

**UNEQUAL PARTICIPANTS: RACE AND SPACE
IN THE INTERRACIAL INTERACTIONS
OF THE CARIBOO GOLD FIELDS, 1860-1871**

by

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Abstract

Contrary to traditional historiography, the Cariboo region of British Columbia was the site of complex interracial interactions involving Chinese, White, Black, and Native participants during the gold field period from 1860-1871. The presence of three sub-regions within the Cariboo; the hinterland, gold towns, and mines, explains the complexity of these interactions. Different social norms characterized and shaped the nature of interracial interactions in each sub-region. In the hinterland, a diversity of economies ensured that interracial interactions took place without the White dominance that characterized the towns and mines. Elite Whites attempted to create the towns as an idealized space through the application of social norms that reinforced their power. Finally, a community of gold miners dominated by working class Whites attempted to dictate social norms, and therefore interracial interactions, in the mines. In each of these spaces, interracial interactions responded to the power relationships present in sometimes contradictory ways.

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As with any work of his nature, it is far more than the product of one person. This thesis would never have seen the light of day without the support of many key people. My heartfelt thanks goes to the staff and curators at the British Columbia Archives, the Anglican Diocese of the Cariboo Archives, the Anglican Provincial Synod of British Columbia and Yukon Archives, the Cariboo-Chilcotin Archives, the Quesnel District and Museum Archives, and at the University of British Columbia's Special Collections, all of whom were exceedingly helpful in conducting my research. Correspondence, discussions and advice came from C.S. Giscombe, Elder Jess Mitchell, James Murton, Keir Reeves and Richard Mackie. I must especially thank Bill Quackenbush, curator of the Barkerville Historic Town and Archives, both for the access he granted me to the archives and town and for the personal guidance and expertise he shared during my visit.

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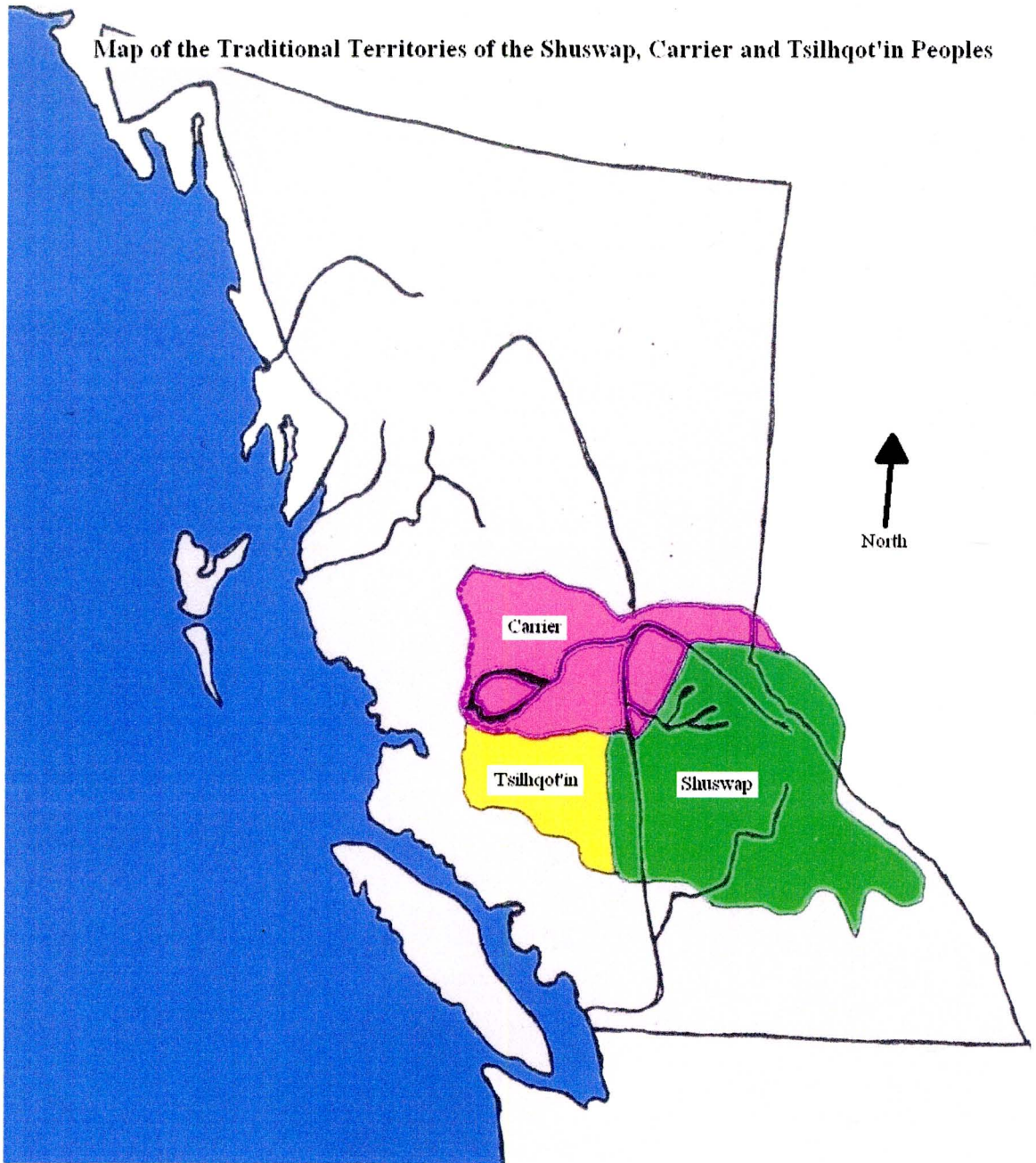
Introduction

For centuries, gold has fired the dreams of humanity. Empires have risen and fallen under the weight of this elusive substance. The 19th century saw the rise of the “gold rush”: waves of humanity that followed rumours of gold around the globe, reshaping and redefining social and physical environments wherever they went. In 1860, the rush for gold hit the Cariboo. When news of Peter Dunlevy’s 1859 strike on the Horsefly River became known,¹ thousands of White, Chinese, and Black Newcomers poured into the traditional territories of the Tsilhqot’in (Chilcotin), Shuswap, and Carrier peoples, (Map 1) imposing their own conception of space, the Cariboo, (Map 2) and their own social norms on to the landscape.² The social norms and expectations bound up in the idea of the Cariboo acted to shape interactions between “racial” groups, such as the Chinese, Natives, Blacks, and Whites.

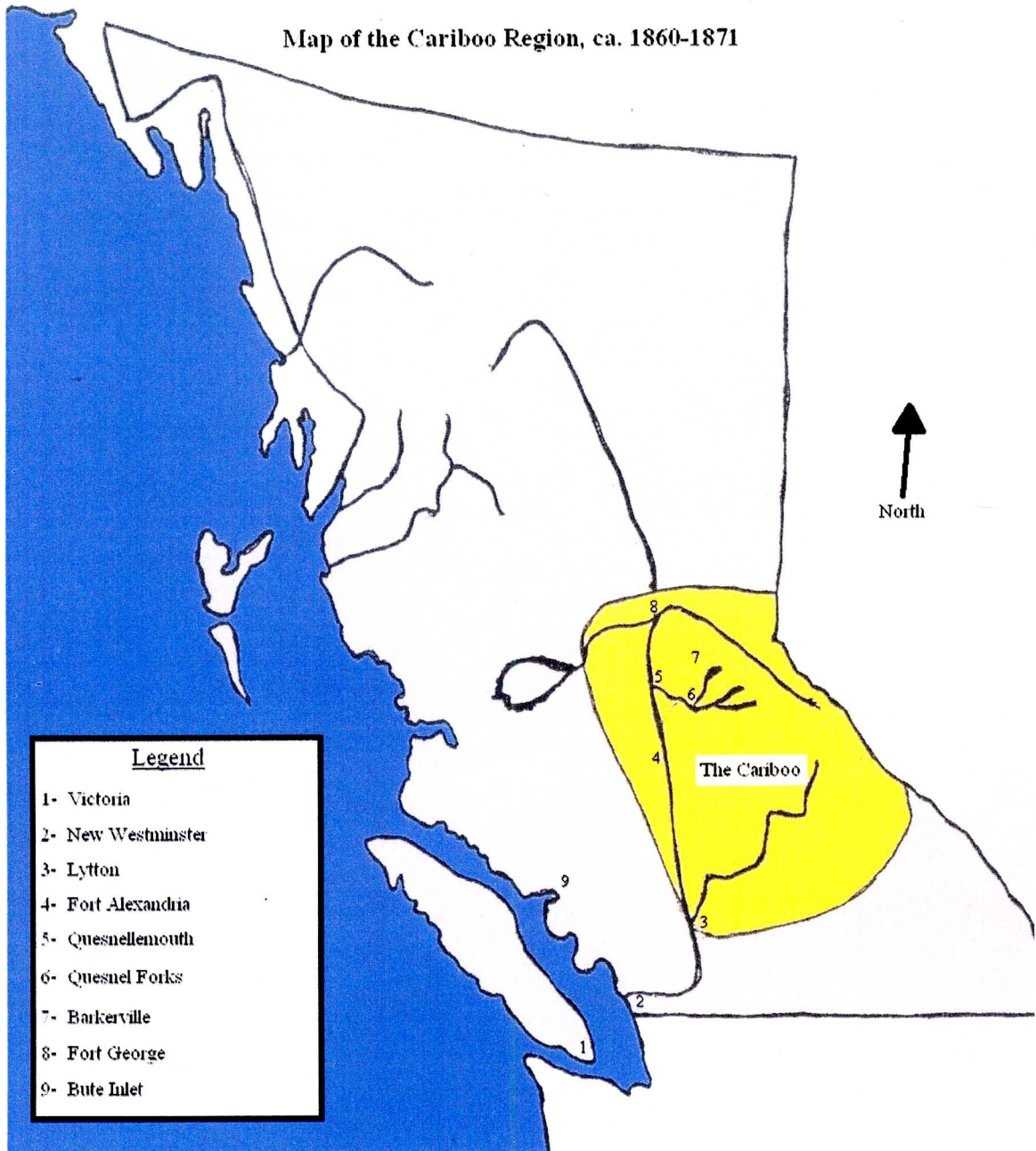
¹ Robin Skelton, *They Call it The Cariboo* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1980), 34-36. Personal Communication from Elder Jess Mitchell. 6 July, 2004.

² Margaret L. Tobey, “Carrier” in *Handbook of North American Indians*, William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed. Vol. 6. Subartic. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 414. Marianne Boelscher Ignace, “Shuswap,” in *Handbook of North American Indians*, William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed. vol. 12. Plateau. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 175, 205. Robert B. Lane, “Chilcotin,” *Handbook of North American Indians*, William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed. vol. 6. Subarctic. (1981), 402. It should be noted that these groupings are anachronistic European constructions and had little relevance during the period. For the designation of the Native groups I use the traditional nomenclature rather than the more common nomenclature found in the majority of historical records and familiar to most readers. Because of this, the first time I use a traditional name, I include the more common label.

Map 1: Traditional Territories of the Native Nations.

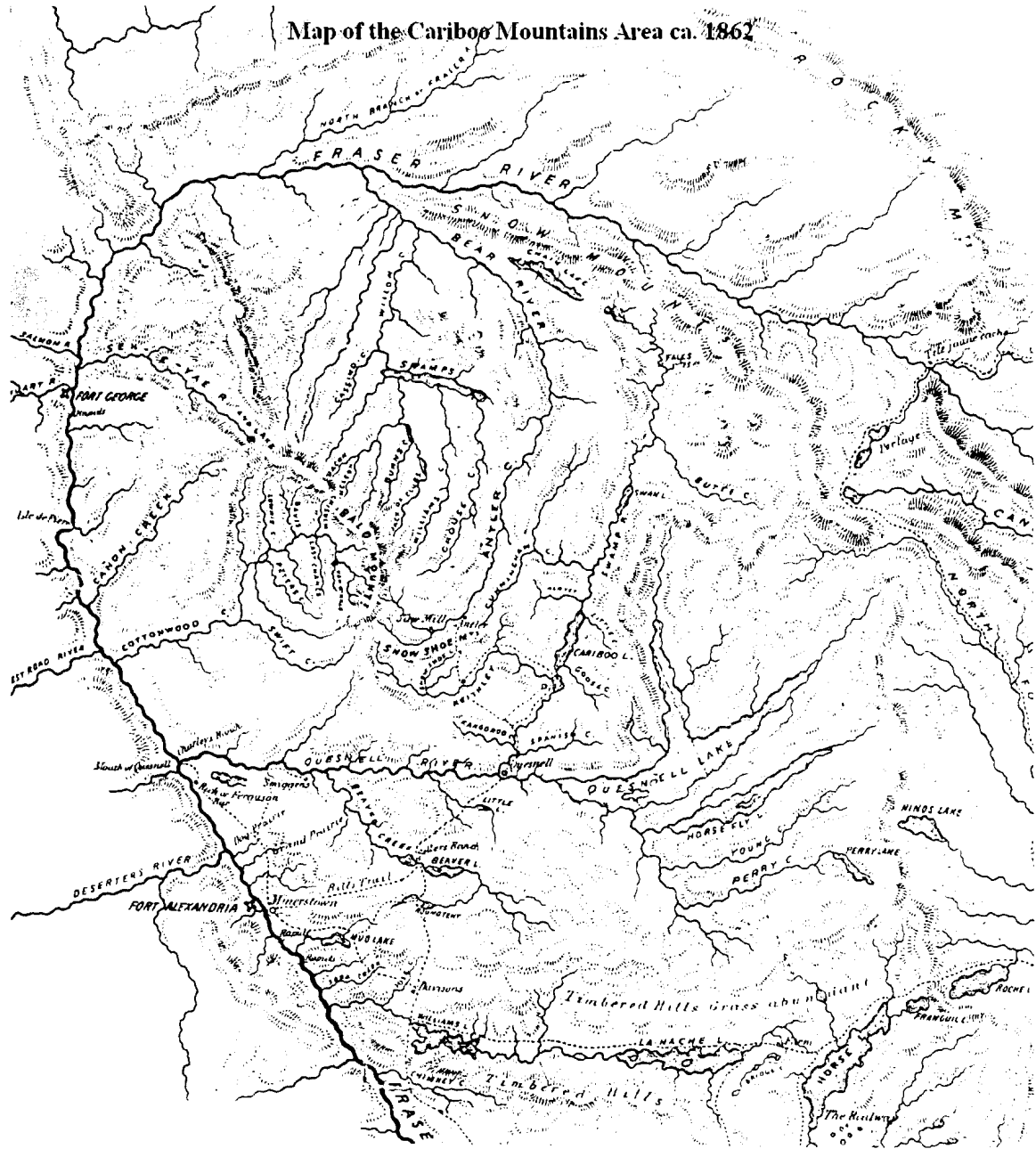


Map 2: Cariboo Region.



