures the spatial dynamics of the collage in temporal terms, an intonation stressing that we understand spatial dynamics temporally, and temporal dynamics spatially: in the text, this occurs through the dialogue between the visual image and the script, a translation that takes place between the grammatical structures and images on each page.

⁹⁶ The building, described as the “ultimate fusion of structural art and luxurious living,” is designed by Arthur Erickson. For more information, see <http://www.concordpacific.com/erickson/>.

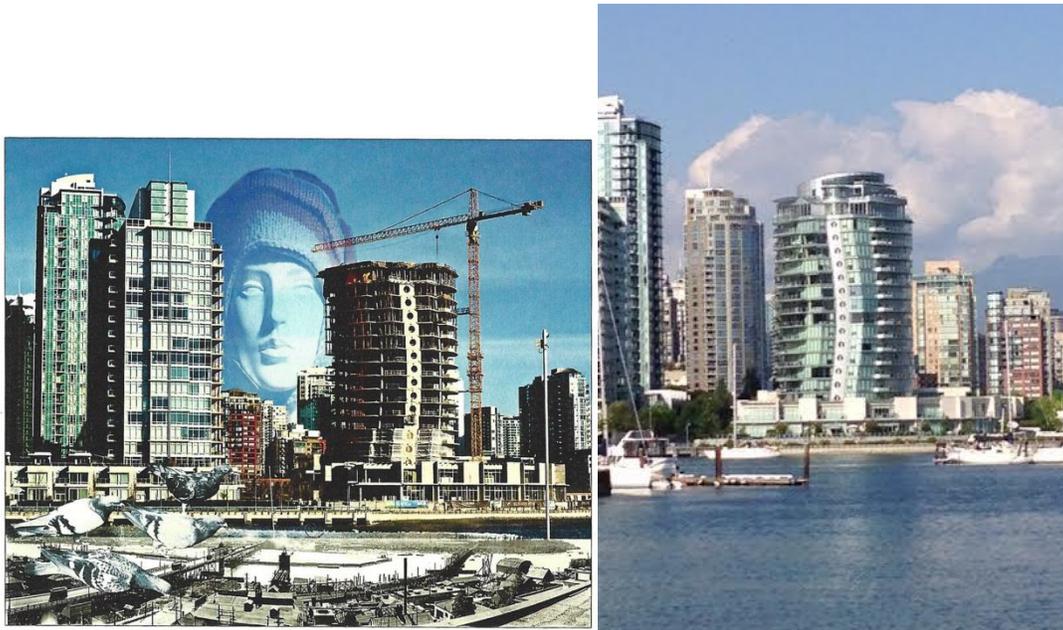


Figure 3.2. Collage from *Mannequin Rising* (on the left, page 71) and photograph (photo by author) of the same location (on the right)

Language and the Visual

One of the most fascinating formal aspects of the text is Miki's use of visual imagery and language alongside one another. In fact, this dialogue between language and the visual field reflects a tension at the heart of the text. In a later interview with Miki, McAllister observes that Miki's work exhibits a sense of disquiet with technologies of seeing such as the photograph:

I've been interested in your exploration of the interrelation between language and visual fields – scopic regimes – as fields of power and the creative possibilities that you open up in these spaces of confinement and erasure. It seems that the photograph as a technology of seeing has been present in your work for many years. First photographs enter your work textually, through descriptive imagery, and, then, it is as if through language you began to undo their discursive power over memory and bodies. (“Between the Photograph” 222)

As in much of Miki's writing, photographs raise problematic questions about the limits of representation. Miki explains that he became fascinated with "photographic representations of the JC body" in internment pictures as a child (206). Given that much of government-promoted media represented Japanese Canadians as silent, passive and alien inhabitants of the Canadian landscape, there was often an elision of Japanese Canadians as active and vocal responders to the government's racist initiatives (206-208). Some of these photographs became iconic representations of that moment.⁹⁷

Michel Foucault explains in his writing on Jeremy Bentham's concept of the panopticon that technologies of seeing such as the gaze organize the "whole social body into a field of perception" (*Discipline and Punish* 214). In other words, power resides not only in the act of seeing but more significantly, in "arrangement[s] whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up" (202). These relations string the social body into a more acutely-tuned domain of power, one that produces not only objects of knowledge but also those that craft and apprehend them. In this regard, the act of seeing might also be understood as an act that is always-

⁹⁷ In this interview with McAllister, Miki observes that documentary photographs from the Internment of Japanese Canadians deny Japanese Canadians their interiority ("Between the Photograph" 206-7). Clips from propaganda films such as *Of Japanese Descent* (1945) objectify and silence the Japanese Canadians captured in the images. These images, he observes, contrast with the photographs taken by Tak Toyota, whose "photos embody a sense of fear and uncertainty in the faces of the women, the men and the kids. As a Nisei photographer who was part of the community uprooted, Toyota was obviously attuned to the emotional disturbance in his subjects" (208). As Miki notes, Toyota's photographs convey what is absent in the government-sanctioned images: the transmission of the subjectivity and feelings of those we see in the pictures, indicating how central the surveillance of emotions is to the racialization of identity. This example of dehumanization taking place through a disavowal of a subject's humanity is an enduring example of state regulation and racial policies in Canada during the Second World War. Crucially, Miki's readings point to how governmentality might function through the governance of emotions, or in other words, through the compulsive and habitual regulation of feelings and emotions in groups of people. Miki's reading of the internment and state-sanctioned representations of Japanese Canadians in his interview with McAllister resonates with the heavy-handed eugenic practices I outlined in my first chapter.

already complicit with certain modes of power. Although *Mannequin Rising* moves in a different direction from Miki's redress work and his critiques of racialization, it offers a multifaceted critique of visual regimes much like his earlier work. His collages, in particular, destabilize what we understand as visual space by blending the visual and linguistic registers together, adopting novel strategies for critiquing the multiple modes of power at work in structuring our visual perception of space.

This occurs in another poem when the poet transforms fashion, in the first sense of the stylistic self-display of bodies – into a part of an address: “I am only a / transfer point / an unreliable / witness to fashion / in a network of waning apostrophes” (112). What does “fashion” signify, we might ask, in the context of the poem? In his historiography of the development of consumerism, Peter Stearns is quick to point out that “using consumption to express . . . individuality” is unique to contemporary global consumer culture (6). And what's more, according to Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, our participation in consumer culture signals that commodities⁹⁸ are “more or less transitory markers of rational categories. Behaving as an economic agent means making rational choices” (ix). According to Douglas and Isherwood, consumerism entails

⁹⁸ According to its definition in *New Keywords*, the commodity in a Marxist sense “refers to a matrix of conditions of exchange (the capitalist market), conditions of production (capital investment and wage labor, which is itself a commodity at another level), and conditions of consumption (private rather than collective appropriation of goods)” (Frow 47). In fact, the production of commodities also suggests how they are deeply embedded in a cycle of production, exchange and consumption. And yet, their consumption itself indicates their transitive nature – as objects whose main purpose is to sell other commodities and that are sold and bought for this purpose alone. The implication of this is that once commodities are removed from the consumer complex, they become “useless” as commodity-objects and highlight Randy Martin's point in *Financialization of Daily Life* that “the usefulness of . . . commodities has to do with how they allow for further exchange” (12). According to Martin, finance or the transfer of capital around the world in the immeasurable volume of trillions of dollars every month has fundamentally reconfigured human relations. As he argues, financialization drives companies to identify, create and promote demand for products such as houses, cars, cosmetic surgeries, organ transplants, etc., and engage people in contractually binding legal agreements; this economic impetus, in turn, creates diverse and contradictory trajectories of “need and want” for people everywhere (12).

identity-formation; because it is an integral part of the social systems we live in, its rituals have been naturalized as norms we participate in (9, 2). Purchasing a home or a car means that we are making choices that are not only consistent with those made by others, but are also participating in lifestyle choices that are socially validated. Xiaoping Li argues in a similar sense that there is a need for “us to consider the conjunction between fashion, global capitalism and modernism” (“Fashioning the Body” 74). As the editors to this volume of collected essays on fashion and globalization assert,

[P]olitical economy is inextricably linked to the ways in which subjectivities are negotiated and produced within a complex interplay of cultural processes and everyday improvisational acts themselves situated within structuring forces of economic, political and social power. Such a recognition entails mobilizing theoretical frameworks capable of articulating human will and desire as they are influenced by and respond to an ethnically-diverse, transnationally-networked, politically-fraught world of consumption and production. (Brydon and Niessen xvi)

To return to the poetic text, Miki suggests that expressions of identity should be understood as part of commodifying regimes that shape and interpellate subjectivity. Fashion, in the parlance of consumer culture, thus meant to convey the pulse or beat of a contemporary moment through the display of bodies, is transformed in Miki’s poem, into part of an address: “fashion / in a network of / waning apostrophes” (112). The metonymic slippage of apostrophe inheres in its significance as both a form of address and a site of grammatical erasure. In the poem, apostrophe is a textual reference to a linguistic convention: an apostrophe is a “figure of speech, by which a speaker or writer suddenly stops in his discourse, and turns to address pointedly some person or thing, either present or absent” (OED). It may also be understood as “an exclamatory address.” Alternatively, apostrophe also refers to the sign indicating either “the omission of a letter or letters” or the genitive and possessive cases in English (as in girl’s, girls’,

conscience') (OED). Turning "fashion" into "form" or reading fashion as form, as a mode or manner of something, or as a form of language, the poem thus leaves us to speculate who or what is on the receiving end of this address. In other words, the poem turns the visual politics of fashion, normatively understood as an expression of social identity, into the address of language. Underlying this slipperiness is the poem's colliding together of language and visual forms of ownership, and a move away from forms of self-assertion, self-ownership, and the logic of possession in language.

If Miki explores historical consciousness through his collage-work, then his exploration of the affective body also requires further analysis. He points out in "Always Slippage" that "in the local there are forces that do not come to full consciousness but often hover at the margins of consciousness, appearing and disappearing in ephemeral ways" (151). It is to this that I now turn to consider Miki's engagement with the body as a feeling, receptive, perceptive and affective entity, but one that's shaped and coopted as we perform our daily lives.

3.3.3. The Social Function of Affect: Desiring Compassion

This section examines Miki's exploration of what he sees as the foreclosure and appropriation of certain feelings in consumerism. Like Demerson, Miki brings a unique challenge to the reader: how do we read texts that suggest an uncommon, unsettling and troublesome register of feelings? For Miki, such a register stems outward from the proliferating accumulation of desires in the locales he moves through. By exploring how the body is modified, subjected to power, and opened proprioceptively to the world, Miki suggests that desire is one modality through which this occurs. However, rather than exploring the feeling human body as the only site of this affect, Miki addresses desire as an affective structure in global consumer culture. This approach foregrounds a poetic attention to the processes through which the body and subjectivity are opened in a force-field of effects and affects. In one poem, Miki approaches the notion of desire by

situating it in relation to another feeling – that of compassion. As the poet humorously questions:

Poem 3.7. Scoping (also pronounced ‘Shopping’) in Kits

Are you suffering from compassion fatigue?
Does it bother you that you think you’re
the only one who is not a victim? Do you
wake in the middle of the night and ask
why me? Then bingo hold on to your stirrups.
You’ve won an all expense paid cruise
through the discourse of your choice
with vocabulary tailored to your needs
and all perceptual states a projection of your
desires and your desires alone. A full message
massage is yours too if you please. (38)

The poem’s verbal play and its contrast of compassion fatigue with a “projection of your / desires and your desires alone” posits a question that is central to *Mannequin Rising*: in what terms do we adequately address how forms of commodification seize upon and transform the political function of feelings such as compassion, thus neutralizing or repackaging their potential? Ann Pellegrini and Jasbir Puar assert that, “concepts like affect, emotion, and feelings aid in comprehending subject-formation and political oppositionality for an age when neoliberal capital has reduced possibilities for collective political praxis” (“Affect” 37). According to this view, because emotions and feelings constitute not just individual but also social and collective identities, they also pose urgent political questions.

Miki, however, also points out how feelings, emotions and affects themselves have been (and continue to be) transformed by neoliberal capital. As the poem indicates, compassion fatigue suggests a rupture between the self and the “other”; the term indicates weariness, and the word “fatigue” imposes a limit on “compassion,” temporally defining and delineating its definition. The metonymic slippage between message and massage similarly juxtaposes the potential of affects and feeling states as

modes of communication, translation and interconnectivity and an economy of pleasure and self-gratification. The question, “Are you suffering from compassion fatigue?” turns the notion of compassion on its head, asking how compassion – a social act of empathy – gets to be reframed as an expression of individualist narcissism or bodily weariness. Berlant argues that “compassion *has increasingly* become associated with issues like human rights, children’s rights, animal rights, and multiculturalism” (“Compassion (and Withholding)” 19). As Berlant points out, compassion is commercialized and sold as charity, commodified to the point where the notion of compassion shifts from its association with sympathy, “the quality or state of being . . . affected by the suffering or sorrow of another” (21) to the connotation of “inequality, charity, or patronage (the nonsufferer showing compassion to the sufferer)” (21). Similarly highlighting the limits of compassion, Miki links the commodification of compassion with the production of desire.

In this poem, Miki playfully reminds us that marketing strategies often work at multi-sensory levels to attract a consumer. The poem sardonically identifies key (material) markers in a discourse that appeals to consumers’ individual needs and longings. As the poem suggests, interpellation does not occur at the level of language alone since it relies on individuals’ own projections of desire, a kind of subjection in which, to draw on Butler, the subject is subject to foreclosure time and again (“Changing the Subject” 739). This can also be taken to mean that the marketing principles of consumer culture enable its norms to “operate as psychic phenomena, restricting and producing desire . . . circumscrib[ing] the domain of a livable sociality” (*The Psychic Life* 21). In this respect, we can also understand compassion as the *desire* to exhibit compassion, monitored and marketed in a variety of ways. Desire in Miki’s text thus offers a conceptual map for attending as much to questions of material culture and market demands as to the body’s potencies in these contexts. It asks us to think about the body as an interface, one in which larger political and economic mechanisms

involving the hyper-surveillance of, for example, individuals and marketing patterns, extend to the body's internal subjective states.

In this regard, Miki's poetics is very much in line with Diana Brydon's point that globalization spawns new forms of global intimacies. As she argues, "emerging global complicities" ask us to be attentive to the "experiential dimensions of [the] affect[s]" they generate precisely because they suggest repercussions for processes of community-building and the project of citizenship (990). While Brydon considers this question in the context of Dionne Brand's work, her argument also resonates with Miki's poetics. As his writing indicates, desire is the fulcrum of these "global intimacies," operative in the circulation of bodies, commodities and economies around the globe, or in other words, in the "there [that] is always a here" (*Mannequin Rising* 13). And yet, as Miki's poetics seems to suggest, these intimate ties do not foster civic participation. This is why the consumer's body in relation to cellphones, "cellular flourishes" (96), and "breakdown in tor- / rents of communication" (104), takes on such importance in his work. This relation establishes a kind of object-relation that precedes and pre-empts other forms of sociality. As Miki's poetry suggests, capitalist economies call for nuanced readings of the social relations taking place in consumer culture.

Human geographer Nigel Thrift explains that forms of appropriation work subliminally in advertising culture to mimic social relations. Subliminal advertising continues to extend its reach with a whole host of new technologies to monitor, analyze and anticipate "self-perception and socially held emotions" in consumers (91). Techniques such as neuromarketing rely on findings from cognitive science, and operate semiconsciously by associating brands and advertisements with social rituals (90-91). As Thrift also outlines, studies of imitation "track the unconscious emotional reactions of consumers." These studies show how bodily movements mirror "unconscious emotional reactions"; so, for instance, it is possible for businesses to use monitoring techniques to build positive associations for products in consumers. The repetition and continuity of

certain body movements (such as nodding) can influence future behaviour in consumption, given that continuous bodily motion or mimicry (the nodding that occurs when two people are in conversation for example) builds trust and suggests interest and excitement (91). These technologies are versatile in their mining of human sociality, feeding into a “capitalist meteorology” which “operates at the intersection between the biological and the cultural, understanding that the basic building blocks of sociality are genetically encoded and neutrally etched” (90). In Miki’s poetics, desire becomes the affective mode through which he investigates this aesthetic and sensory form of subjection.

Non-Human Desire

The concept of desire has a long history in Western societies, and is seen to be the basis of subjectivity and sociality; according to this view, desire chases its own tail, since our desire gets shaped by what we cannot have (Probyn 77-78). Elizabeth Grosz argues that we have inherited a model of desire that genders desire in masculine terms. In this model, male force is directed at acquiring the feminine object (*Space, Time* 177). This model derives from the psychoanalytic view that desire is an absence or an abyss, an idea that Freud and later Jacques Lacan both advanced in their writings. “[T]his notion of desire,” Grosz writes, “is not only uniquely useful in capitalist models of acquisition, property, and ownership, it inherently *sexualizes* desire, coding it in terms of the prevailing characteristics attributed to the masculine / feminine opposition” (177). In contrast to this psychoanalytic interpretation, I follow Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s definition away from the psychoanalytic one of desire as lack. As they argue, “[t]he prime function incumbent upon the socius, has always been to codify the flows of desire, to inscribe them, to record them, to see to it that no flow exists that is not properly dammed up, channelled, regulated.” Capitalism, however, now “decod[es] and deterritorializ[es] [these] flows” (*Anti-Oedipus* 33). According to this view, the notion of desire should be revisited in terms of process. Suggesting that we understand desire as

productive, Deleuze and Guattari offer a number of insights one might extract for theorizing desire as an affective force in global capital.

I am specifically interested in understanding desire as an affective structure because it exceeds the conscious articulation of emotion and holds the potential to affect subjects through a subconscious register. Such an approach also offers a way of extending Deleuze and Guattari's claim to interrogate the links between power, subjectivity and desire (Spivak, "Can the Subaltern" 240). Extending Deleuze and Guattari in this way is useful for a number of reasons: for one, it allows us to disturb the notion that desire pertains to the oedipal moment of subject-formation. Deleuze and Guattari draw attention to how desire circulates in the global enterprise of commerce, even as it remains deeply implicated in social relations. It is therefore affective in the sense that Jeremy Gilbert describes affect: "'affect' is a term which denotes a more or less organised experience, an experience probably with empowering or disempowering consequences, registered at the level of the physical body, and not necessarily to be understood in linguistic terms" (3). Desire is structural given that it affects the body, sometimes by design and sometimes by accident and because it is implicated in the circulation of capital and its goods.

As Miki also shows, we might understand desire as not an altogether human characteristic; rather, it is both technological and affective and functions within various systems of power to mine human potential. Locating both foreknowledge and desire outside of human consciousness, the poet writes, "The mannequins must share / foreknowledge of the rise / and fall of human desires" (13). In these lines, Miki suggests the extent to which our consciousness is shaped by the "tyranny of the commodity" (47). These lines decenter what we take to be the sphere of individual autonomy, and locate our relation to desire outside of ourselves. Ultimately, the poem's movement from mannequins to consumers, from the mannequins as objects that transmit human desire, is significant because it asks that we historicize affect in a postcolonial

reimagining of a “there and there is always a here” (13). This contextualization of desire is consistent with the poem’s suggestion that we should not take material reality to be a given, but should instead destabilize the frames of reference for what we generally take to be an objective perception of reality. For instance, the poet’s reference to “the montage of frames” in the poem parallels the collage that faces the poem, which incorporates an image of a photographer poised to take a photograph in the collage (12). This gesture to framing devices returns us full circle to a key impulse in Miki’s poetics – the impulse to explore how we perceive and receive the world as we encounter it – proprioceptively.

And yet, in *Mannequin Rising*, desire is not only intertwined with the language of ownership and commercialism, but is also the site at which to articulate an alternative ethos to commodification. He writes elsewhere, for example, that the “question rises / from an unpatented move / that desire makes” (106). Desire holds the capacity to escape the capitalist appropriation of everything, the poet tells us. Indeed, Miki’s textual renditions of desire provocatively draw our attention to desire’s enabling as well as disempowering dimensions, and the necessity to pay attention to the objects that channel desire. This is perhaps why the poet engages with affect through desire, one whose topography carries implications for thinking about the larger problematic of globalization and commodification his writing engages with. As Matthew Tiessen argues about understanding the relation of place to human desire, the question of desire always leads us to the question of agency. But, he insists, we can only adequately theorize agency when we think about how nonhuman objects are implicated in shaping, mediating, and intervening in human desire. He asserts that,

Reframing our desire and hopes as expressions not of ourselves alone, but of relationships, intertwinings, and interdependent becomings has the potential to reveal the degree to which the “humanistic” boundaries that have defined us have been a *conceptual* reality rather than one that

adequately describes the relationship between us and the world around us. (131)

Mannequin Rising explores desire in the context of a similar form of human – non-human interchange, taking the human to be a compositional site of change and modification in its encounters with the material world.

In another respect, thinking about desire and the political relevance of feelings takes on a particular sense of urgency since racialized minority bodies are so often placed within a narrative that marks and markets them as undesirable and/or desiring bodies. Christopher Lee aptly highlights this when he suggests the discursive power and shiftiness of racial metaphors, noting that “Asian subjects . . . have been defined variously (and often simultaneously) as sources of labour, threats to the white mainstream, sexualized bodies, bearers of capital, and so on” (“Enacting the Asian” 35). Indeed, desire sutures racialized subjects in numerous ways, returning us to Miki’s point that the relation of objects such as mannequins to emotions/affects must be considered if we are to reimagine new ways of thinking outside of the neoliberal box of articulated desires, feelings, and subjectivity. If desire is a way of conceptualizing how we move into and merge with the nonhuman world, then race continues to play a part in this eerie and uncanny relation.

3.4. Conclusion

The works of Wong and Miki reflect on the continuities and discontinuities they see at work in contemporary formations of power. As they ask, what is the work of affects such as malaise and disgust, desire and compassion, within and against globalization? In what ways does the material – and perhaps not so inanimate – inanimate world, move, shift and modulate the structure of our everyday lives? How do affects get attached to objects, to people, and to the relations that hold the two

together? What part does this play in the ongoing racialization and gendering of bodies? Wong and Miki shed light on these questions by animating and shifting the terms of the debate around the human to consider our consumption of and incorporation into the nonhuman and material world.

Conclusion:

Psychic Property and Clockwork Feelings

The first cyborg was a rat, which had an osmotic pump which injected chemicals into the rat, and modified the injections as the rat responded. *Life* magazine had a big photo of the cyborg rat soon after a small photo appeared in *Astronautics*.

(Ian Hacking, "Canguilhem Amid the Cyborgs" 209)

OncoMouse™ is an ordinary commodity in the exchange circuits of transnational capital Above all, OncoMouse is the first patented animal in the world. By definition, then, in practices of materialized refiguration, s/he is an invention. Her natural habitat, her scene of bodily/genetic evolution, is the techno-scientific laboratory and the regulatory institutions of a powerful nation-state. Created through the ordinary practices that make metaphor into material fact, her status as an invention who/which remains a living animal is what makes her a vampire, subsisting in the realms of the undead.

(Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness* 79)

The mice at Charles River, and in laboratories everywhere, are . . . sentient beings who have all the biological equipment, from neuronal organization to hormones, that suggest rodent feelings and mousy cognition, which, in scientific narratives, are kin to our own hominid versions.

(Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness* 82)

In 2002, the Supreme Court of Canada refused a patent on the OncoMouse, Harvard's genetically modified mouse, reaching the conclusion that while the entirety of

an organism such as a mouse is not patentable, the oncogene (the cancerous gene in the mouse) is, in fact, open to ownership as an intellectual property right⁹⁹ (Gerlach et al. 98). The controversial patenting of this higher life form became a keystone moment for theorizing the legal fictions surrounding collective notions of “the human.” The debates that emerged around the world at the time with respect to the patent form showed that these were as much about the definition of property as it pertains to organisms and non-human animals as they were about human bodies.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the example of the OncoMouse is significant because, as Haraway reminds us, debates about the ownership of “redesigned” organisms also re-activate older anxieties about racial and bodily purity. She writes: “I cannot help but hear in the biotechnology debates the unintended tones of fear of the alien and suspicion of the mixed. I hear a mystification of kind and purity akin to the doctrines of white racial hegemony and U.S. national integrity and purpose that so permeate North American culture and history” (60-61). As Haraway suggests, the issue of bodily integrity in discussions of biotechnology ties to the question of race, activating older anxieties about how human bodies associate and mix with each other, as well as how they interact with non-human

⁹⁹ This decision was subsequently challenged and amended in 2003 in Harvard’s favour.

¹⁰⁰ According to Neil Gerlach, Sheryl Hamilton, and others, legal cases such as that of the Harvard OncoMouse “are establishing the truths, in and through which humans, animals and plants, will and can live What may seem like legal semantics – what constitutes an invention within the terms of the Canadian Patent Act – has significant symbolic and material consequences for mice, canola, and humans as emergent biosubjects” (134-135). Indeed, the case of the OncoMouse in Canada is a case in point for crystallizing the issue of patentability especially since it departed from North American and European takes on the legal and commercial status of the mouse. For Lori P. Knowles in “Of Mice and Men,” the case calls for an active democratic process precisely because it challenges our “basic relationships and institutions” (7). As she observes, “[t]here are only two categories of things in property law: people and property. Biotechnology is challenging that categorization. Animals, frozen embryos, and human DNA sit uneasily between the categories. But the issue of how to categorize animals has [also] always been a problem in this bifurcated worldview” (7).

biological entities, thus upsetting established cultural narratives about where we belong in the order of things.