Map 3: Cariboo Mountains.

Detail of Gust. Epner, "Map of the Gold Regions in British Columbia, 1862," BCARS, CM A1913. The area the main gold field towns occupied is located in the centre of this map in the Cariboo Mountains.



Map ©B.C. Archives, by permission.

As historian Adele Perry has noted, race served as a major organizing trope in the Cariboo, subsuming, to an extent, gender and class concerns within it.³ That is, an interaction between, for example, a mine owner and an employee became something more when the interaction occurred between a White mine owner and a Chinese employee. While these exchanges took place over a constantly shifting terrain of racial meanings and definitions due to the constraints of language and scope, this thesis uses static-sounding racial terms such as Chinese, Black, White, and Native to argue about the interracial interactions that occurred in the Cariboo. An examination of this type of social interaction can help reveal the ways in which “race” affected the experiences of different racial groups, not only in the Cariboo, but in similar contexts as well.

From 1860 to 1871, the Cariboo was a liminal space that opened up possibilities for a variety of social interactions to occur. During this period, the Cariboo saw a shift in settlement patterns from scattered Native settlements and isolated fur trade posts to a heterogeneous Newcomer population concentrated in the Cariboo Mountains. (Maps 1, 2, 3) Concurrent with this demographic and spatial shift was the transition from the fur trade and subsistence economies to an industrialized gold mining economy. Changing ideas as to the meaning and nature of race permeated the constantly changing early Cariboo society. Like Rome, the Cariboo was not built in a day; instead, its Native and Newcomer inhabitants continually socially created it.

A wide variety of interracial interactions occurred between the Chinese, White, Black, and Native inhabitants of the Cariboo. These interactions occurred within one of three sub-regions socially constructed by the Newcomers: the mines, the gold field

³ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 44.

towns, or the surrounding hinterland. In each of these sub-regions, economic processes encouraged the formation of different power relations between the inhabitants. In turn, these power relations interacted with other social and cultural factors, physical realities, and the actions of the inhabitants to shape the nature of interracial interactions in the Cariboo. This thesis seeks to account for the variations in a specific type of social interaction, namely interracial interactions or those interactions that occurred between groups or individuals in which “Race” was a factor. Rooting interracial interactions in a particular “place” in the hinterland, towns or mines allows an examination of how a location within one of these sub-regions shaped the nature of the interracial interactions that occurred in the Cariboo gold fields.

Traditionally, the historiography of the Cariboo, like the historiography of most gold rushes, has concentrated on the Newcomer societ(ies) that occupied the gold field towns and mines.⁴ Unfortunately, this focus has denigrated the importance of the hinterland in analyses of the Cariboo. The power relationships and interracial interactions of all three sub-regions were inter-dependent. The hinterland cannot be understood without reference to the towns and mines, nor can the mines and towns be understood without reference to the hinterland. For instance, Whites could not describe, let alone understand, the “civilization” of the towns without reference to the “savagery” of the hinterland or the somewhat distasteful “roughness” of the mines themselves.

Additionally, traditional historiography has focused on White and, to a lesser extent, Chinese, miners. Little attention is given to the impact of Black and Native participants in the Cariboo, yet both Blacks and Natives affected the interracial

⁴ See, for example: Marie Elliot, *Gold and Grand Dreams: Cariboo East in the Early Years* (Horsdal & Schubert, 2000). F.W. Howay and E.O.S. Schofield, *British Columbia from the Earliest Times to the Present*. I-IV (Vancouver: 1914).

interactions of the Chinese and Whites and were, in turn, affected by them. Only by re-contextualizing the towns and mines with the hinterland, and broadening our analysis to include previously silenced voices, can we begin to understand the nature of interracial interactions in the Cariboo.

Differences between how the economic activities of a given area related to gold mining, the primary economic engine of the Cariboo, largely determined the definition of each of the three sub-regions of the Cariboo. The common impetus of gold propelled Black, White, and Chinese Newcomers to the Cariboo and shaped how they understood the spatiality of the region. To the Newcomers, gold mining was the reason for the existence of the Cariboo and represented the future of the region. Of course, Natives, to whom gold mining was not central to their understanding of the region, had a very different perception of the space the Newcomers labelled the Cariboo. The influence and nature of the gold economy distinguished each of the sub-regions. Specifically, the gold field economy shaped the power relationships present in each sub-region. In the towns and mines where the gold field economy was dominant, the Newcomers prioritized the facilitation of mining and mining interests over all other concerns, while in the hinterland, where the gold field economy was one of three major economies, power relationships between Natives and Newcomers were far more balanced. Power relationships in the Cariboo could be encoded or manifested in several different ways. The most important, for our purposes, is the racial encoding of these relationships.

Unlike in the towns or mines, Native peoples who did not fall under the control of the colonial state dominated the hinterland.⁵ In the hinterland, where the colonial state was virtually ineffective in regulating space, Native-Newcomer interracial interactions occurred over a geography of Newcomer fear.⁶ Native dominance and a lack of state power in the hinterland meant that many Native-Newcomer interracial interactions were favourable to the Natives in comparison to the situation in the towns and mines. Native dominance and its effects also affected interactions between Newcomer groups. In particular, the lack of state regulation encouraged interracial interactions that did not conform to the town elites' wishes to occur between Newcomer groups along the Cariboo Wagon Road and in the roadhouses.

Support and facilitation of gold mining characterized the gold field town sub-region. One group in particular, the British-influenced elites who controlled positions of power in the gold field towns, such as editors, magistrates, firemen, and politicians, sought to impose their vision of social relations on the Cariboo. While the town elites desired to shape the entire Cariboo, limited resources meant they had to focus on those areas that had the most importance to them, namely, the gold field towns and mines. One step removed from the economic activity of gold mining, the town elites constructed the space of the gold field towns to prioritize a certain social order they believed countered the somewhat unavoidable "roughness" of the gold mines themselves. The elites also

⁵ "New Diggings- Excitement- Poisoned Salmon," *Daily British Colonist*, 15 July, 1859. "Further From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 6 April, 1861. "Additional From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 11 September, 1861. "The Roads," *British Columbian*, 16 March, 1865. "Trans-Continental Railroad," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868.

⁶ *British Columbian*, 17 September, 1862. Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 25 September, 1861. "The Miners Returning," *British Columbian*, 18 October, 1862. Brutus, "Letter From Our Richfield Correspondent," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 September, 1863. Robert Stevenson, "Rose Expedition of 1862," BCARS MS 0315, Robert Stevenson Fonds, 1838-1922, 1862. Thomas Robert Mitchell, "Letter to Parents, 1862," 12 pages, 7 October, 1862, BCARS MS 0838.

constructed the towns to be a dichotomous “civilization” to the hinterland’s “savagery.” The gold field towns therefore became sites of prioritized British social norms and behaviours.⁷ These social norms had a spatiality to them that depicted the gold field towns as an idealized space. In reality however, various factors meant that the town elites were unable to enforce this idealized space with the result that a variety of interracial interactions occurred that challenged the idealized space of the gold field towns.

The third sub-region was the gold mines themselves. The mines were the focal point of power relations, and hence interracial interactions, in the Cariboo. A dominating concern with property and access to the gold mines characterized interracial interactions in the mines themselves.⁸ Alone, the colonial state was unable to effectively monitor the mines, but the internal surveillance of the miners complemented this surveillance. Specifically, a “community of miners” predominately consisting of White and Black men existed in the mines. These miners regulated the mines according to what they defined as proper mining behaviour and privileged Black and White miners’ participation while restricting the participation of the Chinese and Natives.⁹ In the mines, interracial interactions had to respond to this “community of miners.”

⁷ I.D.C., “A Man’s a Man for A’ That,” *British Columbian*, 4 June, 1862. ***, “William’s Creek,” *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1863. K., “Letter From Richfield,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 July, 1864. “Cariboo Letter,” *Daily British Colonist*, 23 August, 1864. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. “Reception of the Governor,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869.

⁸ “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 August, 1867. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 August, 1868. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” vol. 2, 9 June, 1865, BCARS GR 0584.

⁹ “News From Above,” *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. “Arrivals From the River,” *Daily British Colonist*, June 10, 1861. Argus, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. Vialor, “En Route to Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863. “Labor,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 June, 1870. See any issue of *Cariboo Sentinel* for its “Mining Intelligence” column that scrutinized the gold mines.

It would be overly simplistic, however, to attribute differences in interracial interactions solely to their locations within socially constructed sub-regions of the Cariboo. The economic activities, and the power relations they informed, that largely characterized each sub-region also interacted with physical realities and the socio-cultural “baggage” held by each group to shape the interracial interactions within each sub-region.

Human and physical geography formed the basis of the physical realities that influenced the form of interracial interactions in the Cariboo gold fields. Prior to the Fraser River gold rush of 1858, there had been only rather isolated Newcomer settlements scattered throughout British Columbia.¹⁰ The only Newcomer settlements that pre-dated the Cariboo gold rush of the early 1860s were relatively remote fur-trading forts at the confluence or along the course of the major navigable waterways in the region. In the Cariboo Mountains, the site of the main gold deposits, no previous Newcomer settlements existed.¹¹ In contrast, the Native peoples were semi-nomadic and widely dispersed along the waterways of the region, with at least one group, the Cariboo Mountains Band, located in the main gold field area.¹²

The miners that came in pursuit of gold had virtually no existing Newcomer infrastructure to use. Outside of limited routes and settled areas, Newcomers had to rely on the pre-existing transportation routes of the Tsilhqot'in, Shuswap, and Carrier

¹⁰ Tina Loo, *Making Law, Order, and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), xiii.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Elizabeth Furniss, *Dakelh Keyoh: The Southern Carrier in Earlier Times* (Quesnel: Quesnel School District, 1993), 5-7.

peoples.¹³ The lone major road, the Cariboo Wagon Road, was only completed in 1865 and took almost a month to travel. The limited ability of non-Natives to penetrate into the hinterland underscored the dominance of Natives in the area surrounding the towns and mines. Because the gold field towns existed to service the gold mines, the location of the major deposits had the obvious effect of concentrating the bulk of Newcomer settlement in a small spatial area in the Cariboo Mountains. These factors encouraged the persistence of a relatively independent hinterland region at the same time that they helped focus the concerns of the gold field society inward toward the towns and mines of the Cariboo Mountains. Additionally, as the geographer Robert Galois noted, the nature of the gold deposits in the Cariboo Mountains necessitated industrialized resource extraction and encouraged the formation of companies that shaped the economic and social interactions of the Cariboo.¹⁴

Each group in the Cariboo also brought “cultural baggage” with them informed by their histories and experiences prior to their participation in the Cariboo. The Tsilhqot’in, Shuswap, and Carrier peoples all occupied different portions of the territory that the Newcomers designated the “Cariboo.”¹⁵ (Map 1) These Native peoples had varying degrees of contact with Europeans. Some groups, such as the Shuswap and Carrier, had a relatively high degree of involvement in the fur trade.¹⁶ Indeed, the Lhtakot’en and the Lheidli T’enneh, sub-groups of the Carrier, modified their seasonal rounds to be in closer

¹³ “Roads,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July 1868.

¹⁴ Robert M. Galois, “Gold Mining and its Effects on Landscapes of the Cariboo.” (M.A. Thesis, University of Calgary, 1972), 3.

¹⁵ Margaret L. Tobey, “Carrier” *Handbook*, 414. Marianne Boelsher Ignace, “Shuswap,” *Handbook*, 175, 205. Robert B. Lane, “Chilcotin,” *Handbook*, 402.

¹⁶ Margaret L. Tobey “Carrier,” *Handbook*, 414. *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868.

proximity to the fur trade forts.¹⁷ In contrast, other groups, notably the Tsilhqot'in, had far less contact with Europeans, preferring to remain outside the fur trade economy.¹⁸ The degree of existing familiarity between Natives and Newcomers influenced the likelihood of Natives choosing to interact with the gold mining society in the towns or mines. For example, the lack of contact between Tsilhqot'in and Newcomers decreased the likelihood of Tsilhqot'in individuals choosing to participate in the gold fields.

Instead, the Tsilhqot'in were far more likely to remain attached to their traditional round subsistence strategies. The Shuswap and the Carrier also continued with their pre-rush subsistence economies.¹⁹ These alternative economies, dependent on the existence of a relatively independent and "unsettled" hinterland, provided the economic base for the favourable position of Natives in the power relationships of the hinterland.²⁰

"Traditional" Native technologies, such as the snowshoe, combined with an intimate knowledge of the landscape, facilitated the continued dominance of Natives in the hinterland.²¹ Conversely, the same skill sets that helped Natives adapt to the conditions of the hinterland helped reinforce the stereotype held by the Newcomers of the hinterland

¹⁷ Ibid. Cosmopolite, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 7 April, 1864. "From Omineca," *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1870. Joseph William MacKay, "Letter to the Board of Management, HBC Western Department," p. 24, 6 June, 1867, BCARS MS 1917.

¹⁸ Robert B. Lane, "Chilcotin," *Handbook*, 410-412.