Haraway's remarks – and the case of the OncoMouse – offer a fitting introduction to the conclusion of this project, returning us full circle to a political, cultural and social climate that reveals anxieties about the boundaries of the biological human subject, anxieties that surface through the language of contagion and purity with its dark undercurrents of race and paranoia about what's foreign. If, as my first chapter demonstrates, it is necessary to examine the gender and race-specific terms of our social, cultural, political and legal existences, then my second chapter dwells more thoroughly on the limits of the intelligible and normative body, understood primarily but not exclusively through biological understandings of the human. What enables or delimits, Goto and Chariandy ask, the possibilities of giving an account of ourselves? Wong and Miki shift the terms of the debate in my third chapter, telling us that it is also crucial to be attentive to the commodification, appropriation and consumption of different forms of life. For these poets, it is consequently of significant import to look beyond the parameters of life as we live it, and to instead examine how we inhabit, incorporate and dissolve into our material environments.

In my concluding remarks I would like to revisit the question I first posit in the Introduction to this project: what are the cultural, scientific, social, political and legal terms through which the “human” body gets regulated and produced? What are the terms of liveability, sociability and indeed, social death? How have these terms shifted over the course of the twentieth century? Returning to the eugenic debates or reflecting on the contemporary politics of disease and its mobility across borders, suggests how these issues trigger panics about the contravention of human bodies by interspecies and interracial contact. These anxieties are about surfaces and boundaries, and are as much about social and cultural values as they are about fears about the body's violation at the level of the material, the microbial and the viral; these fears often get mapped around

whiteness in Western nation-states. Kay Anderson notes that “the human . . . whose species-form is . . . incontrovertible, [is a being] whose state or condition of ‘being’ is made, remade, and unmade” (*Race and the Crisis* 3). Anderson’s historiography illuminates the nineteenth century challenge of race to the western conception of humanity as a unity. She argues that racist perceptions of Australian aboriginality undermined the notion that human beings comprised a singular if hierarchical category of humanness. Although scholarship such as Anderson’s demonstrates how the notion of the human shifts over time in tandem with evolving conceptions of race, I wonder what shape this relation might take in contemporary discourses of biotechnology.

In “A Brief History of Hybridity and Human Biology,” Scott McFarlane notes that an “ongoing eugenics movement [is] being protracted within the discourse of biotechnology.” I understand the term biotechnology in a broad sense to designate those medical and scientific processes that signal an ongoing manipulation of the nature / culture divide or what Eugene Thacker calls “the technically configured mobilization of biological components and processes toward novel ends” (*The Global Genome* 254). In *Modest Witness*, Haraway also writes that western societies have policed the nature / culture divide, stating that “[t]he distinction between nature and culture in Western societies has been a sacred one; it has been at the heart of the great narratives of salvation history and their genetic transmutation” (60). This policing is a form of xenophobia, she points out, and overlooks the long history of interspecies and interracial contact that is particular to the *actual* occurrence of genetic exchange among humans and between humans and non-human animals (61). I would like to dwell on Haraway’s point further to consider how panics about bodily purity are not simply about the *body’s* inviolability per se, but rather are intransigent fears about the limits of human subjectivity, about what keeps human nature natural, and indeed, human feelings human.

If the case of the OncoMouse suggests how debates about the ownership of organisms are deeply invested in demarcating the ethics of owning “nature,” it also reveals how nature and culture are categories that morph and shift in relation to one another. In his well-known study of the Human Genome Project, Paul Rabinow also acknowledges both the promise and the dangers of a “new genetics,” noting that a new genetics will revert the traditional nature / culture binary by naturalizing “culture” and making “nature” artificial (98-99). He names this transformation “biosociality,” using the term to designate the emergence of new social networks and cultural spaces around developing technologies and their screening and surveillance of bodies. Rabinow makes a point of distinguishing biosociality from sociobiology in the title of his essay, introducing the former term in a crucial contestation of the latter.¹⁰¹ Sociobiology, a field of study that asserts that all aspects of human behaviour stem from evolutionary principles contrasts with biosociality, which takes note of the fact that the new sciences are naturalizing culture and artificially recreating nature: such an approach contests the sociobiological claim, rewriting its supposition that social life derives exclusively from processes of natural selection (McNeil 236). This approach takes nature and culture to be interdependent rather than independent knowledge-categories. Although developments in science are transforming the way we understand human identity through biology, according to Rabinow,

¹⁰¹ Arguments such as Rabinow’s draw attention to the transformation of life and labour through a new science inasmuch as they uncover the relation between the governance of biological existence and the “rhythms” of everyday life. For instance, Rabinow reflects on the example of shifts in food production during and after World War II to explain how new foods such as margarine transformed the ways in which people consumed and organized their lives around food (104). Although my study of the new sciences is limited here, others have provided ample analyses of their cultural, social and political significance, noting that the “coming together of the domains of “biological (re)production and capital accumulation” is undermining the usefulness of traditional economic and political categories for understanding the role and function of the life sciences in the “modern political economy” (Cooper 3). For Kaushik Sunder Rajan, technoscience and capital also give rise to parallel “emergent regimes of ethics, with increasingly powerful voices in constructing discursive, normative, and ideological terrains” (“The Capitalization of Life” 19).

older forms of cultural classification of bio-identity such as race, gender, and age have not any more disappeared than medicalization and normalization have, although the meanings and the practices that constitute them certainly are changing . . . these older cultural classifications will be joined by a vast array of new ones, which will cross-cut, partially supersede, and eventually redefine the older categories. (103)

For Rabinow, biosociality names those technological processes that reframe older categories of “bio-identity,” introducing novel social forms that come into play alongside longstanding classifications of identity such as race and gender. Although Rabinow foregrounds biosociality as an emergent factor in the nature / culture debate, Larissa Lai addresses the social context of biotechnologies in her creative work, and asks how new interventions in the nature / culture divide are reinventions of these older categories of identity.

What are biotechnology’s ethical limits?, critics have asked. Many political and philosophical perspectives collide on this thorny issue, but if we merely worry about bodily boundaries, Lai shows us, then we somehow miss the mark. In what follows, I will explore how Lai engages with the racialized fictions of nature and culture through a politics of feeling and memory, both of which figure as fraught sites of control, appropriation and commodification in *Automaton Biographies* (2009). In “Corrupted Lineage,” Lai writes that for “the racialized subject . . . there is no such thing as a pure language, pure culture or an ultimate point of origin” (45). She elaborates further that the “gap[s] between nostalgia and dream,” between absences in memory and lineage recur and are recreated again and again in new versions of the same historical project of race (48). Her poetry reveals biotechnology to be one such site of recurrence, where older narratives about race continue to intersect with technology. Indeed, in exploring the expropriation of memories and emotions in subjects who are human even as they

are not in cultural narratives about biotechnology, Lai's poetry ultimately "corrupts" a humanist genealogy of feeling and memory.

Coming Full Circle in Larissa Lai's *Automaton Biographies*

In my previous chapters I have taken structures of affect and emotion to be formations that are simultaneously exterior and interior to subject-formation. Individuals are located within emotion cultures as much as they are an amalgamation of various feeling, moving and perceiving states. Undoubtedly, to engage with the combined regulation and production of human life is also, on one level, to confront the very conditions of our own subjectivity: this is of course an impossible task, bound to creative failure. Brian Massumi claims that "[a]ctually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them" (*Parables* 35). Massumi posits that non-conscious perception informs our cognitive capabilities, so that our apprehension of being alive is structured by what escapes capture (34-36). Massumi's point about bodily existence raises questions about knowledge, memory and subjectivity. If our bodies inhabit micro- and miniscule temporalities that we fail to and in fact, cannot apprehend, then what is the temporality of our memory? Where does it end, and we begin? In what ways are memory, feeling and subjectivity interlocked? Are they? The question to ask then, is not simply how bodies and biologies are shaped through the biopolitical, but what the affects and effects of this shaping might be.

I turn to a discussion of Lai's *Automaton Biographies* (2009) to conclude this dissertation, because it is an experimental poetic text which brings us full circle in terms of both theme and form. With her reflections on biotechnology, Lai offers possibilities for considering debates about the ownership and commodification of life alongside the ownership and appropriation of memory, feeling and ultimately, subjectivity. What if,

she asks, these, too, belong to someone or something else? In “The Identity of the Body Has Not Yet Been Confirmed,” Lai observes that “[o]ur status as consumers places us in a relationship to other economies and other racialized bodies in ways that are both more intimate and more exploitative than ever” (157). *Automaton Biographies* arises from a similar query, exploring how the discourses of biotechnology continue to refigure our intimate relations with others. Indeed, for Lai, biotechnology is uncanny, an eerie metanarrative for addressing racialization, slavery and ongoing processes of neo-colonialism.

Automaton Biographies is both a return to the beginnings of this project and a departure from it in terms of its playfulness with genre. The title *Automaton* together with *Biographies* indicates the dialectical contradictions the text turns on, and its focus on *automaton* biographies offers a creative juxtaposition to *Incorrigible*, the autobiography I examine in my first chapter. *Automaton Biographies* is not a biography in the traditional sense; it is neither a cohesive work written about a person’s life, the work that most biographies do, nor is it about a singular individual, in the Western humanist tradition of bounded subjectivity. Rather, *Automaton Biographies* comprises a series of biographies about a medley of cyborg, quasi-human, nonhuman and human figures. A collection of four long poems, the text “weav[es] together,” as Tamara Ho observes, “the biographies of cyborgs who are female, animal, and Asian,” and in doing so “disrupts generic assumptions of how we gather, re-member, and taxonomize stories

of life" ("Larissa Lai's 'New'").¹⁰² While I restrict my analysis primarily to the first poem "Rachel," each of the four sections spotlights this biographical detailing: the first reflects on Rachel, as a part-cyborg, part-human, and part-Asian, racialized and hybridized figure. The remainder of the text is also haunted by the longing, disquiet and restless presence of a set of quasi-human and non-human figures. The second long poem "nascent fashion," dissolves the poetic voice into the numerous "we." A "demonic mnemonic / memory" flits between the nominative plural and the personal pronoun in this section's meditations on war (75). The third long poem addresses the chimpanzee Ham and explores the "racing" of his identity. Ham was selected by NASA for a journey to outer space in 1959. Nicknamed Chop Chop Chang by NASA workers, Ham's animal story references a longstanding history of racialization for non-whites in North America: "a monkey or a pawn / strength chesses in chains / [...] / a little cha cha cha / with mother's other / not man but ham" (105). The final section of the text, "auto matter," enters a memory-scape that cuts across familial, spatial and post / colonial geographies.

¹⁰² As Miki explains, the Canadian long poem defers generic boundaries. In the 60s and 70s, writers began to articulate the long poem as a linguistic site at which questions of language and form superseded those of theme (*Broken* 38). With these developments, as Miki notes, the "lyric voice found itself alongside a textual I, alongside prosaic discourses, alongside strategies of fiction-making" (38). And yet, Alessandra Capperdoni also shows, the long poem is deeply implicated in Canadian colonial history. She argues that the long poem became a way for writers in nineteenth century Canada to "adapt an English poetic language to a new territory and social context" (36). The Canadian long poem became a vehicle for both creating and representing national narratives, and helped to define the developing nation-state (36). Following this logic then, this literary form is deeply implicated in the national Canadian imaginary, reflecting a preoccupation with delineating the uniqueness of a Canadian (white) identity, while simultaneously tracing a lineage to Britain. However, for writers influenced by postmodern and poststructuralist concerns with language as a site of discursive power, and motivated by feminist and progressive anti-racist agendas, the long poem also becomes a medium that confronts, as Homi Bhabha so aptly demonstrates in *The Location of Culture*, language as a primary vehicle of colonial power; it produces "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite," and constructs an alternative set of knowledges about colonial pedagogy (123-124). This attention to the limits and paradoxes of language is evident in Lai's exploration of Rachel as a subject of affect in *Automaton Biographies*.

The long poem “Rachel” is addressed from the point of view of the romanticized clone from Philip K Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), and Ridley Scott’s adaptation of Dick’s novel, the canonical 1982 film *Blade Runner*. In this respect, *Automaton Biographies* is only part biography in form, since it is also written from Rachel’s perspective, a self-reflexive mode that is *auto*-biographical as much as it is a literary hybrid of both of these. Lai draws on filmic, fictional, and non-fictional narratives as well as the genre of science fiction to maintain a multi-focal intertext. Pilar Cuder-Domínguez explains that Lai “articulate[s] a multiplicity of subject positions by using a hybrid narrative form that, while sharing some of the objectives of autobiography, resists being labelled as such” (127). Although Cuder-Domínguez is specifically addressing *Salt Fish Girl* in this article, her point about Lai’s larger project is relevant for it suggests how *Automaton Biographies*, too, complicates origin stories through the mixing and meshing of different literary forms. Consequently, the references to *Blade Runner* the film, *Blade Runner* the officer, and Ham the chimp’s biography embedded in NASA’s hyper-masculine culture, remind us of Julia Kristeva’s argument that the different structural levels of a literary text ask the reader to be attentive to the “historical and social coordinates” it emerges from (36). Before I examine *Automaton Biographies* in more detail, I would thus like to take a brief look at Scott’s film.