¹⁹ Argus, "Letter From Beaver Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 11 June, 1861. "Arrival of an Exploring Party from Fort Alexandria to the Coast," *Daily British Colonist*, 12 June, 1861. "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 2 July, 1862. "News From Peace River," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1865. "Indian Drying Olla Berries, Fraser Lake," 1905, BCARS Visual Records, E-08394. Margaret L. Tobey, "Carriers," *Handbook*, 418.

²⁰ "Unsettled" here means lacking farms, roads and other European social indicators of occupancy. I am not implying that the land was unoccupied; precisely the opposite, in fact.

²¹ "Letter From Quesnelle River," *Daily British Colonist*, 5 May, 1862. "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 18 June, 1863. "The Roads," *British Columbian*, 16 March, 1865.

as “Native space.”²² This, combined with their different languages, religions, and physical appearances, marked Natives, in the eyes of much of Newcomer society, as improper inhabitants of the gold field towns and mines. In turn, this meant that Newcomers discouraged Native participation in these areas by choosing not to hire Natives and subjecting them to other obstacles.

The Chinese too, came with a history that shaped how they would interact in the Cariboo. The pattern of temporary migration for wages known as “sojourning” shaped the Chinese experience in the Cariboo, as it did in much of North America.²³ Sojourners were overwhelmingly male peasants from the Pearl Delta region of China.²⁴ Sojourners migrated using a system of chain migration, wherein they tended to settle with other sojourners with whom they had village or kinship ties.²⁵ This practice helped reinforce the primacy of the home village and family and encouraged sojourners to maintain cohesive social units in the Cariboo.²⁶ Combined with the general anti-Asian sentiment of the Natives and the other Newcomers, sojourning contributed to the formation of separate Chinatowns adjacent to nearly every gold field town in the Cariboo and to the large numbers of Chinese-only mining companies.²⁷ Other aspects of Chinese culture and society also affected interracial interactions in the Cariboo. Distinct languages,

²² “Trans-Continental Railroad” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869.

²³ Ying-ying Chen, “In the Colonies of the Tang: Historical Archaeology of Chinese Communities in the North Cariboo District, British Columbia (1860’s-1940’s)” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Archaeology, Simon Fraser University, 2001), 103.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 157.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 80. Zaffaroni summarizes David Lai’s analysis of Chain Migration in her 1987 thesis. Irene Genevieve Marie Zaffaroni, “The Great Chain of Being: Racism and Imperialism in Colonial Victoria, 1858-1871.” (M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 1987), 152-153.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 168-192.

religions, and social conventions all reinforced a sense of Chinese difference among both the Chinese and non-Chinese. All of this had the effect of discouraging Chinese integration with the White and Black segments of Newcomer society.

The experience of California and the United States shaped the Black experience in the Cariboo. The majority of Black immigrants to the Cariboo had experienced racial oppression and intolerance in the United States.²⁸ The initial Black immigrants came to British Columbia with the explicit purpose of escaping this racial oppression. The Blacks viewed the Pacific Colonies as a “Promised Land”²⁹ where their aspirations of “equality before the law” could be realized.³⁰ With this background, it is not surprising that the Blacks were extremely vocal in asserting their equality with Whites in the Cariboo.

A number of factors aided Blacks in these assertions of equality. Blacks spoke and wrote in English and dressed in European fashions, which helped them integrate with the dominant English-speaking White population of the Cariboo gold field towns.³¹ This was especially true when compared to the Chinese or Native town inhabitants who often lacked basic competency in English and sometimes wore non-European clothes.³² Blacks also had experience in European-style businesses and trades and easily integrated into the

²⁸ Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada: A History*. 2nd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 272. James Pilton, “Negro Settlement in British Columbia, 1858-1871.” (M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1951), 19-23. Rudolph M. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, (New Haven, Yale University Press), 60- 65.

²⁹ James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 36.

³⁰ See the subtitle of any issue of *The Elevator*, one of San Francisco’s two major Black newspapers.

³¹ D.L., “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 July, 1866. James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 29-32, 205.

³² H.H.S., “Further From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 April, 1861. Richard Maynard, “Men Carrying Freight Up The Cariboo Road,” 1867, BCARS Visual Records, F-09603.

White economy.³³ Relative to other non-White groups, Blacks in the Cariboo appeared to more successfully abide by the social norms held by the dominant British society. Blacks were still an “Other” to the White population of the Cariboo, but they were not as alien or threatening in their difference as the Chinese or Natives. That Whites did not perceive Blacks as threatening allowed Blacks, despite their relatively small numbers, to act on their strong desires for equality without provoking overt repression by Whites.³⁴

Two main “national” groups of Whites came to the Cariboo, those from the United States and those from the British Empire. Besides skin pigmentation, these two groups shared similar traits of language, Christian, often Protestant, religions, and similar attitudes toward the accumulation of capital and material wealth. While this did tie the disparate White populations together to an extent, important divisions remained. In particular, Britain’s control of the colony of British Columbia meant that British and British-influenced men overwhelmingly occupied positions of power within the Cariboo. Politically and socially, these British-influenced White elites reacted to what they perceived as the rampant effects of “mob rule” in the United States.³⁵ The elites publicly espoused racial equality and a concern with civil order, by which they meant stability

³³ “From Our Special Correspondent,” *British Columbian*, 27 August, 1862. “British Columbia,” *Daily British Colonist*, 13 June, 1864. Harry Guillod, *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, vol. XIX, no. 3 & 4, 29 July, 1862, BA. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Jan. 1868- Aug. 1868,” 18 January, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1.

³⁴ The Black population in the Cariboo was never more than four percent of the total population, even by the most generous estimates.

³⁵ James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 18-19. William Loren Katz, *The Black West: A Documentary and Pictorial History of the African American Role in the Westward Expansion of the United States* (Toronto: Touchstone, 1996), 125-127. Charles R. Duane, *Against the Vigilantes: The Recollections of Dutch Charley Duane*. John Boessenecker, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 3, 19- 21. Tina Loo, *Making Law*, 55-58.

through deference to the existing social order.³⁶ This meant that, officially at least, the society of the gold field towns and mines was open to non-White participation to a degree that was impossible in California.

While this division between the United States and the British Empire was extremely important for the nature of the social norms articulated by the elites in the Cariboo, other divisions were also present. Some nationalities, such as the Irish and Welsh, occupied a hazy ground between White and non-White during this period. Nevertheless, while occasional references to individual ethnic and national difference do occur in the historical record, for the most part these groups were subsumed within the larger category of White in reaction to the perceived threat of the Chinese, much as Noel Ignatiev has analyzed in the context of the Blacks and the Irish in the United States.³⁷ Shared White understandings of biological racism particularly restricted the types of activities that Whites felt suited Natives, Chinese, and to a lesser extent Blacks.

While race was a dominant social organizing trope in the Cariboo, scholars such as Anne McClintock and Gail Bederman have emphasized the centrality of gender in defining and maintaining the racial basis of the colonial enterprise.³⁸ In the Cariboo, gender and class concerns shaped the way the different groups, but especially the Whites and Blacks, understood interracial interactions. For instance, in the mines and towns, Chinese labour was inferior not only because of their race but also because the work they

³⁶ "Later From the Cariboo," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 January, 1865. Tina Loo, *Making Law*, 55- 58. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 125. Cole Harris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), 5, 21.

³⁷ "The Welsh-Who Are They?," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 January, 1867. Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995). David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 19-20.

³⁸ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Imperial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 6-7. Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 12-18, 42.

did tend to be gendered feminine. In particular, Chinese labour in the towns was in jobs dominated elsewhere by women, such as washing or domestic labour.³⁹ The representation of Chinese labour as feminine mattered in so much as the degree to which this representation affected their interracial interactions. By gendering Chinese men feminine, Whites and Blacks justified discriminatory practices against them such as differential wage patterns and social stigmatism. In this way, the gender and class aspects of Chinese washermen and domestic labour as waged employees helped reinforce the social inferiority already proscribed by White and Black understandings of the Chinese as a racial group.

The state's ability to surveil and coerce the space of the Cariboo influenced the power relationships that formed the basis of interracial interactions in the Cariboo. Both philosopher Michel Foucault and historical geographer Cole Harris have analyzed how the state projects control over space through surveillance. In the Cariboo, the usefulness of surveillance as a disciplinary strategy depended on the ability of an authority to extend its influence over the surrounding area.⁴⁰ Physical factors such as population concentration, "narrow" communication and transportation corridors,⁴¹ mountain ranges and other physical barriers combined with an overriding concern with regulation within

³⁹ Furnte, "John Chinaman," *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January, 1865. "The Street," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 June, 1868. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," vol. 1, 30 September, 1864; 31 October, 1864; 31 January, 1865; 1 February, 1865; 30 April, 1865; 1, 3, 7 May, 1865, 6 February, 1866, BCARS GR 0597. Government Agent, "Cariboo West Collecterate," vol. 5, 6 February, 1866; 3 April, 1866; 5 May, 1866; 16 June, 1866; 5 October, 1866, BCARS GR 3052. J. Monroe Thoington, ed. *The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun*, 27 November, 1872, BA. Vera Baker Currie. "Susie: A Manuscript on the Life and Times of Cecilia Elmore Baker, 1867-1958," (Unpublished Manuscript, Cariboo Historical Society, Jan. 14, 1978), 3, 5, QA.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977). Cole Harris, *Making Native Space*, 204, 269-271.

⁴¹ "Narrow" here means lacking depth of penetration into the surrounding countryside. In the Cariboo, contact between gold field towns and the metropole of New Westminster and Victoria was predominately along the Cariboo Wagon Road.

the gold field towns resulted in a distinct lack of effective surveillance of the hinterland by colonial authorities. Even within the gold field towns and mines, aspects of what anthropologist James Scott has called the “hidden transcript” of subordinated groups limited the surveillance of colonial authorities.⁴² For instance, barriers of language and culture diminished the ability of the state to regulate significant segments the inhabitants of the gold field towns.⁴³ The Chinatowns, in particular, are indicative of the inability of colonial authorities to have meaningful control over all aspects of the gold field towns.

These differential levels of surveillance helped characterize the sub-regions of the Cariboo. The level of surveillance in a given sub-region either facilitated or hindered certain types of interracial interactions. In the Cariboo between 1860-1870, socially created spatial sub-regions structured the interracial interactions that occurred between the Chinese, White, Native, and Black inhabitants. Differences between the spaces of the hinterland, gold field towns and mines meant that in some areas very different interracial interactions occurred than were possible in the other sub-regions. Specifically, interracial interactions in the hinterland were more openly diverse than either the towns or mines largely because the multiple economies of the hinterland, the understanding of the hinterland as a predominately Native space, and the concurrent lack of surveillance by non-Natives opened a space for a diversity of interracial interactions. Unlike the hinterland, in the towns the elites’ idealized space characterized and shaped interracial interactions, while in the mines the miners’ community publicly articulated a discourse of proper behaviour that shaped the nature of interracial interactions in that space.

⁴² James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 63-64 especially.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 32.

Interracial Interactions in the Hinterland

The hinterland, understood by Newcomer society as an area that diffused out from the outer limits of the gold field towns and mines and, lacking firm geographic boundaries, blended into the neighbouring regions of the Omineca, Peace, and Okanogan, is usually overlooked in analyses of the Cariboo; and yet racial understandings propagated by the town elites affected interracial interactions in the hinterland. Conversely, interactions in, and understandings of the hinterland affected interracial interactions in the towns and mines. Indeed, experiences and understandings of the various sub-regions of the Cariboo intertwined, making it impossible to understand one sub-region without reference to the others.

The presence of multiple economies in the hinterland set it apart from the gold field towns and mines. Three major economies existed in the hinterland: the “traditional” subsistence and trade economies of the Natives peoples, the fur trade economy, and the gold mining economy.⁴⁴ The traditional economy was those social and economic activities based on fishing, hunting, berry picking, and the trade of these resources. The fur trade economy involved the hunting, preparing and trading of furs to the Hudson’s Bay Company or independent traders. Finally, the gold mining economy shaped interracial interactions in the hinterland in a variety of contexts, from the experiences of migrants travelling between the Cariboo gold fields and the metropolises of New

⁴⁴ The term “traditional” is used in this thesis to refer to those aspects of Native society that pre-date the gold rush. It does not imply an unchanging set of traditions; it simply signifies aspects of Native society that pre-date the impact of the gold rush.

Westminster and Victoria to the experiences that arose out of the roadhouses along the route to the gold fields.

Each of the three different economies in the hinterland had distinct effects on the power relations, and therefore the interracial interactions of the hinterland. The more removed an activity was from the gold field economy, the greater the degree of freedom the participants had from the influence of the town elites. The traditional and fur trade economies had very different economic bases than the gold field economy and consequently limited the influence of the town elites on those involved.

Alone, the divisions between the three economies are not enough to explain the nature of the various interracial interactions in the hinterland. Social and geographic factors also influenced interracial interactions. While both Natives and Newcomers understood the hinterland as Native space, the meanings attached to this space differed for each group. To Natives, the area was their homeland and the gold field mines and towns recent intrusions upon the proper order of things. Natives were comfortable and competent within their traditional territories. (Map 1)

Newcomers shared a basic understanding of the hinterland as an antithetical space to that of the gold field towns. This manifested both as physical danger, represented by

natural hazards and physical acts of crime,⁴⁵ and as social danger, represented by “savage” Natives and the degraded/criminal society of the hinterland.⁴⁶ For Whites, Chinese, and Blacks, the greatest manifestation of this fear was armed Native resistance. The 1864 Bute Inlet resistance, in particular, led to fear that the Tsilqhot’in attacks would spread into the Cariboo. In response, the town elites attempted to put the surrounding wilderness under the surveillance of the state with mounted patrols.⁴⁷

The physical reality of the hinterland also influenced the nature of interracial interactions. The disparity between the highly centralized Newcomer populations located in the towns and the more dispersed Native populations meant that Natives occupied the hinterland to a greater extent than Newcomers. Additionally, Natives had survival

⁴⁵ Argus, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 25 September, 1861. *British Columbian*, 17 September, 1862. “The Miners Returning,” *British Columbian*, 18 October, 1862. Brutus, “Letter From Our Richfield Correspondent,” *Daily British Colonist*, 1 September, 1863. “From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 2 March, 1868. W.D. Moses, “Diary #2, 1869,” 18 May, 1869, BCARS A01046. British Columbia Supreme Court, “Notes of Procedure,” 1 July, 1867, BCARS B05086. Cariboo Quesnelle, “County Court Book, July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877,” BCARS GR 0570. County Court, “Summons Book,” BCARS GR 0584, vol. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8. Cariboo West, “Provincial Court,” BCARS GR 0597, vol.1. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18,” BCARS GR 0822. British Columbia Colony Court, “Cariboo West, 1864-1871,” BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2, 7. Robert Stevenson, “Robert Stevenson Fonds, 1838-1922,” Rose Expedition of 1862, BCARS MS 0315. Thomas Robert Mitchell, “Letter to Parents, 1862,” 12 pages, 7 October, 1862, BCARS MS 0838. See also: *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865; 7 May, 1866; 5, 16 September, 1867; 4, 18 June, 1868; 14 August, 1869. *The Daily Colonist*, 10 July, 1862; 6 October, 1862; 24, 27 August, 1863; 27 May, 1864. *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 17 May, 1863; 5 July, 1863; 12 November, 1863; 24 December 1863; 19 June, 1864; 22 July, 1864.

⁴⁶ See, for example: *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 September, 1867; 14 August, 1869. *British Columbian*, 18 April, 1866; 17 September, 1862. *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 17 May, 1863; 5 July, 1863; 6 July, 1863; 23 August, 1863; 24 December, 1863; 27 January, 1865. Frederick W Howay, “Day Book [Unidentified] 6 Sept 1865-27 Apr. 1867,” 1 March, 1861, UBCSC, box 23, file 12. Note: I have excluded reports that do not appear to be confirmed or are especially suspicious.

⁴⁷ “Dreadful Massacre,” and “The Last Indian Atrocity,” *Daily British Colonist*, 12 May, 1864. “British Columbia,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 8 December, 1864. “British Columbia,” *Daily British Colonist*, 31 December, 1864. “Later From Cariboo,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 27 January, 1865. John Boyles Gaggin, “Colonial Correspondence,” “Gold Commissioners office at Quesnellemouth to Colonial Sec. (Victoria),” 21 January, 1865, BCARS B1330, file 624.

strategies and technologies adapted to the countryside.⁴⁸ In contrast, Newcomer groups tended to lack concrete familiarity with any “wilderness,” let alone the specific biogeoclimatic conditions surrounding the gold field towns.⁴⁹ These physical realities had the effect of constraining Newcomer ability and facilitating Native dominance in the hinterland. The physical environment, combined with the Newcomer understanding of the hinterland as a landscape of fear and the presence of non-gold field economies, maintained the hinterland as Native space, a dynamic that shaped interracial interactions in the hinterland.

The Subsistence Economy

Native groups participated in the traditional subsistence and trading economies to different extents. Some, such as the Tsilqhot’in, maintained a high level of involvement in traditional economies throughout the gold field period.⁵⁰ Others, such as the Shuswap, became comparatively more involved in the gold field economy.⁵¹ Those Natives participating primarily in traditional economies existed largely independent of Newcomer

⁴⁸ “New Diggings-Excitement-Poisoned Salmon,” *Daily British Colonist*, 15 July, 1859. “Further From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 April, 1861. “Letter From Quesnelle River,” *Daily British Colonist*, 5 May, 1862. “The Roads,” *British Columbian*, 16 March, 1865. “Indian Fish Trap, Tatchi River,” 1923, BCARS Visual Records, D-06402. “Indian Drying Olla Berries, Fraser Lake,” 1905, BCARS Visual Records, E-08394. Marianne Boelscher Ignace, “Shuswap,” *Handbook*, 209. Margaret L. Tobey, “Carriers,” *Handbook*, 418.

⁴⁹ “Further From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 April, 1861. “Additional From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 11 September, 1861. “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 25 September, 1861. “Letter From Quesnelle River,” *Daily British Colonist*, 5 May, 1862. “The Roads,” *British Columbian*, 16 March, 1865.

⁵⁰ “Arrival of an Exploring Party from Fort Alexandria to the Coast,” *Daily British Colonist*, 12 June, 1861. “News From Cariboo,” *British Columbian*, 2 July, 1862. Margaret L. Tobey, “Carriers,” *Handbook*, 418. “Indian Fish Trap, Tatchi River,” 1923, BCARS Visual Records, D-06402. “Indian Drying Olla Berries, Fraser Lake,” 1905, BCARS Visual Records, E-08394.

⁵¹ Prof. L. Bushell, “To the Editor of *The British Columbian*,” *British Columbian*, 5 July, 1862. Joseph William MacKay, “Diary,” 9 June, 1865, BCARS MS 1917.

society. They produced much, though not all, of their food and supply requirements and either generally consumed these items themselves or traded with other Native groups.

Overall, the traditional subsistence economy did not encourage interracial interactions. In some cases, the traditional economy intersected with the gold field economy, as when Natives traded foodstuffs and other items to the gold miners, but these uncommon instances represent only a fraction of the total production of these economies.⁵² These limited occurrences of trade benefited both Natives and Newcomers and a fair degree of friendliness between the parties characterized these interactions.⁵³

Despite the negative stereotype attached to “traditional” Native activity by Newcomers, the town elites seem to have perceived these interactions favourably. A combination of the myth of the “vanishing Indian” and Native support of miners encouraged this positive perception of Native activity in the subsistence economy. The town elites’ stereotype of Natives posited that the traditional economy would naturally recede before the advance of White-defined “civilization.”⁵⁴ The town elites hoped that the Natives would recognize the subordinate nature of their way of life and assist with the expansion of “civilization.” In the Cariboo, the town elites and much of the mining population equated “civilization” with the gold field economy and the British-influenced

⁵² Argus, “Letter From Williams’ Lake,” *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. Cosmopolite, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 April, 1864. “Canyon Creek,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 August, 1866. “Oolahans,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 May, 1867. Bishop George Hills, “Diary 1861,” transcribed, 23 June, 1861, 2 July, 1862, ADCA. Harry Guillod, cited in *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, vol. XIX, no. 3 & 4. 6 October, 1862, BA.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ “Trans-Continental Railroad” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 20, 92. Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia* 2nd ed. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 102, 104-105.

society of the gold field towns.⁵⁵ In this context, Whites (mis)interpreted Native trading as a sign of their subordination.⁵⁶ Whites in general, and the town elites in particular, understood the supply of food and supplies by Natives to be recognition of the primacy of the gold field economy.⁵⁷ Additionally, the more remote the location from the gold field towns, the more the town elites saw dependency on Natives as acceptable because they expected Natives to be more adept than Whites at surviving in the “savage wilderness.”⁵⁸ While this trade physically supported the gold field economy, it is doubtful that the Natives who chose to trade with the Newcomers saw themselves as subordinate. Instead, they most likely viewed the miners and prospectors as convenient trading partners who supplemented their pre-existing trading networks.

⁵⁵ I.D.C., “A Man’s a Man for A’ That,” *British Columbian*, 4 June, 1862. ***, “William’s Creek,” *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1863. K., “Letter From Richfield,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 July, 1864. “Cariboo Letter,” *Daily British Colonist*, 23 August, 1864. A.H. Francis, “Letter from our Victoria Correspondent,” *Elevator*, 2 June, 1865. “Mining Intelligence,” *Daily British Colonist*, 10 August, 1865. A.H.F., “Victoria,” *Elevator*, 1 December, 1865. B.D., “Letter from Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 27 March, 1868. Bell, “Letter From Victoria, B.C.,” *Elevator*, 26 June, 1868. Bell, “Letter From Victoria, B.C.,” *Elevator*, 31 July, 1868. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. “Reception of the Governor,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869. Cariboo Quesnelle, “County Court Book, July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877,” 23 September, 1863, BCARS GR 0570. John B. Wilkinson, “Letters,” Victoria, June 27, 1860; Vancouver Island, 27 June, 1860, BCARS MS 0048, file I. W.D. Moses, “Description: Lady Franklin visits the Pacific Northwest: Being extracts from the letters of Miss Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin’s Niece, February to April 1861 and April to July 1870,” Ed. Dorothy Blakey Smith. Victoria BC. Provincial Archives, memoir no. XI. 1974. 1861?, BA.

⁵⁶ Argus, “Letter From Williams’ Lake,” *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. Cosmopolite, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 April, 1864. “Canyon Creek,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 August, 1866. “Oolahans,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 May, 1867. Harry Guillod, *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, 6 October, 1862 BA. Bishop George Hills, “Diary, 1861,” transcribed. 23 June, 1861, 2 July, 1862, ADCA.

⁵⁷ Argus, “Letter From Williams’ Lake,” *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. Cosmopolite, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 April, 1864. “Canyon Creek,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 August, 1866. “Oolahans,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 May, 1867. “News From the Peace River,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1868. Harry Guillod, *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, 6 October, 1862, BA. Bishop George Hills, “Diary, 1861,” transcribed. 23 June, 1861, 2 July, 1862, ADCA. George Blair, *Diary of George Blair Feb 17, 1862-Dec. 29, 1863*, (transcribed by Macintosh, July 17, 1962), 1862, 43/44, BA, 971.12 BLA.

⁵⁸ Compare, for instance: “News From Peace River,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1868 and “Stewart’s Lake Indians,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

The Fur Trade Economy

In the hinterland, the fur trade remained a significant economy for some Natives and Newcomers. The Hudson's Bay Company operated several forts in the interior of the colony and there was a proliferation of independent Newcomer fur traders during the gold field period.⁵⁹ To Native groups such as the Carrier and Beaver, the fur trade was a familiar mode of economic activity that provided a viable alternative to the mining economy.⁶⁰

Even more alarming to the town elites than the alternative fur trading offered to Natives, was the alternative to the gold field economy fur trading offered to Whites and other Newcomers. To the town elites it seemed as though the fur trade encouraged Whites to act in a "savage" manner.⁶¹ The town elites therefore viewed the fur trade as a direct threat to the social norms and values they tried to promulgate within the gold field towns.⁶²

While both Natives and Newcomer fur traders suffered from negative stereotyping by the town elites, this appears to have been the extent of their influence on the fur trade economy.⁶³ Several factors worked to mitigate the effect of the town elites' criticisms of fur trading. First, other than public derision, no sanctions seem to have been brought against the fur traders. Many fur traders lived outside the gold field towns, and those that

⁵⁹ Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 85. Margaret L. Tobey, "Carrier," *Handbook*, 418.

⁶⁰ "News From Peace River," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1868. "Stewart's Lake Indians," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

⁶¹ "How Provoking," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 June, 1868. "Trans-Continental Railroad" *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868. "Stewart's Lake Indians," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 20, 92. Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, 102, 104-105.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ "News From Peace River," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1868. "Stewart's Lake Indians," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

lived in the towns probably derived economic benefits that offset the occasional derogatory reference in the newspaper and the general air of condescension.⁶⁴ Second, criticism of the hinterland was not primarily intended to chastise the fur traders, though it may have had that effect, but rather, the intended audience was the other inhabitants of the gold field towns. By criticizing the fur trade, and especially the miscegenation that accompanied it, the town elites encouraged greater conformity in the towns to the social norms they articulated. In the hinterland, good business practices, including a more open attitude toward Natives by Newcomer fur traders, continued to characterize the interracial interactions between Natives and Newcomers in the fur trade economy despite the criticism of the town elites in the towns.⁶⁵

The Gold Field Economy

The town elites had more control over the nature of interracial interactions in situations that involved the gold economy directly, such as packing, roadhouse sociability, and food production. While the town elites recognized the need for these activities, they nonetheless regarded them as secondary to events in the towns and mines.⁶⁶ Even here, where the influence of the town elites was at its pinnacle in the hinterland, interracial interactions did not conform to the ideal promulgated from the gold field towns. Instead, social and physical conditions specific to the hinterland modified or mitigated the impact of the town elites.

⁶⁴ Cosmopolite, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 7 April, 1864. "Stewart's Lake Indians," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869. "From Omineca," *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1870.

⁶⁵ Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, 80-83.

⁶⁶ "Trans-Continental Railroad" *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868. A cursory read of *Cariboo Sentinel* shows that "Mining Intelligence" was the focus of every issue, and other economic concerns relevant in so much as they affected the mining industry.

Miners travelling to and from the Cariboo gold mines made up the bulk of the Newcomers in the hinterland. Newcomers travelled to the Cariboo in mono- and multi-racial groups. While Whites, Blacks, and Chinese all travelled in mono-racial groups, it is the Chinese who stand out as the least likely to travel in multi-racial groups, whereas Blacks and Whites travelled in multi-racial groups with relative frequency.⁶⁷ The relative homogeneity of Chinese immigrants and the virulent anti-Asian sentiment that predominated among Whites, Blacks, and Natives conspired to make the Chinese the most likely to remain within their racial group when entering the Cariboo.⁶⁸

While Black and White miners shared many basic social, cultural and economic characteristics, with the result that multi-racial associations predominately formed between them, these associations were not necessarily equitable.⁶⁹ In one example, a Black tinsmith traded wheelbarrow repairs for a meal and shared accommodation in a tent with two White men. The tinsmith was more likely to engage in trade with the relatively familiar Whites than with Natives, who had less need of his services and were unfamiliar in language and customs.⁷⁰ Trade between individuals was predicated on a sense of equality of skills and goods, but not necessarily of the individuals that possessed

⁶⁷ See, for example: Argus, "Letter from Williams' Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. "Yale, May 23rd," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 May, 1866. "For Cariboo," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 May, 1867. "Criminal Trials," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 July, 1867. Harry Guillod, *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, 29 July, 1862, BA. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 103. Benson Tong, *The Chinese Americans*, Revised ed. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003), 9-15.