The Film

With its adaptation of Dick’s novel, whose work concerns itself with depicting artificial life-forms, Scott’s film is legendary for making cybernetics a hot topic in the popular imagination. The narrative’s dystopic frame and its exploration of the interchange between the human and the non-human in terms that defy categorization have made it a staple in the science fiction canon of film’s wider context. In brief, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is set in the year 2021 in the aftermath of a World War, which led to the near mass extinction of all forms of nonhuman life, and has left those that remain on earth with little but the desire to purchase an animal, either real

or a clone. The devastating loss of animal life and the toxic, radiation-filled atmosphere leave humans with a shattered social and political order, leading to the sponsored emigration of humans from earth to Mars. While those who leave the planet are gifted with human clones, of those that remain behind, some are hired as bounty hunters to track down and kill any clone who returns to earth after escaping from one of the off-world labour colonies. In the novel, Rick Deckard is hired to “retire” a group of Nexus-6 replicants, the latest and most sophisticated clones who bear an even more striking resemblance to humans than previous models.

The film departs from the novel in an important sense, and this difference is crucial because of the way it constructs the replicants’ subjectivity. In the novel, the primary difference between androids and humans is the lack of feeling that the clones have, either for one another or for another living being. The film alters this relation by attributing feeling to the replicants rather than the human subjects in the narrative. Much has been said about the film and its various versions,¹⁰³ but as I will discuss shortly, Lai offers another take on the narrative in her long poem “Rachel.” In the novel, Rachel is a clone who “belongs” to the Rosen Corporation, creator of the Nexus-6 line; she passes as “human” to confound Deckard, eventually embarking on a romantic liaison with him. But the film alters the figure of Rachel, who is transformed from a knowing subject – a subject aware of the conditions of her existence – into an unknowing one in *Blade Runner*. In this way, the film asks us to examine Rachel’s subjectivity by playing with her belief that she is in fact human, and the eventual and devastating realization that she is not.

¹⁰³ As Neil Badmington argues, for example, the film insists on destabilizing our notions of subjectivity, and in doing so, confronts the limitations of the humanist framework (“Blade Runner’s Blade Runners”). While Badmington reads *Blade Runner* as a narrative that undercuts autonomous subjectivity, Katherine Hayles has read the human-replicant encounter from *Do Androids Dream* as an autopoietic struggle (161). The struggle between Roy Baty and the Tyrell corporation, according to Hayles, reflects a conflict over “how boundaries are constituted” (161).

Commodification in this narrative is so complete that it encompasses not only the Tyrell Corporation's artificial engineering of Rachel's body, but also her subjective identity, specifically in the form of her memories which never belonged to her but were implanted from Tyrell's niece. Rachel becomes aware of the manufactured and artificially constructed feature of her memory-scape in a scene in which Deckard shares her own memories with her, confirming that she is a replicant. The narrative extends this colonization of consciousness further in introducing another twist to the story: that the replicants exhibit a greater degree of feeling and compassion for one another than humans do for each other. The empathy test, also known as the Voight-Kampf test, used in the narrative to determine whether the subject of the test is human or clone, bears witness to this as the replicants invariably reveal their "nature" by demonstrating their empathy for others. In a scene at the beginning of the film, Deckard performs the empathy test on Rachel upon Tyrell's request. As Tyrell outlines, "capillary dilation of the so-called blush response, fluctuation of the pupil, [and] involuntary dilation of the iris" are all signs that the subject in question is a replicant instead of a human being when tested by the Voight-Kampf machine. In fact, Rachel ultimately discloses that she feels something in response to the hundred plus questions that Deckard has asked her when he posits his final question to her: "you're watching a stage play, a banquet is in progress, the guests are enjoying an appetizer of raw oysters, the entrée consists of boiled dog . . ." In this instance, and according to the principles of the Voight-Kampf test (in which a set of somatic responses would reveal a replicant's empathy for animals), Rachel unwittingly betrays that she is a clone through the dilation of the iris. After Deckard guesses that Rachel is a replicant, Tyrell informs him that Rachel is denied the knowledge that she is a clone because "more human than human is [their] motto." Explaining further, he outlines that Rachel is an experimental model for which an artificial set of memories is transplanted in her brain to provide a buffer for the excessive feelings that the replicants exhibit:

We began to recognize in them strange obsession, after all they are emotionally inexperienced, with only a few years with which to store up the experiences which you and I take for granted. If we gift them with a past, we create a cushion or a pillow for their voices and consequently we can control them better.

According to Tyrell's formulation, feelings reveal the replicants' untrained responses to the social world; the Tyrell Corporation in turn, transforms this unanticipated consequence of the biotechnological production of clones into a technology of control, using memory to contain the replicant subject and her "emotional inexperience." In the context of the narrative then, "feelings" and their expression are divorced from the supposedly more "human" characters in the film, whose marked lack of empathy marks them as human, according to the dominant biotech ideology at work in the story.¹⁰⁴

In this respect, *Blade Runner* subverts what Susan Maslan identifies as the historical development of the idea of the human; she argues that the human body became human as a political and legal entity through sentiment ("The Anti-Human" 358). According to Maslan, the modern conception of citizen, as it developed from the French Revolution, married "the embodied creature of sentiment and the abstract element of the polis" ("The Dream" 75). This conception of the "unified man-citizen" derived from the view that "a subject would *feel* his ties and obligations of citizenship as part of his interiority" (75). As Maslan asserts, the "man-citizen" conjoined these two aspects of biopolitical life – biological life and politically qualified life through feeling. The implication of this is that subjects as subjects of feeling are central to political sovereignty regardless of whether they belong inside or outside of the political order. This is why the regulation of the replicants' bodies occurs through the regulation of their

¹⁰⁴ As Joyce Davidson and Christine Milligan explain in "Embodying Emotion Sensing Place: Introducing Emotional Geographies," that "emotions are understandable—'sensible'—only in the context of particular places" (524).

memories and feelings. Even though they lack political rights, they are nevertheless affective bodies who have the potential to derail Tyrell's power. As Tyrell says, the replicants exhibit a greater degree of sentiment than humans do because the duration of their lives is restricted to only four years; they do not have the experience to control and regulate the expression of their emotions, nor do they have the chance to learn how to do so.

In this regard, the replicants embody the range of what Lauren Berlant calls the "humanizing emotions: compassion, sentimentality, empathy, love" as well as anger and sorrow, offering a spectrum of feeling states exceeding those expressed by the "human" characters in the film ("Compassion" 5). Implanted memories, on the other hand, provide replicants with a "false consciousness" meant to buffer them as much from the reality of their artificial birth as the volatility of the emotional terrain they inhabit. This is precisely the epistemic rift Rachel contends with in *Automaton Biographies*: her memories are inconsistent with the temporality of her birth and the temporality of her life. But as we will see, in the poetic text, Rachel's reflections on the story of her life begin to counter and undo the power of the clone narrative in *Blade Runner*. Thus if, as Tyrell asserts, memories are a technology of control, Rachel's contention might be that she is indeed, "more human than human," and her rewriting of her memories – through a poetics of feeling – makes it so.

Lai's Rachel

In *Automaton Biographies*, Rachel addresses the film's subtext of manufactured labour, slavery and colonial violence and reimagines her life story through a politics of feeling. According to Peter Hutchings, the film's constitutive fiction of the replicants as non-human allows for "the suspension . . . of the memory of genocide and slavery," which is why the film doesn't get read as a "certain exchange of empathy between humans and androids" (388). On another note, Stephen Sohn also observes that *Blade*

Runner reflects a larger tendency in cultural production to reproduce the nineteenth century invention of the “yellow peril threat” (6-7). Elaborating further, Sohn avers that writers such as Lai challenge a vast repository of racialized tropes and metaphors associated with Asian bodies by rewriting how the film “orientaliz[es] the future” (11, 7). In this respect, Lai stages interventions in both the genre of science fiction and politically and culturally significant scientific events, such as NASA’s launch of Ham into space. But it is through the figure of Rachel that Lai surfaces *Blade Runner*’s subtext of race and slavery, rewriting what has come to be a representative cultural narrative about the perils and possibilities of scientific progress.

Aihwa Ong, a noted anthropologist and the editor of a collection of essays titled *Asian Biotech: Ethics and Communities of Fate*, argues that concerns about biological risk and vulnerabilities (13), and the politics of life and subject formation (30), figure Asian bodies as “surplus populations.” She writes that, “[c]apitalist development invests Asian bodies with an ‘uncanny surplus,’ that is, as embodied commodities that promise, in Marx’s formulation, the generation of never-ending surplus value and limitless desires” (34). Although Ong’s essay collection focuses on how Asian countries are coming to make use of their biological resources, her statement is also pertinent for thinking about racialized, diasporic, and labouring bodies as being at once implicated in multiple national, sovereign and extra-sovereign structures having to do with the harnessing and regulation of bodies as biological resources. In particular, Lai brings a gendered critique to this biopolitical project, exploring the interconnections of replicant subjectivity and these larger regimes of life, labour and production around the world. An important feature of Lai’s rewriting of *Blade Runner* involves a rewriting of Rachel, who Lai reads as a racialized figure of abjection and desire. As Rachel tells her readers, “this knowledge colds me / in my ice-fringed room / my asian fits this frost” (16). These haunting and evocative lines resonate with other stories of loss, absence and exploitation in *Automaton Biographies*, for instance, the plight of comfort women, women and girls forcibly incarcerated in prostitution camps during WWII by the

Japanese army in Japanese-occupied lands (61), the sale of women and girls in China in the same period (153), and the unnamed factory girl who has chemical burns, who suffocates, and who has a severed hand, but whose story strikes a sharp contrast to “the white / girl in the white dress” (52). Such contrasts undercut the image of the doll that runs through the collection, stemming from Rachel’s own image as an object of beauty and desire in the film.

Through her diary entry, Rachel begins to affectively map the links between her own silenced and subordinate status in *Blade Runner*, the production of replicant subjectivity, and wider patterns of exploitation involving female bodies. She reflects on Deckard’s murder of Pris (a “military pleasure model” who escapes from an offshore colony), and how her own involvement with Deckard marks her complicity in the murder: “a kiss is just a bullet wound” (22-23) she writes, but this statement turns on itself in the following pages, as the page of the diary entry itself becomes the site of “shattered language / tonal and broken” (24). The metaphoric synthesis of kiss and bullet wound draws Rachel’s subjectivity into the fold of violence, and the resonance of “shot wounds” blurs into the diary’s “shattered language” (24). Throughout the poem, Rachel repeatedly agitates her own insider – outsider position in the biotech regime. The poem loosely sketches associations that become intricately interlocked as we continue reading. She points out that her eyes are “assembly-line eyes,” once again evoking the association of her own cloned eyes – produced through the assembly line – and the eyes of assembly-line workers. Problematizing vision, Rachel addresses Olympia, the doll from E.T.A. Hoffman’s “The Sandman,” who is mistaken for a living woman in the story. “[S]pin about, wooden doll,” Rachel tells her, “my eyes fine as china / man could make them” (25). Connecting her own story to Olympia’s, Rachel notes that her own eyes are also “fine as china.” And yet, Olympia’s story is not the only one that Lai explores in examining Rachel’s subjectivity.

Rachel's persona also engages with other cultural narratives that *Blade Runner* derives from, such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and the Christian myth of origins. Addressing *Blade Runner* through these other narratives, Lai tracks the film's archive of cultural knowledge, and its own basis in the architecture of these other stories and myths about subjectivity. Rachel questions these cultural narratives in her heated address to *Blade Runner*, to Deckard, to Tyrell, and to her mother: "pretty policeman's seen the letter / the law of my birth / four years line my fibre / his rib? or any other part / belonging to a man" (20). In these lines, Rachel collapses the Christian myth of origins and the story of her own birth together, showing how these stories are woven together. The "fibre" of her being, evoking the connotation of thread, a filament woven like yarn into something bigger, blurs into the following line, and reverses the movement of the previous line. Is it "his rib?" she questions. Rachel's commentary reflects how the Christian myth about Eve's creation from Adam's rib underlies the mythic narrative of *Blade Runner*, and her own subordinate role to both Tyrell and Deckard. But in addressing these narratives together, Rachel's voice offers a cutting response to the powerful gendered and racial norms that frame her subjectivity on screen. As Robyn Morris observes, Rachel returns the gaze in her diary entries and lays claim to "an autonomous subjectivity" (24). Morris explains further that Rachel's diary entry "record[s] a previously othered and silenced insider's perspective on an iconic Hollywood film in a mode that is not fiction, and not autobiography . . . there is no accepted textual measure by which to categorise such writing" (24-25). As an intertext, *Automaton Biographies* stages a deconstructive critique through which Rachel's voice mocks, destabilizes and challenges the doctrine and agents of power at work in the narrative.