⁶⁸ "News From Above," *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. Vialor, "En Route to Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863. "Blacks vs. Yellow," *Elevator*, 30 March, 1866. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 103, 161. Gillian Marie, *Attitudes Toward Chinese Immigrants to British Columbia, 1858-1885.* (M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1976), 21. Benson Tong, *The Chinese Americans*, 9- 15.

⁶⁹ James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 43, 44. C.S. Giscombe, *Into and Out of Dislocation*. (New York: North Point Press, 2000), 7. Dan Marshall, *Indians, Goldseekers And the Rush to British Columbia*. (Ph.D. Dissertation, UBC, 2000), 21.

⁷⁰ Harry Guillod, cited in *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, 29 July, 1862, BA.

them. Therefore, it was easy for Harry Guillod, one of the White men, to label his travelling companion a “nigger” while sharing a tent with him.⁷¹

Native interracial interactions while travelling along the Cariboo Wagon Road differed from the other groups. Unlike the Whites, Chinese, and Blacks, Natives rarely travelled to the Cariboo to mine and instead worked as packers along the route. Natives packed, usually on foot, miner’s goods or shop supplies to the gold field towns.⁷² Natives also packed supplies out from the gold field towns into the hinterland for prospecting parties. In both circumstances, Newcomers employed Natives. The town elites considered packing on foot an industry particularly suited to Natives because they believed Natives could carry heavier burdens than their White counterparts.⁷³ The town elites therefore saw Native employment in foot packing as a necessary, but regrettable, holdover from the fur trade economy.

It is doubtful whether the town elites’ concern with the symbolism of foot packing significantly affected the interracial interactions between the packers and their employers. While *The Cariboo Sentinel* railed against Native foot packers, in doing so, the paper also revealed the dependency of the gold field towns on those same foot packers.⁷⁴ Moral indignation aside, the necessity of transporting goods by Native foot packers allowed Natives the opportunity to exercise a degree of control in the packing industry that they lacked in any aspect of the gold field economy in either the towns or the mines. For example, Natives often packed in family groups, with all family members hauling their

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Progress, “The Upper Country,” *British Columbian*, 13 June, 1861. “How Provoking,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 June, 1868. “Stewart’s Lake Indians,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

⁷³ Progress, “The Upper Country,” *British Columbian*, 13 June, 1861.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

share of the load.⁷⁵ By doing this, Native packers maintained family cohesion while modifying their traditional round economies to incorporate wage labour. In this way, Natives controlled the nature of their involvement in the packing industry.

Further evidence of Native control of packing can be seen when examining the available records of the price per pound charged by Native packers during the gold field period. (Table 1) The first evident trend is a cyclical increase in the value of Native labour in the summer, usually from April to June.⁷⁶ Elevated demand cannot be considered the major factor in this trend. Demand should have logically peaked later, in August or September, when the miners were well established in the gold fields and the initial supplies the gold miners had brought with them had been exhausted. Instead, Native participation in other activities, such as fishing, reduced the supply of labour.⁷⁷ For example, in June 1861, "Argus" admitted "[i]t was almost impossible to get provisions up, as nearly all the Indians had gone on their usual fishing excursions to the lakes."⁷⁸ Natives used wage labour such as packing when it suited their interests but their traditional subsistence strategies usually remained their primary economic interest. This trend varied somewhat between Native groups with the Tsilqhot' in emerging as one of the Native groups least likely to engage in packing.⁷⁹ Largely of their own volition, the

⁷⁵ Bishop George Hills, "Diary 1861," transcribed, 25 June, 1861, ADCA. R. Byron Johnson, *Very Far West Indeed: A Few Rough Experiences on the North-West Pacific Coast* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, 1872), 78.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

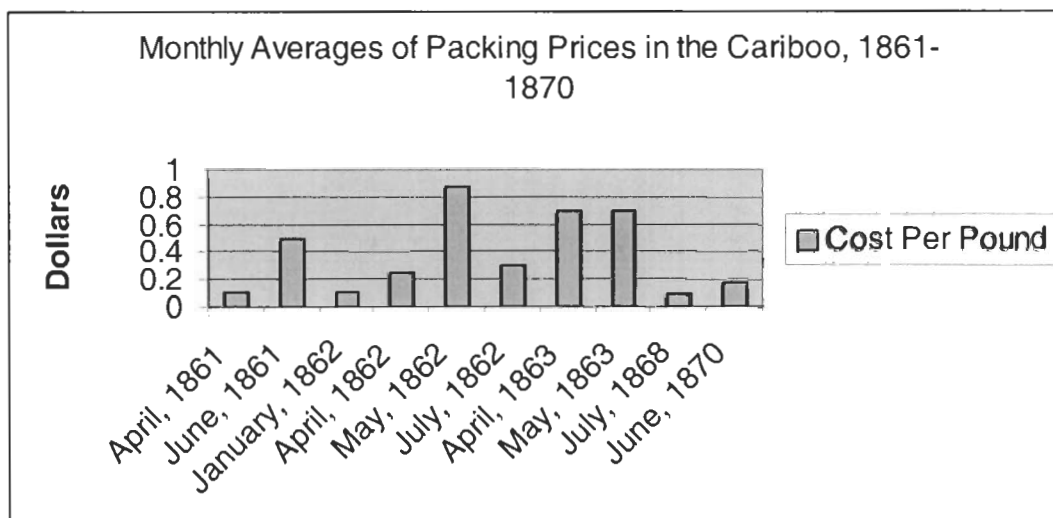
⁷⁷ Argus, "Letter From Beaver Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 11 June, 1861. "Arrival of an exploring Party from Fort Alexandria to the Coast," *Daily British Colonist*, June 12, 1861. Progress, "The Upper Country," 13 June, 1861. "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 24 May, 1862. "From Omineca," *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1870. Chartres Brew, "Correspondence," 22 April, 1869, BCARS B01311, file 197.

⁷⁸ Argus, "Letter From Beaver Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 11 June, 1861.

⁷⁹ "Arrival of an Exploring Party from Fort Alexandria to the Coast," *Daily British Colonist*, 12 June, 1861. "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 2 July, 1862.

Tsilqhot'in remained remote from the gold field economic system to a greater extent than other Native groups of the region.

Graph 1: Packing Prices Compiled from Period Newspapers.⁸⁰



However, packing prices did not depend entirely on the willingness of Natives to pack. The second trend to emerge in an analysis of packing prices is an increase in the wages paid to Native packers over the early study period, ranging from 1860-1864, followed by a decline in the latter portion of the study period, 1865-1871.⁸¹ The demand for Native packers fell off due to a lower population in the Cariboo resulting from the decline of the gold fields and due to the advent of accessible wagon roads throughout the settled area. These demographic and technological changes affected the ability of Natives to participate in the packing industry. Native agency, the multiple economies of the hinterland and demographic and technological trends combined to shape when, to what extent, and on what conditions, Natives participated in the packing industry.

⁸⁰ See, for example: *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1868; 25 June, 1870. *British Columbian*, 24 May, 1862; 5 July, 1862; 29 April, 1863. *Daily British Colonist*, 6 April, 1861; 8 April, 1861; 2 May, 1861; 3 June, 1861; 10 June, 1861; 14 June, 1861; 9 January, 1862; 31 May, 1862; 13 June, 1862; 1 May, 1863; 28 May, 1863.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Packing also provided a context for a very different interracial interaction for the Chinese who packed a particularly large amount of supplies into the Cariboo. While Whites permitted the Chinese to enter the packing industry without contention, they did place constraints on where the Chinese could pack. Until 1863, Whites, in an attempt to stop the Chinese from mining in the main Cariboo gold fields, did not allow Chinese packers to enter the Cariboo Mountains.⁸² Instead, White and Native packers met the Chinese packers at the entrance to the Cariboo Mountains and carried the loads into the actual gold fields.⁸³ In this case, the social and economic meanings of race in the gold mines and towns as a non-Chinese space affected the social and economic meanings of race in the hinterland, restricting the Chinese from packing into the Cariboo Mountains. Instead, Whites confined Chinese packers in this early period to packing along the Fraser and Quesnel Rivers.

The other major form of packing in the Cariboo, mule teams, were both mono and multi-racial in character.⁸⁴ A tension existed between the extremely high demand for goods to be brought into the Cariboo, and the town elites' desire to favour White, or more generally, non-Chinese mule packers.⁸⁵ Mono-racial Chinese mule teams were not dependant on White businesses, however. Although it is not known to what extent it

⁸² "News From Above," *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. "Arrivals From the River," *Daily British Colonist*, June 10, 1861. Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. Vialor, "En Route to Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863.

⁸³ Argus, "Letters From Williams' Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. Vialor, "En Route to Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863.

⁸⁴ Argus, "Letter From Williams Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. "Later From The Interior," *British Columbian*, 4 January, 1865. "The Horse Fly Prospecting Expedition," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July, 1865. "Cruelty To Animals," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 June, 1867. "Road Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 May, 1870. "Wilson's Pack Train; Near Quesnel," 189-, BCARS Visual Records, A-05277.

⁸⁵ Bishop George Hills, "Diary 1861," transcribed, 23 June, 1861, ADCA. W.M. Mark. *Cariboo: A True and Correct Narrative*. (Stockton: W.M. Wright, 1863), 1862, BA 971.12 MAR 1863.

occurred, Chinese packers packed in goods for non-Chinese businesses.⁸⁶ The defensive Chinese community that privileged other Chinese over co-operation with other racial groups increased the likelihood that Chinese goods were largely imported, where possible, by Chinese packers.⁸⁷ Also, the Kwong Lee Company, the major Chinese business in British Columbia, seems to have been vertically integrated, controlling most of the different aspects of making, selling, and delivering the products and services it offered, including, to the advantage of the Chinese men involved, packing.⁸⁸ As in virtually all economic fields in which the Chinese competed, the town elites depicted the Chinese as having an unfair advantage. In one case, *The Cariboo Sentinel* depicted the Chinese as cruelly overburdening their pack animals with loads of 200-300 lbs.⁸⁹ In contrast, less than a month later, the *Sentinel* expressed admiration when White-owned mules bore loads of up to 400 lbs.⁹⁰ Despite these biased characterizations, Chinese mule teams persisted during the gold field era, undoubtedly aided by the presence of a significant and secure Chinese market for their services in the gold field towns. The economics of mule packing mitigated the effects of the town elites' criticism and helped the Chinese packers persist in the face of resistance by the town elites.

⁸⁶ "Cruelty To Animals," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 June, 1867.

⁸⁷ Harry Con, Ronald J. Con, et al. *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1982), 31.

⁸⁸ B., "Later From The Interior," *Daily British Colonist*, 18 February, 1865. "Mainland Items From A Correspondent," *Daily British Colonist*, 5 August, 1869. Chartres Brew, "Colonial Correspondence," 1 August, 1869, BCARS GR 0216, v.11. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 30 April, 1865, 1, 3 May, 1865, 22 February, 1868, BCARS GR 0597, vol.1. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868," 20 October, 1869, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2. Much more research needs to be done on the Kwong Lee Company and its place in the early history of British Columbia.

⁸⁹ Argus, "Letter From Williams Lake," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. "Cruelty To Animals," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 June, 1867.

⁹⁰ "M.C. Davis," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867.

Further underscoring the limited effect of the town elite's social norms in the packing industry was the common occurrence of multi-racial pack trains. Exceptional in this regard was Jean (Cataline) Caux, a Basque, who hired predominately Black, Chinese, and Native packers.⁹¹

*Photo 1: Jean Caux's (Foreground, Left) Multi-Racial Packers.*⁹²



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Emphasizing the heterogeneity of his pack trains, a half-Black, half-Native man, Dave Wiggins, was Cataline's second-in-command for the majority of the gold field period.⁹³ Given Cataline's personality, it is doubtful that he tolerated any unproductive interracial conflict in his trains.⁹⁴ While the racial heterogeneity of Cataline's pack trains is exceptional, other mule packers also made wide use of Native, Black, and Chinese

⁹¹ "Jean (Cataline) Caux, Mule Train Loading At Harvey Bailey's For Babine Lake," 1897, BCARS Visual Records, A-03049. "Cataline (Jean Caux) and a group of Indian Packers," 1910, BCARS Visual Records, I-51525. Irene Bjerky, *Cataline, (Jean Caux)*, QA.

⁹² Jean (Cataline) Caux, Mule Train Loading At Harvey Bailey's For Babine Lake," 1897, BCARS Visual Records, A-03049.

⁹³ Irene Bjerky, *Cataline*, 48, QA. Dave Wiggins eventually married a Lillooet woman. *Ibid.*, 29.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 30.

labour.⁹⁵ Due to the long journeys over relatively isolated areas, employees in multi-racial packing companies had extensive interactions with members of other racial groups.

The ameliorating effects of such interactions, if any, on the stereotypes possessed by each group seems to have been largely confined to the individuals directly involved. The heterogeneity of Cataline's pack trains is remembered in the historical record as an exception worth commenting upon, not as indicative of a larger trend.⁹⁶ Those packers that did come to view their co-workers in a new light as the result of working beside them may not have translated that understanding to the "race" as a whole and, although the town elites had little direct control over the packing industry, common stereotypes proved resilient enough to continue to perpetuate racial difference in the hinterland.

These stereotypes of subordinate Natives and dominant Newcomers would seem to be confirmed by an examination of those Natives who prospected for White miners.⁹⁷ This relationship seems to be an example of White miners using Natives to accomplish financially risky, but necessary, work. A closer examination, however, reveals a different power relationship present in this interracial interaction. Natives prospected for Whites with whom they had a relationship or who would pay them for the information.⁹⁸ In this way, Natives benefited from the gold mining industry from which social and economic factors excluded them and rewarded those Whites who were more tolerant, or at least

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., passim.

⁹⁷ "The Late Discoveries," *Daily British Colonist*, 23 January, 1861. "Probable Important Discovery," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 June, 1867. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. "History of The Peace River Mines," *Daily British Colonist*, 17 February, 1870. "Peace River and Cariboo News," *Daily British Colonist*, 17 May, 1870. William George Cox, "Colonial Correspondence," 1 December, 1863, BCARS B1312, file 378.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

able to appear more tolerant, of them. In reality then, Native prospectors actually exercised a fair degree of power in their relationships with White miners.

Besides Native prospectors, other groups who travelled out from the gold field towns into the surrounding hinterland were also less likely to abide by the social dictates of the town elites, despite being based out of the towns. Prospecting and survey parties comprised one of the main ways that Newcomers travelled out from the towns into the surrounding hinterland. These exploratory parties could be composed of only one racial group, such as Blacks, Chinese or Whites,⁹⁹ but were usually multi-racial, employing Natives as both packers and guides and often Chinese as cooks.¹⁰⁰ Both types of exploratory parties were heavily dependent on the goodwill of the Native inhabitants of the regions they entered. As these parties moved greater and greater distances from the support network of the gold field towns, they became more vulnerable, not only to hostile Natives, but also to disasters such as capsizing or storms.¹⁰¹ In any case, the disposition of local Natives to these exploratory parties could make the difference between life and

⁹⁹ Observer, "Letter From Richfield," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 29 January, 1864. "Prospecting," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. "John Chinaman and Wages," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 11 June, 1870. "From Cariboo," *Mainland Guardian*, 25 June, 1870. Linda Eversole, "John Giscome: Jamaican Miner and Explorer," *British Columbia Historical News*. 11-15, 1862, BA.

¹⁰⁰ Argus, "Letter from Quesnelle City," *The British Colonist*, 9 August, 1861. "The Horse Fly Prospecting Expedition," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July, 1865. "Good News from the Interior," *British Columbian*, 7 October, 1865. "Latest from Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 18 May, 1866. "Up Country Telegrams," *British Columbian*, 19 May, 1866. "Return of the Telegraph Expedition," *British Columbian*, 27 October, 1866. H.M. Ball, "Journal," transcribed, 1-2 September, 1864, BCARS MS 0750.

¹⁰¹ Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 25 September, 1861. "The Miners Returning," *British Columbian*, 18 October, 1862. Brutus, "Letter From Our Richfield Correspondent," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 September, 1863. "Dreadful Massacre," and "The Last Indian Atrocity," *Daily British Colonist*, 12 May, 1864. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 8 December, 1864. "British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 31 December, 1864. "Later From Cariboo," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 27 January, 1865. "From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 2 March, 1868. W.D. Moses Diaries, "Diary #2, 1869," 18 May, 1869, BCARS A01046. John Boyles Gaggin, "Colonial Correspondence," "Gold Commissioners office at Quesnellemouth to Colonial Sec. (Victoria)," 21 January, 1865, BCARS B1330, file 624.

death.¹⁰² The distance of the hinterland from the support of the gold field towns meant that these extensions of the gold field economy into the surrounding hinterland were inherently weak. This weakness allowed Natives to position themselves in a relatively strong social and economic position. Natives influenced the price of their labour, their working conditions and, finally, decided if they wanted to work at all.

Joseph McKay's experience on a telegraph survey expedition for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1865 provides a particularly telling example of the dependency of surveyors and prospectors specifically, and non-Natives in general, on Natives in the hinterland.¹⁰³ In his official correspondence, McKay attributed the failure of his expedition and the death of his partner to the desertion of their Native guide who left them with wet gunpowder.¹⁰⁴ However, an examination of McKay's diary reveals that McKay's partner was injury-prone and, despite the best efforts of the Native guide, the food situation continually worsened.¹⁰⁵ After several days, the Native guide abandoned McKay and his hapless partner, apparently convinced they were doomed.¹⁰⁶ Over the next few days, McKay and his hunting partner were unable to shoot even large game even at close range, due to their lack of any skill at hunting, rather than because of wet gunpowder.¹⁰⁷ McKay is an example that outside of areas of settlement, non-Native groups were dependent on

¹⁰² B. "Arrival of an Exploring Party from Fort Alexandria to the Coast," *Daily British Colonist*, 12 June, 1861. "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 2 July, 1862. Joseph William McKay, "J.W. MacKay to the Board of Management HBC, Victoria, Vancouver Isl," 25, 3 June, 1865, BCARS MS 1917. Thomas Elwyn, "Colonial Correspondence," 5 July, 1866, BCARS B1327, file 526.

¹⁰³ Joseph McKay was actually of Métis heritage on both his father's and mother's sides. Richard Mackie, personal communication, 4 February, 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Joseph William McKay, "J.W. McKay to the Board of Management Hudson's Bay Company," *Correspondence*, 3 June 1865, BCARS MS 1917. Joseph William McKay, "J.W. McKay to the Board of Management Hudson's Bay Company: Draft," *Correspondence*, 6 June, 1865, BCARS MS 1917.

¹⁰⁵ Joseph William McKay, "1865 Diary," 17-18 May, 1865, BCARS MS 1917.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 26 May, 1865. Starvation, fatigue and injury eventually killed McKay's partner.

Native assistance, often purchased at a very high price.¹⁰⁸ In the hinterland, non-Native groups were even less effective at coercion than they were in the conflicted spaces of the gold field towns and mines.

One of the major Newcomer institutions located in the hinterland were the roadhouses usually spaced about a day's travel apart along the main routes into the Cariboo gold fields, and which offered a roof, food, drink, and sociability.¹⁰⁹ The roadhouses of the Cariboo could both relax and enforce social boundaries.¹¹⁰ In the act of drinking, social boundaries could be relaxed and interracial interactions between individuals could occur with a semblance of equality. This is especially true when the custom of "standing" for drinks was practiced. "Standing" drinks meant that travellers would take turns buying rounds for their companions. Drinkers shunned travellers who refused to participate.¹¹¹ The records from roadhouses indicate that Chinese and White working class miners, in particular, gambled and drank together.¹¹² While it is impossible to determine how widespread this trend was given the paucity of surviving records, a combination of boredom, a shared homosocial environment, the common availability of both liquor and cards, and a lack of alternative sites of sociability increased the likelihood of such interactions.¹¹³ Blacks, too, frequented roadhouses and took part in

¹⁰⁸ Joseph William McKay, "1865 Diary," 31 May, 1 June, 1865, BCARS MS 1917. Cariboo Quesnelle, "County Court Book, July 28, 1864- Oct. 10th, 1877," 17 May, 1864, BCARS GR 0570.

¹⁰⁹ "Later From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 11 January, 1866. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 42-43.

¹¹⁰ Julia Roberts, "'A Mixed Assemblage of Persons': Race and Tavern Space in Upper Canada," in *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 83, no. 1, (March 2002), 1-3.

¹¹¹ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 40-42. W.D. Moses, "Diary," 29 August, 1869, Barkerville Computer Reference System, BA.

¹¹² John Boyd, "Unidentified Day Book," 18-19, 23 January, 29 March, 1868, BCARS A01030.

¹¹³ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 40.

the multi-racial sociability present.¹¹⁴ However, the town elites looked down upon the drinking that occurred in the roadhouses and feared that the interracial mixing there would be imported to the towns.¹¹⁵ That interracial mixing was the norm in the roadhouses speaks to the lack of an effective means of coercion by the town elites and influence of countervailing factors that encouraged these interactions.

However, the roadhouses were not booze-fuelled racial utopias. Laws preventing Native consumption of alcohol officially excluded Natives from the socialization of the roadhouses.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, while drinking and gambling together is indicative of a blurring of social boundaries, in some ways these activities may actually have helped enforce racial stereotypes. During this period, Whites stereotypically understood the Chinese as, among other things, users of immoral substances, and as inveterate gamblers.¹¹⁷ In contrast, White men engaged in drinking and gambling reinscribed their White masculinity by reaffirming a rugged manliness.¹¹⁸ The participation of both these groups in the sociability of the roadhouses would have appeared to confirm these stereotypes. In addition to this double standard, most of the social acquaintances formed in the roadhouses would be transitory by nature, further limiting any sustained challenges to racial stereotypes.

¹¹⁴ Frederick W. Howay, "Day Book [Unidentified] 6 Sept 1865-27 Apr. 1867," 2, 25 March, 1865, UBCSC, box. 23, file 14. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Jan. 1868- Aug. 1868," 17 March, 1871. 8 April, 1871QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 2, box B, item 2.

¹¹⁵ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 40-43, 80-83.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹¹⁷ Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 7 September, 11 November, 1867; 8 February, 22 September, 1868, BCARS GR 0597, vol.1. Kay Anderson, "Engendering Race Research: Unsettling the self-Other Dichotomy," in *Bodyspace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 204-207. Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 51.

¹¹⁸ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 38-44.

The business structure of the individual roadhouses also belies the notion of racial utopias along the route to the Cariboo. While both Blacks and Whites operated roadhouses, neither Chinese nor Natives emerge from the historical record as proprietors.¹¹⁹ Generally, Natives and Chinese predominated as employees, especially in the more arduous tasks of manual labour, while Blacks and Whites tended to occupy positions of ownership. While the roadhouses employed workers from all different groups, specific jobs seem to have had loose racial designations. Therefore, the majority of cooks were Chinese,¹²⁰ but there were also a few Black cooks.¹²¹ Roadhouse owners hired Natives and Chinese to cut lumber, collect hay for the horses, and do other odd jobs.¹²² The need for investment capital to fund roadhouse operations favoured ownership of roadhouses by Whites and Blacks who, in turn, favoured social norms that confined Natives and Chinese to subordinate positions.

The populations of the gold field towns and mines were especially dependant on one aspect of the gold field economy in the hinterland. Interracial interactions revolving around food production by Newcomer groups in the hinterland placed the food producers

¹¹⁹ "From Our Special Correspondent," *British Columbian*, 27 August, 1862. "British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 13 June, 1864. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868," 18 January, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1. For probable locations refer to: Branwen C. Patenaude, *Trails to Gold* (Victoria: Horsdal & Shubart, 1995), 160.

¹²⁰ "Cariboo and British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 September, 1863. John Boyd, "Unidentified Day Book," 14 December, 1868, BCARS A01030. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: October 1869-October 1870," 15 November, 1869, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 2, box B, item 3. Bohanon/Fuller, "Cash/Account Books ca 1868-1882," 7 April, 1870, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 3, box D, item 2. James Reynard, "Barkerville, 1869-1906. Cariboo Mission-Rev. J. Reynard," 1869, ADCA.

¹²¹ "Cariboo and British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 3 September, 1863. Bohanon/Fuller, "Cash/Account Books ca 1869-1876," 9 January, 1872, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 3, box D, item 3.

¹²² John Boyd, "Unidentified Day Book," 15 April, 10 September, 14 December, 1868; 21 April, 8 June, 1869, BCARS A01030. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Aug. 1868-Oct. 1869," 7 December, 1868; 7 February, 18 April, 1869, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2.

in an advantageous social position and individuals from the different Newcomer groups all participated through either ranches or farms.¹²³ In particular, the Chinese rapidly implemented Chinese gardens, akin to those in both California and Australia.¹²⁴ The Chinese gardens supplied considerable quantities of fresh vegetables such as “lettuce, onions, [and] radishes” and the gold field staple, potatoes.¹²⁵ Additionally, Chinese gardens in the Cariboo adapted to grow wheat, accounting for one-quarter of the total wheat production in the region by 1867.¹²⁶ There is also evidence of Chinese ranches, or at least Chinese swine and cattle herds in the Cariboo.¹²⁷

Blacks and Whites also farmed and ranched.¹²⁸ Land records exist for pre-emptions by two Blacks, John Giscome and Henry McDames, on the Bonaparte River near

¹²³ “The Chinese are...,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 May, 1866. “Quesnelmouth,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. “Vegetables” and “Wheat Crop,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. “Vegetables,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 May, 1869. J. Monroe Thoington, ed., “The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun,” 27 November, 1872, BA. Frederick W. Howay, “Day Book [Unidentified] 6 Sept 1865-27 Apr. 1867,” 23 February, 2 March, 13 April, 1865, UBCSC, box 23, file 14. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Aug. 1868- Oct. 1869,” 15 November, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2.

¹²⁴ “Mining Intelligence,” *Daily British Colonist*, 28 September, 1865. “Quesnelmouth,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. “Snow,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 May, 1868. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 195.

¹²⁵ “The Chinese are...,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 May, 1866. “Quesnelmouth,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. “Vegetables,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. “Vegetables,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 May, 1869. J. Monroe Thoington, ed., “The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun,” 27 November, 1872, BA, Barkerville Archival System.

¹²⁶ “Wheat Crop,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. “Up Country News,” *British Columbian*, 4 November, 1868.

¹²⁷ B., “Later from the Interior,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 February, 1865. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. “Porcine,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 June, 1869. J. Monroe Thoington, ed. The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun. 27 November, 1872, BA. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Aug. 1868-Oct. 1869,” 2 October, 1868, 29 June, 1869, QA fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868,” 23 June, 1868, QA fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1.

¹²⁸ Frederick W. Howay, “Day Book [Unidentified] 6 Sept 1865-27 Apr. 1867,” 23 February, 2 March, 13 April, 1865, UBCSC, box 23, file 14. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Aug. 1868-Oct. 1869,” 15 November, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2.

Quesnellemouth.¹²⁹ Account books from nearby roadhouses show that both Giscome and McDames kept livestock, although to what extent is not certain.¹³⁰ Within a year of recording their pre-emptions, both Giscome and McDames sold to their White neighbour, James Reed.¹³¹ While it is uncertain how many other Blacks farmed or ranched in the Cariboo, the example of Giscome and McDames shows that some Blacks had both the knowledge and the capital necessary for this type of business venture.