One of the most fascinating aspects about "Rachel" is the way Rachel draws attention to her body as an effect of the artificial and mechanical conditions of her "birth": "i tower my mythic birth / my father's a doll maker / his algorithms spill life / more human than human" (13). Exploring her nonhuman state, Rachel explores the

ambivalence of an “i” that emerges through an interrogation of her own formation as a subject. Even more strikingly, however, she tracks the calculating logic behind her own birth through an attention to time. Exploring how the doll maker’s rhythms are literally incorporated into her body, Rachel contends that her “body ticks out / its even rhythm too flawless / for birth” (16). This sense of bodily time is mirrored not only by Rachel’s heart, which is “an egg timer / spilling sand” (19), but is also reflected in the “the law of [her] birth / four years line [her] fibre” (20). She writes further, “my father’s enterprise / rations my emotional response time / pupil is the empty space / through which light passes” (14). Rachel notes that her “father’s enterprise” carefully measures the emotions she expresses. This directive not only monitors her subjectivity but the pupil, as one of the means through which humans express feeling, is only “empty space.” We learn soon enough, however, that Rachel fills this “empty space” with all her rage and sorrow.

The poem gradually builds momentum, as Rachel sets the doll maker’s tools into motion. As she tells Olympia and / or herself: “spin about, wooden doll” (25). Rachel gradually transforms the clock-work like mechanisms of her body into agitated, unsettling and angry movements. She disarranges the doll maker’s algorithms, the rhythms of time, and the design behind the “hand / that winds” her (17). “[M]y heart exudes a kind of love / a kind of mourning,” she writes, but later undoes this statement, and says, “this melancholy pisses me off / i rank my anger / [. . .] / i race my swagger” (30). Lai writes elsewhere, “i pride my fear / i clutch my hate / [. . .] / i marvel my limbs’ articulation” (17). In turning her melancholia into rage, her fear into pride, and in “clutching” her hate, Rachel rejects the intimate, calculating logic of Tyrell’s hold on her life. And moreover, she rewrites the determinate limits Tyrell imposes on her subjectivity.

Sianne Ngai has aptly dubbed the commodification of emotions as “psychic property” in her reading of Herman Melville’s “Bartleby the Scrivener” (61).

Biotechnologies raise a whole host of ethical questions about not only the limits of the new sciences, but also the transformation of those limits by variant forms of capitalism. Indeed, the interplay of biotechnologies and capital illustrates what gets to be called property, the legal and social determinants that come into play with respect to questions of ownership and who gets to own what, and also, more and more, the extension of property rights into not only the domain of the somatic (bodily tissues, organs, non-human animals), but also emotions and feelings, non-somatic features of social life which have been historically understood as being distinctly *human*. Lai explores Rachel's subjectivity to reflect, as Nikolas Rose questions, "[w]hat happens when it is the self itself that is subject to transformation by biomedical technology. When cognition, emotion, volition, mood, and desire are themselves opened to intervention" and I would add, when feelings, desires and cognition are subject to regimes of commodification? (187). Claims to personhood in this volatile context need to be considered in light of how racialized subjects themselves have been historically and variably read as human, inhuman, and as having feelings that exceed the parameters of humanness. Lai's Rachel thus explores not only the limits of apprehension when she asks how her memories are produced, but also reflects how this question is uncanny, a recursive symptom of the living past.

Works Cited

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. Ed. Werner Hamacher and David E. Wellbery. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998. Print.
- Ahmed, Sara. "Creating Disturbance: Feminism, Happiness and Affective Differences." *Working with Affect in Feminist Readings: Disturbing Differences*. Ed. Marianne Liljeström and Susanna Paasonen. London: Routledge, 2010. 31-44. Print. Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism.
- . *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004. Print.
- . "Multiculturalism and the Promise of Happiness." *New Formations* 63 (Winter 2007-2008): 121-137. *IngentaConnect*. Web. 20 July 2013.
- . *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham: Duke UP, 2010. *Ebrary*. Web. 10 July 2013.
- Amnesty International. "Oil & Injustice in Nigeria: Ken Saro-Wiwa." *Review of African Political Economy* 32.106 (December 2005): 636-637. *JSTORE*. Web. 28 November 2013.
- An Act Respecting British Nationality, Naturalization and Aliens. *Revised Statutes of Canada, c. 44*. Canada. 1927. *HeinOnline*. Web. 11 May 2014.
- An Act Respecting Citizenship, Nationality, Naturalization and Status of Aliens. *Statutes of Canada, c.15*. Canada. 1946. *Pier21*. Web. 29 April 2014.
- An Act Respecting Immigration. *Revised Statutes of Canada, c. 93*. Canada. 1910. *HeinOnline*. Web. 30 April 2014.
- Anderson, Kay J. *Race and the Crisis of Humanism*. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- . *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991. Print.
- "Apostrophe." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *Oxford UP*. Web. 12 November 2012.

- Appadurai, Arjun. *Fear of Small Numbers: an Essay on the Geography of Anger*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print. Public Planet Books.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. 1951. Orlando: Harcourt, 1994. Print.
- Backhouse, Constance. *Carnal Crimes: Sexual Assault Law in Canada, 1900-1975*. Toronto: Irwin Law, 2008. Print.
- . *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950*. Toronto, U of Toronto P, 1999. Print.
- Badmington, Neil. "Blade Runner's Blade Runners." *Semiotica – Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies* 173.1/4 (2009): 471-489. EBSCO. Web. 9 February 2011.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1981. Print.
- Bannerji, Himani. *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press and Women's P, 2000. Ebrary. Web. 23 March 2013.
- Barad, Karen. "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter." *Signs* 28.3 (Spring 2003): 801-831. JSTORE. Web. 8 February 2013.
- Bashford, Alison. *Imperial Hygiene: a Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health*. New York: Palgrave, 2004. Print.
- Bashford, Alison and Claire Hooker. "Contagion, Modernity and Postmodernity." Introduction. *Contagion: Historical and Cultural Studies*. Ed. Bashford and Hooker. London: Routledge, 2001. 1-12. Print.
- Bataille, Georges. *The Unfinished System of Non-Knowledge*. Ed. Stuart Kendall. Trans. Michelle Kendall and Stuart Kendall. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001. Print.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts*. Cambridge: Polity, 2004. Print.
- Beauregard, Guy. "Asian Canadian Studies: Unfinished Projects." *Canadian Literature* 199 (Winter 2008): 6-27. Print.
- . "The Emergence of 'Asian Canadian Literature': Can Lit's Obscene Supplement?" *Essays on Canadian Writing* 67 (1999): 53-73. Print.

- Bennett, Jane. *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001. Print.
- . *Vibrant Matter: a Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, Duke UP, 2010. Ebrary. Web. 16 February 2013.
- Berlant, Lauren Gill. "Affect in the End Times: A Conversation with Lauren Berlant." Interview by Jordan Greenwald. *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 20.2 (Spring/Summer 2012): 71-89. *Project Muse*. Web. 11 October 2013.
- . "Compassion (and Withholding)." Introduction. *Compassion: the Culture and Politics of an Emotion*. Ed. Berlant. New York: Routledge, 2004. 1-27. *Ingram*. Web. 13 June 2013.
- . "Intimacy: a Special Issue." Introduction. Ed. Lauren Berlant. Spec. issue of *Critical Inquiry* 24.2 (Winter 1998): 281-288. *JSTORE*. Web. 08 October 2013.
- Bertelsen, Lone and Andrew Murphie. "An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers: Félix Guattari on Affect and the Refrain." *The Affect Theory Reader*. Ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth. Durham: Duke UP, 2010. 138-157. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. 1994. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- Biehl, João. *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. Print.
- Bill C-24: An Act to Amend the Citizenship Act and To Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts. 2nd Reading. 41st Parl., 2nd sess. [Ottawa]: LegisInfo, 2014. *Parliament of Canada*. Web. 10 May 2014.
- Birke, Lynda. "Intimate Familiarities? Feminism and Human-Animal Studies." *Society & Animals* 10.4 (2002): 429-436. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 2 January 2014.
- Blade Runner*. Dir. Ridley Scott. Warner Brothers, 1982. Film.
- Blue, Gwendolyn and Melanie Rock. "Trans-Biopolitics: Complexity in Interspecies Relations." *Health* 15.4 (2010): 353-368. *SAGE*. Web. 3 January 2014.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. 1977. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. Print.
- Braidotti, Rosi. *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity, 2006. Print.
- Brand, Dionne. *What We All Long For*. Toronto: Vintage, 2005. Print.

- Brennan, Teresa. *The Transmission of Affect*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004. Print.
- Brydon, Anne and Sandra A. Niessen. "Adorning the Body." Introduction. *Consuming Fashion: Adorning the Transnational Body*. Ed. Brydon and Niessen. Oxford: Berg, 1998. ix-xvii. Print. Dress, Body, Culture.
- Brydon, Diana. "Dionne Brand's Global Intimacies: Practicing Affective Citizenship." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 76.3 (Summer 2007): 990-1006. *Project Muse*. Web. 23 April 2013.
- Buhler, Sarah. "Babies as Bargaining Chips? In Defence of Birthright Citizenship in Canada." *Journal of Law and Social Policy* 17 (2002): 87-114. *HeinOnline*. Web. 27 April 2014.
- Burkitt, Ian. *Bodies of Thought: Embodiment, Identity and Modernity*. London: SAGE, 1999. *Ebrary*. Web. 22 November 2013.
- Butler, Judith. "Changing the Subject: Judith Butler's Politics of Radical Resignification." Interview by Gary A. Olson and Lynn Worsham. *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 20.4 (2000): 727-765. *ERIC*. Web. 13 May 2012.
- . *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.
- . *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* 2009. London: Verso, 2010. Print.
- . *Giving an Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham UP, 2005. Print.
- . *Precarious Life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence*. 2004. London: Verso, 2006. Print.
- . *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997. Print.
- Butling, Pauline. "Literary Activism: Changing the Garde." *Writing in Our Time: Canada's Radical Poetries in English (1957-2003)*. By Butling and Susan Rudy. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2005. 229-254. Print.
- Butling, Pauline and Susan Rudy. Preface. *Writing in Our Time: Canada's Radical Poetries in English (1957-2003)*. By Butling and Rudy. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2005. xi-xiii. Print.
- Cain, Maureen. "Foucault, Feminism and Feeling: What Foucault Can and Cannot Contribute to Feminist Epistemology." *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*. Ed. Caroline Ramazanoglu. London: Routledge, 1993. 73-96. *Ebrary*. Web. 18 June 2013.

- Canguilhem, Georges. *The Normal and the Pathological*. Brooklyn: Zone, 1989. Print.
- Capperdoni, Alessandra. "Alter/nations – Long(ing) Poems: Reconfiguration of the Nation-Discourse in Experimental Canadian Poetry (1960s-1980s)." Diss. Simon Fraser U, 2006. *Summit*. Web. 29 November 2011.
- Caruth, Cathy. Introduction. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Ed. Caruth. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1995. 3-12, 151-157. Print.
- Chapman, Don. "The Lost Canadians." *Macleans*. 23 July 2013. Web. 10 August 2013. <blog.lostcanadian.com>.
- Chariandy, David John. "Black Canadas and the Question of Diasporic Citizenship." *Narratives of Citizenship: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples Unsettle the Nation-State*. Ed. Aloys N.M. Fleischmann, Nancy Van Styvendale and Cody McCaroll. Edmonton: U of Alberta P, 2011. 323-346. Print.
- . "'The Fiction of Belonging': On Second-Generation Black Writing in Canada." *Callaloo* 30.3 (Summer 2007): 818-829. *Project Muse*. Web. 26 May 2012.
- . *Soucouyant*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp, 2007. Print.
- . "Spirits of Elsewhere Past: A Dialogue on *Soucouyant*." Interview by Kit Dobson. *Callaloo* 30.3 (Summer 2007): 808-817. *JSTORE*. Web. 10 April 2013.
- Chen, Mel Y. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*. Durham, Duke UP, 2012. Ebrary. Web. 1 January 2013.
- Cheng, Anne Anlin. *The Melancholy of Race*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Print.
- Cho, Lily. "Affecting Citizenship: the Materiality of Melancholia." *Narratives of Citizenship: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples Unsettle the Nation-State*. Ed. Aloys N.M. Fleischmann, Nancy Van Styvendale and Cody McCaroll. Edmonton: U of Alberta P, 2011. 107-127. Print.
- . "Asian Canadian Futures: Diasporic Passages and the Routes of Indenture." *Canadian Literature* 199 (Winter 2008): 181-201. *EBSCO*. Web. 15 April 2013.
- . *Eating Chinese: Culture on the Menu in Small Town Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2010. Print.
- . "Intimacy Among Stranger: Anticipating Citizenship in Chinese Head Tax Photographs." *Interventions* 15.1 (2013): 10-23. *Routledge*. Web. 30 March 2014.