Neither the Black ranches nor the Chinese market gardens did not meet with criticism from the town elites.¹³² Indeed, the town elites praised the Chinese for the produce of their market gardens.¹³³ Given the general anti-Asian sentiment of the gold field towns, this is quite remarkable. This acceptance can be traced to several complementary factors. Next to gold, food was the most important commodity in the gold field towns. It was scarce, extremely expensive, and often of dubious quality.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ "British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 13 June, 1864. John K. Giscombe, "Barkerville Computer Index Search: Giscombe," Land Registry, BA. Henry McDames, "Barkerville Computer Index Search: McDames," Land Registry, BA. British Columbia Department of Lands and Works, "Pre-emption Records Taken by P. O'Reilly 1862-1864, Alexandria and Miscellaneous Districts," 1-2, BCARS GR 1182, file 2.

¹³⁰ Frederick W. Howay, "Day Book [Unidentified] 6 Sept 1865-27 Apr. 1867," 23 February, 2 March, 13 April, 1865, UBCSC, box 23, file 14. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Aug. 1868-Oct. 1869" 15 November, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2.

¹³¹ Jas. Reed, "Barkerville Computer Index Search: Reed," Land Registry, BA. John K. Giscome, "Barkerville Computer Index Search: Giscome," Lot Survey, 16 September, 1862, BA, lot 82. Henry McDames, "Barkerville Computer Index Search: McDames," Lot Survey, 16 September, 1862, BA, lot 83.

¹³² A rare case of ambiguous criticism of Chinese farmers: "The Chinese Are Not Behind Their White Brethren..." *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 May, 1866.

¹³³ "Mining Intelligence," *Daily British Colonist*, 28 September, 1865. "The Chinese are..." *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 May, 1866. "Quesnelmouth," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. "Our Agricultural Resources," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 October, 1866. "Vegetables" and "Wheat Crop," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. "Vegetables," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 May, 1869. J. Monroe Thoington, ed., *The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun*. 27 November, 1872, BA.

¹³⁴ "Quesnelmouth," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. "Our Agricultural Resources," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 October, 1866. County Court, "Summons Book," 16 July, 1866, BCARS, GR 0584, vol. 3.

While the food suppliers commanded high prices for their produce, the goods they offered helped relieve demand, lowering prices overall, and were of better quality than anything shipped from further south.¹³⁵ Additionally, the food production industry in the hinterland could not begin to fill the needs of the gold field towns, resulting in a rather uncompetitive market.¹³⁶ The various groups growing food did not feel threatened by each other because the high demand reduced the need for competition between food producers. Also, most Whites, including the town elites, saw food production as supporting, not competing with, the main economic activity of the area, gold mining. All of these factors combined to make the interracial interactions surrounding food production rather equitable.

Conclusions

All residents of the Cariboo had to spend some time in the hinterland travelling between the gold field towns and their experiences there affected how they understood the Cariboo more generally. While not a top priority, the hinterland was a concern of the town elites. However, the hinterland's physical, economic, and social character mitigated the effect of the town elites. The different economies of the hinterland allowed Natives the opportunity to be relatively independent which helped in the formation of the Newcomer understanding of the space of the hinterland as "Native." The alternative economies combined with the Newcomer understanding of the hinterland as Native space

¹³⁵ See, for example: County Court, "Summons Book," 16 July, 1866, BCARS, GR 0584, vol. 3. Bishop George Hills, "Diary 1861," transcribed, 23 June, 1861, ADCA.

¹³⁶ "Mining Intelligence," *Daily British Colonist*, 28 September, 1865. "Vegetables," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1871.

tended to slant many Native-Newcomer interactions in the hinterland to the benefit of Natives.

The gold field economy present in the hinterland was not the dominant force it was in the towns or the mines. In some aspects of the gold field economy, Natives' interactions benefited from the strength of the subsistence and fur trade economies as well as the relative weakness of the Newcomers, most notably in the packing industry. However, the gold field economy did give the Newcomers some ability to influence Natives in the hinterland. In some types of interactions, such as those around drinking, the presence of Newcomer social norms that denied Natives access by depicting them as savage/ childlike shaped their participation.

The other non-White groups in the hinterland also took part in the gold field economy in the hinterland. Blacks, in a very similar pattern as to what emerges in the gold field towns and mines, displayed the greatest degree of intermixing with Whites. Notably, Blacks interacted with Whites as owners of roadhouses, employees, farmers, and travelling companions. Yet, as the example of Harry Guillod illustrates, the particular context of the hinterland, with its dearth of town elite coercive power, did not lack differences based on race for the Blacks or other groups.

The exclusion of the Chinese serves as the most potent example of the ability of the social norms of the gold field towns to affect the space of the hinterland. However, the Chinese also took advantage of the relative inability of the town elites to regulate their activity. In particular, the Chinese capitalized on the split between the town elites and the rough culture of the working class miners to interact in roadhouses over drinks and cards. The Chinese also exploited the general weakness of the gold towns by farming,

positioning themselves in a strong economic and social position in their interactions with other Newcomers.

The hinterland was a fundamentally different space than the gold field towns or mines. The hinterland was characterized by a lack of surveillance by the town elites that shaped the hinterland as “Native” in the perceptions of the Newcomers and contributed to the strength of Natives in their interactions in the hinterland. This weakness of the town elites in the hinterland also allowed the Chinese, Blacks, and common Whites to articulate social and economic relationships that varied greatly from the towns and mines. However, this relative freedom from the surveillance and control of the town elites did not mean that the social norms of the towns and mines did not affect the hinterland. Instead, Newcomers carried social norms and understandings from the towns into the hinterland where they primarily affected interracial interactions related to the gold field economy. Interracial interactions in the hinterland were significantly different, but not completely separate from the gold field towns and mines.

Social Norms and the Space of the Gold Field Towns

The towns of the Cariboo Mountains and the lesser towns located outside the main mining area all served as regional centres for gold mining in the Cariboo. (Map 3) The gold field towns shared the common characteristics of possessing multiple businesses, higher population densities and aspects of colonial government such as a constabulary, judiciary, and tax collectors. Additionally, the gold field towns acted as nexuses for social and business interactions between miners and non-miners alike. These interactions made the gold field towns distinct from the hinterland and mines. Within these towns, the elite Whites particularly shaped the nature of interracial interactions.

Four main distinct racial groups occupied the towns: the Whites, Chinese, Blacks, and Natives. The Chinese were distinctive in their settlement patterns in that they tended to settle in Chinatowns adjacent to the gold towns.¹³⁷ Additionally, numerically small, but socially significant numbers of Blacks and Natives settled within the gold field towns.¹³⁸ While Blacks settled throughout the White areas of the gold field towns, Natives tended to live either along the periphery of the town or in mixed-race

¹³⁷ "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 14 June, 1862. "Highly Interesting News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 21 June, 1862. "Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 29 July, 1868. J.P. Gibbs, 22 September, 1868, BA, Barkerville Archival System. A. Hickman, "Hickman, A.," 22 September, 1868, BA, Barkerville Archival System. Old Survey 22, "Lot 25-Old Survey 22, 1866," BA, Barkerville Archival System.

¹³⁸ "The Census," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 December, 1866. Mallandaine, Edward, *First Victoria Directory*, 3^d issue, and *British Columbia Guide*. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871), 94-95.

dwellings.¹³⁹ The majority of the population of the gold field towns was White, but national, linguistic, sexual, and class divisions complicated this category. Most importantly for the nature of interracial interactions, the White population of the gold field towns can be seen as divided into two social strata, the elites and the working class labourers.

The town elites were particularly important in shaping interracial interactions in the gold field towns. British-influenced White men dominated the ranks of the town elites by controlling the vast majority of positions in the government bureaucracy (including the judiciary), elected positions, the Anglican Church, most of the newspapers as well as being some of the wealthiest business owners.¹⁴⁰ In contrast, the working class White miners were from a variety of national backgrounds and ranged from the abject poor to the fairly well-to-do. While some nationalities, such as the Welsh, experienced discrimination at the hands of other “Whites,” for the most part, the majority of White racism was targeted at the “threatening” non-White groups, the Chinese and Natives.¹⁴¹ What united the working class as a social stratum was a shared exclusion from the ranks of the town elites and a common status as labourers, often in the mines. While many

¹³⁹ “News From Cariboo,” *British Columbian*, 14 June, 1862. “Highly Interesting News From Cariboo,” *The British Columbian*, 21 June, 1862. “Important From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 30 January, 1863. “Important From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 25 February, 1863. “News From Cariboo!,” *Daily British Colonist*, 27 February, 1863. “Letter From Lillooet,” *Victoria Chronicle*, 19 February, 1864. El Oro, “Another Letter from Lillooet,” *Victoria Chronicle*, 11 May, 1864. “British Columbia,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 17 March, 1865. Winnemucca, “Gossiping Letter from Quesnellemouth,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 3 June, 1865 [sic, 1865]. “The Indian Liquor Traffic,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. “Death and Inquest,” *The Cariboo Sentinel*, 29 July, 1868. Gibbs, J.P., “Barkerville Computer Index Search: Gibbs, J.P.,” 22 September, 1868, BA. A. Hickman, “Hickman, A.,” 22 September, 1868, BA, Barkerville Archival System. Old Survey 22, “Lot 25- Old Survey 22, 1866,” BA, Barkerville Archival System.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example: “Cariboo Letter,” *Daily British Colonist*, 23 August, 1864.

¹⁴¹ “The Welsh-Who Are They?,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 January, 1867. David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*, 19-20.

working class miners owned shares in mining companies, they also performed the actual labour in the mines, in contrast to the town elites who also owned shares but rarely appear to have mined themselves. Finally, working class White miners lacked the same access to the resources of the colonial state as the town elites. Despite these differences, both the workers and the elites shared a basic understanding of the non-White racial groups in the towns as “Others.” This meant that working class and elite Whites often acted similarly in their interracial interactions. Occasionally however, the working class Whites’ interests diverged from those of the elites so that the working class Whites engaged in interracial interactions that conflicted with the idealized space of the town elites.

Largely on the word of the town elites who dominate the written record of the gold field towns, traditional historiography has understood the towns as generally lacking racial conflict, while, in fact, this social calm existed largely only as the town elites’ ideal. The social norms inherent in the elites’ idealized space of the gold field towns conflicted with the day-to-day interactions of the majority of the population of the gold field towns. Instead of embodying one set of social norms, the gold field towns embodied a variety of often-conflicting social norms. Interracial interactions particularly challenged the racial basis of the town elites’ idealized space of the gold field towns. Each racial group responded to the idealized space of the town elites in different ways. The Chinese initially formed Chinatowns and only integrated with the non-Chinese population of the gold field towns slowly over the gold field period. In contrast, Blacks took advantage of the Whites’ fear of Chinese difference to spatially, socially, and economically integrate within the White areas of the towns. According to the town elites,

Natives belonged in the hinterland, so the presence of Natives in the towns, let alone the economic and social interactions they engaged in those spaces, repudiated the idealized space of the gold field towns. Nor were the Whites unified in their attitudes toward the “ideal” social norms of the gold towns. While the majority of working class Whites often agreed with the elites as to what social norms should dominate the towns, there were also significant differences, especially over the frequency and type of interracial interactions permissible in the towns.

Enforcing Order: The Idealized Space of the Gold Field Towns

The reality of an economic and political system that placed Whites at the top of the social, economic, and political hierarchy shaped interracial interactions within the gold field towns. Those Whites who occupied the upper echelons of Cariboo society disproportionately affected the representations of the "race" of the remaining White and non-White population of the Cariboo in a manner that was denied to these other groups. Specifically, the town elites explicitly disseminated racialized representations of “Others,” and therefore implicitly of themselves, through the media and courts by using their social capital as elites to dictate to their “inferiors.”

In particular, the town elites represented the idealized space of the gold field town as one in which British mid- and upper-class social norms of behaviour, law, housing,

and styles of dress dominated.¹⁴² For example, the visit of the Governor of British Columbia, Anthony Musgrave, to the Cariboo in 1869 prompted public displays of loyalty to the Empire, colonial authority, and the underlying British-based social norms that informed the town elites' notion of the idealized space of the towns.¹⁴³ Additionally, the town elites portrayed sources of immigration to the gold fields other than the "White" areas of the British Empire, such as the United States, China, and the Caribbean, as sites of degradation, corruption or antiquarianism.¹⁴⁴ However, the town elites' idealized space of the Cariboo was not an explicitly racial construction, but instead was primarily social in character. For instance, the town elites welcomed Blacks who were strong supporters of the social order embodied in the idealized space of the Cariboo while fearing oppositional populist or republican-leaning Whites.¹⁴⁵ The preservation of the existing social order was the primary goal of the town elites.

¹⁴² I.D.C., "A Man's a Man for A' That," *British Columbian*, 4 June, 1862. ***, "William's Creek," *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1863. K., "Letter From Richfield," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 July, 1864. "Cariboo Letter," *Daily British Colonist*, 23 August, 1864. A.H. Francis, "Letter from our Victoria Correspondent," *Elevator*, 2 June, 1865. "Mining Intelligence," *Daily British Colonist*, 10 August, 1865. A.H.F., "Victoria," *Elevator*, 1 December, 1865. B.D., "Letter from Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 27 March, 1868. Bell, "Letter From Victoria, B.C.," *Elevator*, 26 June, 1868. Bell, "Letter From Victoria, B.C.," *Elevator*, 31 July, 1868. "Profits of Agriculture," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. "Reception of the Governor," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869. Wilkinson, John B., "Letters." Victoria, June 27, 1860; Vancouver Island, 27 June, 1860, BCARS MS 0048, file I. Cariboo Quesnelle, "County Court Book. July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877," 23 September, 1863, BCARS GR 0570. W.D. Moses, "Description. Lady Franklin visits the Pacific Northwest: Being extracts from the letters of Miss Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin's Niece, February to April 1861 and April to July 1870," Ed. Dorothy Blakey Smith. Victoria BC. Provincial Archives, memoir no. XI. 1974. 1861?, BA. Cole Harris, *Making Native Space*, 1-6.