- . "Rereading Chinese Head Tax Racism: Redress, Stereotype, and Antiracist Critical Practice." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 75 (2002): 62-84. EBSCO. Web. 13 April 2013.
- Chow, Lily. *Chasing their Dreams: Chinese Settlement in the Northwest Region of British Columbia*. Prince George: Caitlin, 2000. Print.
- Chow, Rey. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Print.
- . *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993. Print.
- Chu, Sandra Ka Hon. "Reparation as Narrative Resistance: Displacing Orientalism and Recoding Harm for Chinese Women of the Exclusion Era." *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 18 (2006): 387-437. HeinOnline. Web. 30 April 2014.
- Clough, Patricia. "The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedicine and Bodies." *Theory, Culture & Society* 25.1 (2008): 1-22. SAGE. Web. 13 June 2011.
- Cohen, Robin. *Global Diasporas: an Introduction*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2008. Print. Global Diasporas.
- Coleman, Daniel. "Epistemological Cross-Talk: Between Melancholia and Spiritual Cosmology in David Chariandy's *Soucouyant* and Lee Maracle's *Daughters are Forever*." *Crosstalk: Canadian and Global Imaginaries in Dialogue*. Ed. Diana Brydon and Marta Dvořák. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012. 53-72. Print.
- . *White Civility: the Literary Project of English Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2006. Print.
- Coleman, Daniel and Donald Goellnicht. "Race into the Twenty-First Century." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 75 (Winter 2002): 1-29. EBSCO. Web. 11 November 2011.
- Conor, Liz. *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2004. Print.
- Cook-Deegan, Robert M. *The Gene Wars: Science, Politics and the Human Genome*. New York: Norton, 1994. Print.
- Cooper, Melinda. *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*. Seattle: U of Washington P, 2009. Print. In *Vivo: the Cultural Mediations of Biomedical Science*.

- Cosslett, Tess, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield. Introduction. *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods*. Ed. Cosslett, Lury and Summerfield. London: Routledge, 2000. 1-21. *Ebrary*. Web. 13 August 2013.
- Cuder-Domínguez, Pilar. "The Politics of Gender and Genre in Asian Canadian Women's Speculative Fiction." *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Ed. Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2008. 115-131. Print.
- Cvetkovich, Ann. "Legacies of Trauma, Legacies of Activism: ACT UP's Lesbians." *Loss: the Politics of Mourning*. Ed. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian. Berkeley: U of California P, 2003. 427-457. *Ebrary*. Web. 2 June 2012.
- Damasio, Antonio. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*. New York: Avon, 1994. Print.
- . *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. San Diego, Harcourt, 1999. Print.
- Dan, Shao. "Chinese by Definition: Nationality Law, Jus Sanguinis, and State Succession, 1909-1980." *Twentieth-Century China* 53.1 (November 2009): 4-28. *Project Muse*. Web. 10 May 2014.
- Davey, Frank. *When Tish Happens: the Unlikely Story of Canada's Most Influential Literary Magazine*. Toronto: ECW, 2011. *Ebrary*. Web. 2 September 2013.
- Davidson, Joyce and Christine Milligan. "Embodying Emotion Sensing Place: Introducing Emotional Geographies." *Social & Cultural Geography* 5.4 (December 2004): 523-532. *Taylor & Francis*. Web. 1 June 2012.
- Davidson, Michael. *On the Outskirts of Form: Practicing Cultural Poetics*. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2011. Print.
- Davis, Mike. *Planet of Slums*. Verso: London, 2006. Print.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983. Print.
- Delisle, Jennifer Bowering. "'A Bruise Still Tender': David Chariandy's *Soucouyant* and Cultural Memory." *Ariel: a Review of International English Literature* 41.2 (2011): 1-21. *Open Access*. Web. 1 September 2012.
- Demerson, Velma. *Incorrigible*. 2004. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2005. Print.

- . "Advocating Against Women's Lost Citizenship, Confinement & Sterilization." WordPress. Web. 10 November 2012.<velmademerson.wordpress.com/the-acts/>.
- Derksen, Jeff. "Making Race Opaque: Fred Wah's Poetics of Opposition and Differentiation." *West Coast Line* 29.3 (1995): 63-76. Print.
- . "National Literatures in the Shadow of Neoliberalism." *TransCanada Two: Literature, Institutions, Citizenship*. TransCanada Institute. U of Guelph, Guelph. 11-14 October 2007. *U of Guelph TransCanadas*. Web. 18 December 2008.
- . "Unrecognizable Texts: From Multicultural to Antisystemic Writing." *Telling it Slant: Avant-Garde Poetics of the 1990s*. Ed. Mark Wallace and Steven Marks. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2002. 145-159. Print.
- Deutscher, Penelope. "Foucault's *History of Sexuality, Volume I*: Re-reading its Reproduction." *Theory, Culture & Society* 29 (2012): 119-137. SAGE. Web. 9 April 2012.
- Devereux, Cecily. *Growing a Race: Nellie L. McClung and the Fiction of Eugenic Feminism*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2005. Print.
- Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* 1968. New York: Del Rey, 1996. Print.
- Dietrich, Michael R. "Richard Goldschmidt: Hopeful Monsters and Other 'Heresies.'" *Nature Reviews Genetics* 4.1 (January 2003): 68-74. *Nature Publishing Group*. Web. 15 August 2013.
- Dobson, Kit. "Transnational Subjectivities: Roy Miki's *Surrender* and Global Displacements." *Studies in Canadian Literature* 32.2 (2007): 162-176. *Erudit*. Web. 25 March 2013.
- "Dorothy Procter – A Survivor of Prison Experiments." *CKUT Time Capsule*. Radio CKUT 90.3 FM, McGill University, Montreal, 2 May 2013. Web. 13 December 2013. <<http://ckuttimecapsule.wordpress.com/2013/05/02/dorothy-proctor-a-survivor-of-prison-experiments/>>.
- Douglas, Mary and Baron Isherwood. *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*. 1979. London: Routledge, 1996. *Ebrary*. Web. 19 February 2013.
- Duden, Barbara. *Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn*. Trans. Lee Hoinacki. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993.

- "Economy." The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. *Oxford UP*. Web. 27 November 2013.
- Eng, David L. "Melancholia in the Late Twentieth-Century." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 25.4 (Summer 2000): 1275-1281. Special Issue: Feminisms at a Millennium. *JSTORE*. Web. 13 August 2012.
- Eng, David L. and David Kazanjian. "Mourning Remains." Introduction. *Loss: the Politics of Mourning*. Ed. Eng and Kazanjian. Berkeley, U of California P, 2003. 1-25. *Ebrary*. Web. 2 June 2012.
- The Erickson. Promotional Website. *Concord Pacific*. Web. 3 March 2013.
- Evans, Caroline. "Jean Patou's American Mannequins: Early Fashion Shows and Modernism." *Modernism/Modernity* 15.2 (April 2008): 243-263. *Project Muse*. Web. 23 September 2012.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Ed. Michel Senellart et al. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2008. Print.
- . *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. 1977. 2nd ed. New York: Vintage, 1995. Print.
- . *The History of Sexuality*. Trans. Robert Huxley. 1978. Vol. 1. New York: Vintage, 1990. Print.
- . "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." *The Foucault Reader*. Ed. Paul Rabinow. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. New York: Vintage Books, 2010. 76-100. Print.
- . *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*. Ed. Mauro Bertani et al. Trans. David Macey. New York: Picador, 2003. Print.
- Fournier, Lauren. "Meeting the Other: Re-conceiving the Asian Canadian Avant-Garde Through Collaboration." *West Coast Line* 45.3 (Fall 2011): 92-99. *ProQuest*. Web. 29 November 2012.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia." *The Penguin Freud Reader*. Ed. Adam Phillips. Strand: London, 2006. 310-326. Print.
- Frow, John. "Commodity." *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Ed. Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris. Malden: Blackwell, 2005. Print.

- Fuchs, Thomas. "The Phenomenology of Body Memory." *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement*. Ed. Sabine C. Koch, Thomas Fuchs, Michela Summa and Cornelia Müller. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2012. 9-22. *Ingram*. Web. 10 September 2013.
- Gatens, Moira. *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power, and Corporeality*. London: Routledge, 1996. *Ingram*. Web. 15 October 2013.
- Geertz, Clifford. *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic, 1983. Print.
- Gerlach, Neil, Sheryl N. Hamilton, Rebecca Sullivan and Priscilla L. Walton. *Becoming Biosubjects: Bodies, Systems, Technologies*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2011. Print.
- Gilbert, Jeremy. "Signifying Nothing: 'Culture,' 'Discourse,' and the Sociality of Affect." *Culture Machine* 6 (2004): 1-19. *Research Open Access Repository*. Web. 11 March 2013.
- Gilmour, Julie. "Interpreting Social Disorder: the Case of the 1907 Vancouver Riots." *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 67 (Spring 2012): 483-495. *SAGE*. Web. 17 September 2013.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993. Print.
- Glasbeek, Amanda. *Feminized Justice: the Toronto Women's Court, 1913-1934*. Vancouver: UBC P, 2009. Print.
- Goellnicht, Donald C. "A Long Labour: the Protracted Birth of Asian Canadian Literature." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 72 (Winter 2000): 1-41. *ProQuest*. Web. 15 September 2006.
- . "Asian Kanadian, Eh?" *Canadian Literature* 199 (Winter 2008): 71-99. *EBSCO*. Web. 13 October 2010.
- Goodman, Jordan, Anthony McElligott, and Lara Marks. "Making Human Bodies Useful: Historicizing Medical Experiments in the Twentieth Century." Ed. Goodman, McElligott, and Marks. *Useful Bodies: Humans in the Service of Medical Science in the Twentieth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003. 1-23. *Ebrary*. Web. 2 December 2013.
- Goto, Hiromi. *Hopeful Monsters*. Vancouver: Arsenal, 2004. Print.

- . "Trap Door to the Sublime: Hiromi Goto Finds Poetry in the Horrific, Beauty in the Mundane." Interview by Sook C. Kong. *Herizons* 18.2 (Fall 2004): 28-29, 46. EBSCO. Web. 10 August 2012.
- Gouk, Penelope and Helen Hills. "Towards Histories of Emotions." Introduction. *Representing Emotions: New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine*. Ed. Gouk and Hills. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. 15-34. Print.
- Grewal, Inderpal. *Transnational Americas: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Ebrary. Web. 12 August 2013.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Politics, Life, and Art*. Durham: Duke UP, 2011. eDuke. Web. 15 December 2013.
- . *Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies*. Routledge: New York, 1995. Print.
- . *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Ebrary. Web. 15 August 2013.
- . *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994. Print.
- Gunew, Sneja. "Rethinking Whiteness." Introduction. *Feminist Theory* 8.2 (2007): 141-147. SAGE. Web. 9 September 2013.
- Hacking, Ian. "Canguilhem Amid the Cyborgs." *Economy and Society* 27.2-3 (May 1998): 201-216. Taylor & Francis. Web. 21 May 2012.
- Hannah-Moffat, Kelly. *Punishment in Disguise: Penal Governance and Federal Imprisonment of Women in Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001. Print.
- Happe, Kelly E. *The Material Gene: Gender, Race, and Heredity After the Human Genome Project*. New York: New York UP, 2013. Project Muse. Web. 2 October 2013.
- Haraway, Donna. *Modest_Witness @Second_Millennium.FemaleMan@_Meets_OncoMouse™*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.
- . *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: the Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Harder, Lois and Lyubov Zhyznomirska. "Claims of Belonging: Recent Tales of Trouble in Canadian Citizenship." *Ethnicities* 12.3 (2012): 293-316. SAGE. Web. 27 April 2014.

- Harding, Jennifer and E. Deidre Pribam. "The Case for a Cultural Emotion Studies." Introduction. *Emotions: A Cultural Studies Reader*. Ed. Harding and Pribam. London: Routledge, 2009. 1-23. Print.
- Harvey, David. *The Enigma of Capital and the Crisis of Capitalism*. London: Profile, 2010. Print.
- Hayles, N. Katherine. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999. Print.
- Henderson, Jennifer. *Settler Feminism and Race Making in Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2003. Print.
- Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today* 29.1 (Spring 2008): 103-128. *Duke*. Web. 13 January 2009.
- . *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*. New York: Columbia UP, 2012. Print.
- . "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory." *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14.1 (2001): 5-37. *Project Muse*. Web. 27 September 2009.
- Ho, Tamara. "Larissa Lai's 'New Cultural Politics of Intimacy': Animal. Asian. Cyborg." *Social Text*. 4 January 2012. Web. 30 September 2012.
- Hobsbawm, Eric J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. 1990. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993. Print.
- Huo, Xia, et al. "Elevated Blood Levels of Children Guiyu, an Electronic Waste Recycling Town in China." *Environ Health Prospect* (July 2007): 1113-1117. *NCBI*. Web. 28 November 2013.
- Hutchings, Peter. "From Offworld Colonies to Migration Zones: Blade Runner and the Fractured Subject of Jurisprudence." *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 3.3 (2007): 381-397. *SAGE*. Web. 9 February 2011.
- "If Bill C-24 passes, Canadian Citizenship Will be Harder to Get and Easier to Lose." *Georgia Straight* 4 May 2014. *straight.com*. Web. 11 May 2014.
- Jaggar, Alison M. "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology." *Emotions: A Cultural Studies Reader*. Ed. Jennifer Harding and E. Deidre Pribam. London: Routledge, 2009. 51-68. Print.

- Johnson, Erica L. and Patricia Moran. *The Female Face of Shame*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2013. *Project Muse*. Web. 17 September 2013.
- Jones, Donna V. *Racial Discourses of Life Philosophy: Negritude, Vitalism and Modernity*. New York: Columbia UP, 2010. *Ebrary*. Web. 17 November 2013.
- Joseph, Maia, Christine Kim, Larissa Lai, and Christopher Lee. Introduction. *Tracing the Lines: Reflections on Contemporary Poetics and Cultural Politics in Honour of Roy Miki*. Ed. Maia, Kim, Lai and Lee. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2012. Print.
- Kamboureli, Smaro. *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2009. Print. TransCanada Ser.
- Katz, Cindi. "On the Grounds of Globalization: A Topography for Feminist Political Engagement." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26.4 (2001): 1213-1234. *JSTORE*. Web. June 2007.
- Kevles, Daniel. "Eugenics and Human Rights." *British Medical Journal* 319 (August 1999): 435-438. *NCBI*. Web. 5 May 2012.
- Kim, Christine. "The Politics of Print: Feminist Publishing and Canadian Literary Production." Diss. York U, 2004. *ProQuest*. Web. 26 March 2013.
- . "Racialized Diasporas, Entangled Postmemories, and Kyo Maclear's *The Letter Opener*." Ed. Christine Kim, Sophie McCall, and Melina Baum Singer. *Cultural Grammars of Nation, Diaspora, and Indigeneity in Canada*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012. 171-189. Print.
- . "Rita Wong's *monkeypuzzle* and the Poetics of Social Justice." *Studies in Canadian Literature* 32.2 (2007): 59-74. *Erudit*. Web. 1 April 2013.
- . "Ruscitations in Rita Wong's forage: Globalization, Ecologies, and Value Chains." *Open Letter: a Canadian Journal of Writing and Theory* 13.9 (Summer 2009): 166-173. SFU Library. Web. 5 April 2013.
- . "The Smell of Communities to Come: Jeremy Lin and Post-racial Desire." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 35.3 (2014). Special issue: *New Communities, New Racisms: Contemporary Asian Australia*. Guest editor: Audrey Yue (accepted). Print.
- Kinnear, Mary. *A Female Economy: Women's Work in a Prairie Province, 1870-1970*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1998. Print.
- Knowles, Lori P. in "Of Mice and Men: Patenting the Oncomouse." *The Hastings Center Report* 33.2 (March – April 2003): 6-7. *JSTORE*. Web. 19 January 2013.

- Kogawa, Joy. *Obasan*. 1981. Markham: Penguin, 1983. Print.
- Koivunen, Anu. "An Affective Turn? Reimagining the Subject of Feminist Theory." *Working with Affect in Feminist Readings: Disturbing Disturbances*. Ed. Marianne Liljeström and Susanna Paasonen. London: Routledge, 2010. 8-28. Print. Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism.
- Koshy, Susan. "Morphing Race into Ethnicity: Asian Americans and Critical Transformations of Whiteness." *Boundary 2* 28.1 (Spring 2001): 153-194. *Project Muse*. Web. 9 September 2013.
- . *Sexual Naturalization: Asian Americans and Miscegenation*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Ed. Leon S. Roudiez. Trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1980. Print.
- Kuhn, Annette. *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*. London: Verso, 1995. Print.
- Kulba, Tracy. "Citizen Crusaders: Social Hygiene and the Production of the Female Citizen in Post-World War One Canada." *West Coast Line* 42.3 (2008): 14-26. Print.
- Kulperger, Shelley. "Familiar Ghosts: Feminist Postcolonial Gothic in Canada." *Unsettled Remains: Canadian Literature and the Postcolonial Gothic*. Ed. Cynthia Sugars and Gerry Turcotte. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2009. 97-124. Print.
- Lai, Larissa. *Automaton Biographies*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp, 2009. Print.
- . "Corrupted Lineage: Narrative in the Gaps of History." *West Coast Line* 34.3 (Winter 2001): 40-53. Print.
- . "Future Asians: Migrant Speculations, Repressed History and Cyborg Hope." *West Coast Line* 38.2 (Fall 2004): 168-193. *CBCA*. Web. 5 February 2013.
- . "The Identity of the Body Has Not Yet Been Confirmed." *West Coast Line* 42.2 (Summer 2008): 137-139. *CBCA*. Web. 9 February 2011.
- . *Salt Fish Girl*. Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2002. Print.
- Lai, Larissa and Rita Wong. *sybil unrest*. Burnaby: LINEbooks, 2008. Print.

- Lai, Paul. "Stinky Bodies: Mythological Futures and the Olfactory Sense in Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl*." *MELUS* 33.4 (2008): 167-187. *MELUS*. Web. 8 December 2012.
- Lee, Christopher. "Asian Canadian Critical Practice as Commemoration." *Cultural Grammars of Nation, Diaspora, and Indigeneity in Canada*. Ed. Christine Kim, Sophie McCall and Melina Baum Singer. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012. 119-133. Print. TransCanada Series.
- . "Enacting the Asian Canadian." *Canadian Literature* 199 (Winter 2008): 28-44. *EBSCO*. Web. 18 March 2013.
- . "The Lateness of Asian Canadian Studies." *Amerasia Journal* 33.2 (2007): 1-17. Print.
- Lee, Christopher J. "*Jus Soli* and *Jus Sanguinis* in the Colonies: the Interwar Politics of Race, Culture, and Multiracial Legal Status in British Africa." *Law and History Review* 29.2 (2011): 497-522. *CRKN*. Web. 9 July 2013.
- Lee, Sky. *Disappearing Moon Cafe*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990. Print.
- Lee, Tara. "Promising Transnational Births: the Womb and Cyborg Poetics in Asian Canadian Literature." Diss. Simon Fraser U, 2006. *Summit*. Web. 24 July 2007.
- Lejeune, Philippe. *On Autobiography*. Ed. Paul John Eakin. Trans. Katherine Leary. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989. Print. Theory and History of Literature Vol. 52.
- Lemke, Thomas. *Biopolitics: an Advanced Introduction*. Trans. Eric Frederick Trump. New York: New York UP, 2011. Print.
- Levander, Caroline F. *Cradle of Liberty: Race, the Child, and National Belonging from Thomas Jefferson to W.E.B. Du Bois*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print. New Americanists.
- Lévinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity: an Essay on Exteriority*. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1969. Print. Duquesne Studies, Philosophical Ser.
- Levine, Allan. *The Devil in Babylon: Fear of Progress and the Birth of Modern Life*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2005. Print.
- Li, Xiaoping. "Fashioning the Body in Post-Mao China." *Consuming Fashion: Adorning the Transnational Body*. Ed. Anne Brydon and Sandra Niessen. Oxford: Berg, 1998. 71-89. Print. Dress, Body, Culture.
- . *Voices Rising: Asian Canadian Cultural Activism*. Vancouver: UBC P, 2007. Print.

- Lowe, Lisa. "The Intimacies of Four Continents." *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*. Ed. Ann Laura Stoler. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. 191-212. Ebrary. Web. 15 October 2013.
- Lye, Colleen. "Racial Form." *Representations* 104.1 (Fall 2008): 92-101. JSTORE. Web. 16 June 2013.
- Macey, David. "Rethinking Biopolitics, Race and Power in the Wake of Foucault." *Theory Culture Society* 26.6 (2009): 186-205. SAGE. Web. 10 May 2012.
- MacDonald, Tanis. "Dead Girl-Bag': The Janet Smith Case as Contaminant in Sky Lee's *Disappearing Moon Cafe*." *Studies in Canadian Literature* 27.1 (2002): 32-46. *Erudit*. Web. 10 September 2010.
- "Mannequin." Oxford Dictionaries. 2014. *Oxford UP*. Web. 1 October 2012.
- "Mannequin." The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. *Oxford UP*. Web. 1 October 2012.
- Marciniak, Katarzyna. "Immigrant Rage: 'Alienhood, 'Hygienic' Identities, and the Second World." *Differences* 17.2 (2006): 33-63. *Duke UP*. Web. 17 May 2012.
- Maher Jane-Maree. "The Promiscuous Placenta: Crossing Over." *Contagion: Historical and Cultural Studies*. Ed. Alison Bashford and Claire Hooker. London: Routledge, 2001. 201-216. Print.
- Markotić, Nicole. "'Stuck in the Acentred Gesture': Disabling Roy Miki's Poetry." *Tracing the Lines: Reflections on Contemporary Poetics and Cultural Politics in Honour of Roy Miki*. Ed. Maia Joseph, et al. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2012. 38-47. Print.
- Marlatt, Daphne. "Roy Miki: On the Move." *Tracing the Lines: Reflections on Contemporary Poetics and Cultural Politics in Honour of Roy Miki*. Ed. Maia Joseph et al. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2012. 17-19. Print.
- Martin, Emily. "The Fetus as Intruder: Mother's Bodies and Medical Metaphors." *Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots*. Robbie Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, eds. New York: Routledge, 1998. 125-142. Print.
- Martin, Randy. *Financialization of Daily Life*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2002. Print.
- Maslan, Susan. "The Anti-Human: Man and Citizen Before the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103.2/3 (Spring/Summer 2004): 357-374. SAQ. Web. 23 April 2012.

- . "The Dream of the Feeling Citizen: Law and Emotion in Corneille and Montesquieu." *SubStance* 35.1.109 (2006): 69-84. *JSTORE*. Web. 23 April 2012.
- Mason, Carol. "Minority Unborn." *Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions*. Ed. Lynn M. Morgan and Meredith W. Michaels. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1999. 159-174. Print.
- Massumi, Brian. "Fear (The Spectrum Said)." *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 13.1 (2005): 31-48. *Duke UP*. Web. 6 August 2012.
- . "Navigating Movements: A Conversation with Brian Massumi." Interview by Mary Zournazi. *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*. 2002. New York: Routledge, 2003. 210-242. Print.
- . *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Durham: Duke UP, 2002. Print.
- Mawani, Renisa. *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921*. Vancouver: UBC P, 2009. Print.
- . "In Between and Out of Place: Mixed-Race Identity, Liquor, and the Law in British Columbia, 1850-1913." *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. Ed. Razack, Sherene. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002. 47-69. *Ebrary*. Web. 29 August 2013.
- . "Specters of Indigeneity in British-Indian Migration, 1914." *Law & Society Review* 46.2 (2012): 369-403. *Wiley*. Web. 1 January 2013.
- Mbembe, Achille. "Necropolitics." Trans. Libby Meintjes. *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 11-40. *Duke UP*. Web. 3 January 2011.
- McAllister, Kirsten Emiko. *Terrain of Memory: a Japanese Canadian Memorial Project*. Vancouver: UBC P, 2010. Print.
- McCauley, Michael, Sara Minsky and Kasisomayajula Viswanath. "The H1N1 Pandemic: Media Frames, Stigmatization, and Coping." *BMC Public Health* 13.1 (2013): 1-16. *Open Access*. Web. 3 December 2013.
- McDermott, Rose. "The Feeling of Rationality: the Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science." *Perspectives on Politics* 2.4 (December 2004): 691-706. *JSTORE*. Web. 1 June 2012.
- McFarlane, Scott T. "Faking It: A Brief History of Hybridity and Human Biology." *West Coast Line* 34.3 (Winter 2001): n.pag. *ProQuest*. Web. 9 May 2012.

- Mckiernan-González, John. *Fevered Measures: Public Health and Race at the Texas-Mexico Border, 1848-1942*. Durham: Duke UP, 2012. Print.
- McLaren, Angus. "The Creation of a Haven for 'Human Thoroughbreds': the Sterilization of the Feeble-Minded and the Mentally Ill in British Columbia." *Canadian Historical Review* 67.2 (1986): 127-150. *U of Toronto Journals*. Web. 7 November 2013.
- . *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945*. Toronto: McClelland, 1990. Print.
- McLaren, Angus and Arlene Tigar McClaren. *The Bedroom and the State: the Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1980*. Toronto: McClelland, 1986. Print.
- McLaren, John, Robert Menzies, and Dorothy E. Chunn. Introduction. *Regulating Lives: Historical Essays on the State, Society, the Individual, and the Law*. Ed. McLaren, Menzies and Chunn. 3-22. Vancouver: UBC P, 2002. Print.
- McNeil, Maureen. "Nature." *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Ed. Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris. Malden: Blackwell, 2005. Print.
- "Mikhail M. Bakhtin." *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.
- Miki, Roy. "'Always Slippage': An Interview on a Collage/Poem Project in Process." Interview by Kirsten Emiko McAllister. *West Coast Line* 42.1 (Spring 2008): 148-159. *CBCA*. Web. 16 December 2008.
- . "Between the Photograph and the Poem: A Dialogue on Poetic Practice." Interview by Kirsten Emiko McAllister. *Tracing the Lines: Reflections on Contemporary Poetics and Cultural Politics in Honour of Roy Miki*. Ed. Maia Joseph, et al. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2012. 206-226. Print.
- . *Broken Entries: Race, Subjectivity, Writing*. Toronto: Mercury, 1998. Print.
- . *In Flux: Transnational Shifts in Asian Canadian Writing*. Edmonton: NeWest, 2011. Print.
- . *Mannequin Rising*. Vancouver: New Star, 2011. Print.
- . *Random Access File*. Red Deer: Red Deer College P, 1995. Print.

- . *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*. Vancouver: Raincoast, 2004. Print.
- . *Saving Face*. 1991. Winnipeg: Turnstone, 1991. Print.
- . *Surrender*. Toronto: Mercury, 2001. Print.
- . *There*. Vancouver: New Star, 2006. Print.
- Miller, William Ian. *The Anatomy of Disgust*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997. Print.
- Mitchinson, Wendy. *Giving Birth in Canada, 1900-1950*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2002. Print.
- Miyazaki, Hirokazu. *The Method of Hope: Anthropology, Philosophy, and Fijian Knowledge*. Stanford: Standford UP, 2004. Print.
- Morris, Robyn. "Cultural Criticism and Change: New Directions in Asian Canadian Writing." *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 25.1 (2012): 21-36. *Metapress*. Web. 18 March 2013.
- Mosby, Ian. "Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942-1952." *Social History* 46.91 (May 2013): 145-172. *Project Muse*. Web. 15 September 2013.
- Murray, Stuart. "Thanatopolitics: On the Use of Death for Mobilizing Political Life." *Polygraph* 18 (2006): 191-215. *Academia.edu*. Web. 3 January 2011.
- Ngai, Sianne. *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2005. Print.
- Noland, Carrie. *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures / Producing Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009. Print.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Upheavals of Thought: the Intelligence of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001. Print.
- Nyers, Peter. *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond States of Emergency*. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.
- Of Japanese Descent*. Prod. Dallas Jones and Shelly Leon. The National Film Board of Canada, 1945. Film.

- Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "On the Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race." *Asian American Studies: a Reader*. Ed. Min Song and Jean Wu. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2000. 199-208. Print.
- Oikawa, Mona. *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory, and the Subjects of Internment*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2012. Print. Studies in Gender and History.
- Ong, Aihwa. "An Analytics of Biotechnology and Ethics at Multiple Scales." Introduction. *Asian Biotech: Ethics and Communities of Fate*. Ed. Aihwa Ong and Nancy N. Chen. London, Duke UP, 2010. 1-52. *Ebrary*. Web. 25 May 2013.
- Pellegrini, Ann and Jasbir Puar. "Affect." *Social Text* 100 27.3 (Fall 2009): 35- 38. *Duke UP*. Web. 14 November 2012.
- Pelling, Margaret. "The Meaning of Contagion: Reproduction, Medicine and Metaphor." *Contagion: Historical and Cultural Studies*. Ed. Alison Bashford and Claire Hooker. London: Routledge, 2001. 15-38. Print.
- Phu, Thy. *Picturing Model Citizens: Civility in Asian American Visual Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2012. *Ebrary*. Web. 14 March 2013.
- Probyn, Elspeth. "Desire." *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Ed. Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris. Malden: Blackwell, 2005. Print.
- Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007. *Ebrary*. Web. 26 November 2012.
- Rabinow, Paul. *Essays on the Anthropology of Reason*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996. Print.
- Rajan, Kaushik Sunder. "The Capitalization of Life and the Liveliness of Capital." Introduction. *Lively Capital: Biotechnologies, Ethics, and Governance in Global Markets*. Ed. Rajan. Durham: Duke UP, 2012. *Ebrary*. Web. 11 December 2012.
- Rak, Julie. "Widening the Field: Auto/biography Theory and Criticism in Canada." Introduction. *Auto/biography in Canada: Critical Directions*. Ed. Rak. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2005. 1-29. *Ebrary*. Web. 12 July 2013.
- Reumper, Wendy. "Locking Them Up: Incarcerating Women in Ontario, 1857-1931." *Law, Society, and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*. Ed. Louis A. Knafla and Susan W.S. Binnie. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995. 351-378. Print.

- Richards, Graham. "Emotions into Words—or Words into Emotions." *Representing Emotions: New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine*. Ed. Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills. 49-65. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. Print.
- Robbins, Bruce. "The Smell of Infrastructure: Notes Toward an Archive." *Boundary 2* 34.1 (Spring 2007): 25-33. *Duke UP*. Web. 3 April 2013.
- Rogoff, Irit. *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2000. Print.
- Rose, Nikolas. *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007. Print. Formation Ser.
- Roy, Wendy. "The Word is Colander: Language Loss and Narrative Voice in Fictional Canadian Alzheimer's Narratives." *Canadian Literature* 203 (Winter 2009): 41-61. *EBSCO*. Web. 9 February 2011.
- Sakai, Naoki and Jon Solomon. "Addressing the Multitude of Foreigners, Echoing Foucault." Introduction. *Translation, Biopolitics, Colonial Difference*. Ed. Sakai and Solomon. Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2006. 1-35. Print. *Traces*: 4.
- Sangster, Joan. "Between the Lines, Joan Sangster in Conversation with Sara Alaica. Interview by Sara Alaica. *Amazon*. Web. 13 March 2012.
- . "Defining Sexual Promiscuity: 'Race,' Gender and Class in the Operation of Ontario's Female Refuges Act, 1930-1960." *Crimes of Colour: Racialization and the Criminal Justice System in Canada*. Ed. Wendy Chan and Kiran Mirchandani. Toronto: Broadview, 2002. 45-63. *Ebrary*. Web. 10 June 2013.
- . "Incarcerating 'Bad Girls': the Regulation of Sexuality Through the Female Refuges Act in Ontario, 1920-1945." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 7.2 (October 1996): 239-275. *JSTORE*. Web. 11 June 2013.
- . "Incarcerating 'Bad Girls': the Regulation of Sexuality Through the Female Refuges Act in Ontario, 1920-1945." *Moral Regulation and Governance in Canada: History, Context and Critical Issues*. Ed. Amanda Glasbeek. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' P, 2006. 189-216. Print.
- . "Reforming Women's Reformatories: Elizabeth Fry, Penal Reform, and the State, 1950-1970." *The Canadian Historical Review* 85.2 (June 2004): 227-252. *Project Muse*. Web. 17 June 2013.
- . *Regulating Girls and Women: Sexuality, Family and the Law in Ontario, 1920-1960*. Don Mills: Oxford UP, 2001. Print.

- Sassen, Saskia. "Locating Cities in on Global Circuits." Introduction. *Global Networks, Linked Cities*. Ed. Saskia Sassen. New York: Routledge, 2002. 1-36. Print.
- . *A Sociology of Globalization*. New York: Norton, 2007. Print. Contemporary Societies.
- Shildrick, Margrit. *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self*. London: SAGE, 2002. Print. Theory, Culture & Society.
- Shih, Shu-Mei. "Comparative Racialization: an Introduction." *PMLA* 123.5 (October 2008): 1347-1362. Special Issue: Comparative Racialization. *MLA*. Web. 10 December 2011.
- Silva, Denise Ferreira Da. *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2007. Print.
- Silverman, Kaja. *The Threshold of the Visual World*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print.
- Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. "De/Colonization and the Politics of Discourse in Women's Autobiographical Practices." Introduction. *De-Colonizing the Subject: the Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*. Ed. Smith and Watson. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1992. xiii-xxxi. Print.
- Sohn, Stephen. "Alien/Asian: Imagining the Racialized Future." *MELUS* 33.4 (Winter 2008): 5-22. *JSTORE*. Web. 14 November 2012.
- Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea: Can the Subaltern Speak?* Ed. Rosalind C. Morris. New York: Columbia UP, 2010. 237-291. Print.
- Sprott, Jane B. and Anthony N. Doob. *Justice for Girls: Stability and Change in the Youth Justice Systems of the United States and Canada*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2009. Print. Adolescent Development and Legal Policy.
- Stearns, Peter N. *Consumerism in World History: the Global Transformation of Desire*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2006. *EBSCO*. Web. 22 April 2013.
- Stephen, Jennifer. "The 'Incorrigible,' the 'Bad,' and the 'Immoral': Toronto's 'Factory Girls' and the Work of the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic." *Law, Society, and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*. Ed. Louis A. Knafla and Susan W.S. Binnie. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995. 405-439. Print.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2002. Print.

- Strange, Carolyn. "Postcard from Plaguetown: SARS and the Exoticization of Toronto." *Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization and Security, 1850 to the Present*. Ed. Alison Bashford. New York: Palgrave, 2006. 219-239. Print.
- . *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995. Print.
- . *The Velvet Glove: Maternalistic Reform at the Andrew Mercer Ontario Reformatory for Females, 1874-1927*. Thesis. U of Ottawa, 1983. ProQuest. Web. 12 June 2013.
- Strange Carolyn and Jennifer A. Stephen. "Eugenics in Canada: A Checkered History, 1850s-1990s." *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*. Ed. Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010. 523-538. Print.
- Stryker, Susan. "My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage." *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. New York: Routledge, 2006. 244-256. Print.
- Sugars, Cynthia and Gerry Turcotte. "Canadian Literature and the Postcolonial Gothic." Introduction. *Unsettled Remains: Canadian Literature and the Postcolonial Gothic*. Ed. Sugars and Turcotte. vii-xxvi. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2009. Print.
- Thacker, Eugene. *The Global Genome: Biotechnology, Politics, and Culture*. Cambridge: MIT P, 2006. Print. Leonardo.
- . "The Shadows of Atheology: Epidemics, Power and Life After Foucault." *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.6 (2009): 134-152. SAGE. Web. 10 May 2012.
- Thompson, Debra. "Racial Ideas and Gendered Intimacies: the Regulation of Interracial Relations in North America." *Social & Legal Studies* 18.3 (2009): 353-371. SAGE. Web. 30 March 2014.
- Thrift, Nigel. "Pass It On: Towards a Political Economy of Propensity." *Emotion, Space and Society* 1 (2008): 83-96. Science Direct. Web. 5 March 2013.
- Tiessen, Matthew. "(In)Human Desiring and Extended Agency." *Ecologies of Affect: Placing Nostalgia, Desire, and Hope*. Ed. Tonya K. Davidson, Ondine Park and Rob Shields. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2011. 127-142. Print.
- Turda, Marius. *Modernism and Eugenics*. New York: Palgrave, 2010. Print. Modernism and....

- Ty, Eleanor. *Unfastened: Globality and Asian North American Narratives*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2010. *Ebrary*. Web. 1 October 2013.
- Ty, Eleanor and Christl Verduyn. Introduction. *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Ed Ty and Verduyn. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2008. 1-27. Print.
- Valverde, Mariana. *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*. Toronto: McClelland, 1991. Print.
- Wah, Fred. *Diamond Grill*. Edmonton: NeWest, 1996. Print.
- . *Faking It: Poetics and Hybridity, Critical Writing 1984-1999*. Edmonton: NeWest, 2000. Print. *Writer as Critic Ser.*
- Wahlsten, Douglas. "Leilani Muir versus the Philosopher King: Eugenics on Trial in Alberta." *Genetica* 99: 185-198 (1997). *Springer Link*. Web. 9 April 2012.
- Waterworth, Jayne. M. *A Philosophical Analysis of Hope*. New York: Palgrave, 2004. Print.
- Weaver, Rachael. Review of *Peripheral Fear: Transformations of the Gothic in Canadian and Australian Fiction*, by Gerry Turcotte. *JASAL* 10 (2010): 1-3. *Open Access*. Web. 16 December 2013.
- Webb, Darren. "Modes of Hoping." *History of the Human Sciences* 20.3 (2007). 65-83. *SAGE*. Web. 1 September 2013.
- Winks, Robin W. *The Blacks in Canada: a History*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1971. Print.
- Wolfe, Cary. *What is Posthumanism?* Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2010. *Ebrary*. Web. 28 September 2012.
- Woodsworth, James S. *Strangers within Our Gates: Or, Coming Canadians*. 1909. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1972. Print.
- Wong, Rita, et al. "Epilogue: A Conversation on Unfinished Projects." *Canadian Literature* 199 (2008): n.pag. *ProQuest*. Web. 10 December 2012.
- . *forage*. Gibsons, BC: Nightwood, 2007. Print.
- Yu, Henry. "Refracting Pacific Canada: Seeing our Uncommon Past." *BC Studies* 156/157 (Winter 2007/Spring 2008): 5-10. *EBSCO*. Web. 10 May 2013.

Yu, Timothy. "Form and Identity in Language Poetry and Asian American Poetry." *Contemporary Literature* 41.3 (Autumn 2000): 422-461. *JSTORE*. Web. 29 November 2012.

Žižek, Slavoz. *The Parallax View*. Cambridge: MIT, 2006. Print.

Žižek, Slavoz, Eric L. Santner, and Kenneth Reinhard. *The Neighbor: Three Inquiries in Political Theology*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2005. Print. Religion and Postmodernism.