¹⁴³ "Preparations for the Governor's Reception," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 September, 1869. "Reception of The Governor," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869.

¹⁴⁴ "Effect of Emancipation on the African Race in the British West Indies," *Daily British Colonist*, 21 October, 1859. "West India Emancipation," *Daily British Colonist*, 24 October, 1859. A.H. Francis, "Letter from our Victoria Correspondent," *Elevator*, 2 June, 1865. A.H.F., "Victoria," *Elevator*, 1 December, 1865. "Our Chinese Population," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. "A Graphic Description of China," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. "The Chinese Floating Islands," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 February, 1869. "Scrimmage," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 12 June, 1869. "Chinese Testimony....," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 February, 1870.

¹⁴⁵ W.D. Moses, "Diary #2, 1869," 24 May, 1869, BCARS A01046. Tina Loo, *Making Law*, 55-58.

However, the town elites saw some groups, such as the Chinese and Natives, as innately opposed to the social norms and idealized space that they articulated.¹⁴⁶ In the towns, the elites understood the Chinese as “alien” hordes whose separate Chinatowns stood as markers of the social threat they represented.¹⁴⁷ The town elites accepted Native opposition more easily than Chinese opposition because they perceived Natives to be diminishing in the face of the advance of the frontier of civilization, whereas they perceived the Chinese population to be rapidly increasing.¹⁴⁸ In contrast, in the eyes of the elites, the Blacks were the non-White group least threatening to the social order.¹⁴⁹ The Blacks worked, spoke, dressed, and ate in a manner that was familiar to Whites. Additionally, the Blacks also vocally supported British law and authority.¹⁵⁰ In the same

¹⁴⁶ “Criminal Trials,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 July, 1867. Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” transcribed by Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963. Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of *Mainland Guardian*) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

¹⁴⁷ “The Welsh-Who Are They?,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 January, 1867. “A Graphic Description of China,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. “The Chinese Labour Question,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 July, 1869. “Preparations for the Governor’s Reception,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 September, 1869. “Chinese Punishment,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 3 September, 1870. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 22 January, 1868; 22 September, 1868, BCARS GR 0597. J. Monroe Thoington, ed., *The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun*, 27 November, 1872, BA. George Blair, “Diary,” transcribed by Macintosh, July 17, 1962, 1862, BA, 971.12 BA. Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963, Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of *Mainland Guardian*), 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

¹⁴⁸ *** “Williams Creek,” *Daily British Colonist*, 24 July, 1863. “Decay of the North American Native Races,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 September, 1867. “The Chinese Labour Question,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 July, 1869. Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963. Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of *Mainland Guardian*) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

¹⁴⁹ “Victoria,” *The Elevator*, 1 December, 1865. “Black vs. Yellow,” *Elevator*, 30 March, 1866. “Prevention is Better Than Cure,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. Coloured Miner, “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866. D.L., “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 July, 1866. Bell, “Letter From Victoria, B.C.,” and “When and by Whom was America Peopled?,” *Elevator*, 26 June, 1868. “Bathhouses,” 9 July, 1866, Barkerville Archival System, BA. W.D. Moses Diaries, Diary #2, 1869, 16, 24 May, 1869; 7 April, 1869, BCARS A01046. BA. Moses, W.D. Description. Lady Franklin visits the Pacific Northwest: Being extracts from the letters of Miss Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin's Niece, February to April 1861 and April to July 1870. Ed. Dorothy Blakey Smith. Victoria BC. Provincial Archives, memoir no. XI. 1974, 1861?

¹⁵⁰ D.L., “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 July, 1866. James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 29-32, 205.

way that the Blacks made the Irish white in the United States, the Chinese nearly made the Blacks white in the Cariboo.¹⁵¹ At the same time however, the town elites still separated the Blacks from White society with racial labels and descriptions.¹⁵²

The town elites sought to defend the idealized space of the Cariboo gold field towns in a number of ways. When it was in their interest, working class Whites supported the town elites' articulation of an idealized space in the gold field towns. In one example from the early gold field period, working class and elite Whites barred the Chinese from entering the towns in the Cariboo Mountains by physically preventing them from travelling East past Quesnellemouth.¹⁵³ This policy seems to have been successful from 1859 until it collapsed around 1864.¹⁵⁴ While the working class White and Black miners sought to exclude the Chinese because of their economic threat, the town elites attempted to exclude the Chinese primarily because of the social threat they represented.

Unable to exclude the Chinese or effectively regulate the Chinese space of Chinatown, elite Whites could enforce a position of White dominance in the interracial interactions of the gold field towns through systemic racism. A consistent underlying "common sense" systemic racism denigrated the Chinese, Natives, and Blacks to different extents at the same time that it shored up the White's own social position within the gold field towns. This systemic racism is evident in the use of racial jokes found in

¹⁵¹ David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*.

¹⁵² "A Nigger's Idea of the Telegraph," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 May, 1867. "Riddle Me This," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 June, 1867.

¹⁵³ "News From Above," *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. "Arrivals From the River," *Daily British Colonist*, June 10, 1861. Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. Vialor, "En Route to Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863.

¹⁵⁴ In essence, finding the front door closed, the Chinese simply went around the back. Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. "Letter From William Creek," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 4 July, 1863. Robert M. Scott, "Diaries Snowshoe Creek, 1863-1892," 25 June, 1863, BCARS MS 2604. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 168.

The Cariboo Sentinel.¹⁵⁵ The jokes reinscribed an inferior social position for non-Whites by highlighting the subjects' skin colour and by labelling them with derogatory names and terms. Additionally, non-Whites, with their lack of White attributes, provided the "humorous" punch line for the jokes.¹⁵⁶ Humour was just one of the more noticeable aspects of the systemic "common sense" racism that underlay the White conception of the gold field towns of the Cariboo. Further indications of systemic racism can be discerned in segregated competitions for "Siwashes" at celebrations,¹⁵⁷ in the everyday use of racial terms such as "squaws," "niggers," or "children of the woods,"¹⁵⁸ in the pervasive use of "Ah" instead of Chinese names, and in the common stereotypes of Chinese as heathens and economic leeches,¹⁵⁹ Natives as "savages," and Blacks as childlike or overly emotional.¹⁶⁰ These common everyday assumptions of working class and elite Whites were the town elites' most pervasive and powerful method of promulgating the idealized space of the Cariboo, and with it, a particular vision of British society. Nor were Whites the only group to contribute to this systemic racism. Blacks singled out the Chinese as particularly inferior, and there are indications of a significant

¹⁵⁵ "A Nigger's Idea of the Telegraph," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 May, 1867. "Riddle Me This," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 June, 1867. Untitled, *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 March, 1869. Kumkumly, "A Voice From The Wilderness," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 January, 1870. "Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 January, 1870. "A Laughable Incident," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 September, 1870. Untitled, *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 March, 1869.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ "Queen's Birthday Races," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 May, 1870.

¹⁵⁸ "Indian Row," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 January, 1869.

¹⁵⁹ "Arrival of the Governor Douglas," *Daily British Colonist*, 8 May, 1860. Tal. O Eifion, "The Bed-Rock Drain," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 April, 1869.

¹⁶⁰ "According to...", *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 September, 1869. "The Assizes," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 3 June, 1871. "The Cariboo Sentinel, Barkerville," 8 August, 1871, CCA, Barkerville, Cariboo Gold Fields. Alexander Allan, "Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876," transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963. Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of *Mainland Guardian*) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

amount of Chinese-Native tension.¹⁶¹ These forms of racism served to directly or indirectly reinforce the social position of Whites in the gold field towns by denigrating other non-Whites. While racism that targeted Whites almost certainly existed, in the social order of the gold field towns it would have been unwise on the part of non-White groups to openly discriminate against Whites and risk retaliation by Whites who were generally socially, economically, and politically more powerful.

The Challenges to Idealized Space

Reality did not reflect the idealized space of the gold field towns. Whites and non-Whites alike challenged the “official” racialized spatial meanings of the gold field towns by articulating very different racial meanings of space through their interracial interactions. W.D. Moses provides an excellent example of one articulation of a competing notion of space and the social norms implicit in it. In his diary, Moses records acting as an informal bank for two Natives, Johnny and Annie, saving and lending significant amounts of money.¹⁶² By acting in this manner, Moses recognized and facilitated a Native presence and participation in the gold field towns denied by the elites. In so doing, Moses acted out an alternative to the elites’ idealized concepts of interracial interactions in the gold field towns.

¹⁶¹ “Black vs. Yellow,” *Elevator*, 30 March, 1866. Bell, “Letter from Victoria, B.C.” and “When and by Whom was America Peopled?,” *Elevator*, 26 June, 1868. “Omineca Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 April, 1870.

¹⁶² W.D. Moses, “Diary, Diary #3, 1871, Memoranda,” 27 July, 1870, BCARS A01046. One deposit was for 60.00.

Chinese Interracial Interactions in the Gold Field Towns

The Chinese tended to reside in distinct Chinatowns, often separated physically from the main area of the gold field towns.¹⁶³ Like Chinatowns elsewhere in North America, Chinese shops, residences, and, in some cases, a T'ong Hall characterized the Chinatowns of the Cariboo.¹⁶⁴ The Chinatowns represented an area that, despite attempts by Whites to enforce control, remained a relatively autonomous space where Chinese customs and social values carried great weight.¹⁶⁵ These Chinatowns were not completely socially and economically insular. The Chinese frequented shops outside of the Chinatowns while non-Chinese entered into the Chinatowns for business or entertainment.¹⁶⁶

While non-Chinese assumed that the Chinatowns represented a homogenous population, there do appear to have been internal factions, possibly between the more numerous Cantonese-speakers from Guangdong province and the fewer Mandarin-

¹⁶³ "Our Chinese Population," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. "Burning of Barkerville," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868. "North Fork of Quesnel," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 November, 1868. "Nuisances," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1871. Government Agent, "Cariboo West Collectorate." 1863-1866, 30 September, 1863, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 2. Ying-ying Chen elaborates between the different types of Chinatowns in the Cariboo in far more detail than is possible here. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 38-47.

¹⁶⁴ Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 14 January, 1869; 9 December, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Record Book," 6 January, 1869, BCARS GR 0822. Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 158, 191, 197-198.

¹⁶⁵ "Porcine," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 June, 1869. "Preparations for the Governor's Arrival," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 September, 1869. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 7 September, 1867; 14 January, 1869, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

¹⁶⁶ "Latest From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 31 August, 1863. Cariboo Quesnelle, "County Court Book. July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877," 27 April, 1865, BCARS GR 0570. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 24 April, 1868, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 5. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 22-23 May, 1866; 19 September, 1866, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. W.D. Moses, "Diary #3, 1871," 15 August, 1871, BCARS A01046. Richard Thomas Wright, *Quesnelle Forks: A Gold Rush Town in Historical Perspective*. (Friends of Barkerville Historical Society, July 1987), 1876, CCA, box Quesnel Forks.

speakers from more northern regions, such as Beijing.¹⁶⁷ Whatever the exact source of this rift, its intensity became more evident over time.¹⁶⁸ Also, as the Chinese and non-Chinese became accustomed to each other during the gold field period, the Chinese began to make wider use of the court system.¹⁶⁹ The Chinese adoption of aspects of White society to regulate interactions within the Chinese space of Chinatown may have been the result of the inability of the T'ongs and other Chinese social structures to maintain order in an increasingly fragmenting society.¹⁷⁰ In other words, internal Chinese divisions may have provided the impetus for Chinese attempts to selectively integrate into the non-Chinese society of the Cariboo.

The collapse of the exclusion of the Chinese from the gold field towns encouraged greater Chinese settlement and increased the number and scope of interracial interactions in the towns. Non-Chinese initially reacted with hostility to this new presence because of the economic and social threat they believed the Chinese represented.¹⁷¹ The situation evidently reached a boiling point during the winter of 1865, when two Chinese men injured Moresby, a White man, with an axe and pick during a dispute over wood in Barkerville.¹⁷² In response to the "attack," White miners held an indignation meeting in a

¹⁶⁷ James Reynard, "Barkerville, 1869-1906. Cariboo Mission-Rev. J. Reynard," ADCA. Overall immigration demographics would seem to conflict with this theory.

¹⁶⁸ M.R.M., "Letter From the Forks of Quesnelle," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 18 June, 1863. "British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 5 November, 1866. "Police Courts," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 December, 1870. "Celestial Row," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 17 June, 1871.

¹⁶⁹ "Ah Toy vs. Sing Gee & Co.," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 October, 1869. "Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 December, 1870. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 April, 1871. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 6 July, 1864; 9 June, 1865, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 2. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 1 September, 1864, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. Cariboo Quesnelle, "County Court Book. July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877," 27 October, 1864; 27 April, 1865; 13 September, 1865, BCARS GR 0570.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 27 January, 1865.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

local saloon and announced they would “run the Chinamen off the Creek.”¹⁷³ The miners eventually settled for petitioning the Chinese to leave, but it is doubtful that anything ever came of this; certainly, there is no record of an attempt to “run” the Chinese out of the Cariboo Mountains.¹⁷⁴ While the relative numbers and strength of the Chinese may have quickly tempered the initial response of the White miners, the influence of the upper levels of White society also seems to have had some role in mitigating the response. Immediately following the incident, newspaper coverage stressed that the authorities would maintain law and order “without respect to color or nationality.”¹⁷⁵ Many of the town elites had a vested interest in preserving the social order by preventing any sort of American-style “mob justice” and maintaining a supply of cheap Chinese labour.¹⁷⁶ In this case, the town elites mitigated the anger of the working class miners because it suited their economic interest.

Over the gold field period and despite the creation of Chinese space in the Chinatowns, the Chinese increasingly integrated into the Cariboo gold field towns.¹⁷⁷ In one respect, this resulted from the overall demographic shift that saw the Chinese become an increasing proportion of the population of the gold field towns in the years

¹⁷³ “Later From the Cariboo,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 January, 1865.

¹⁷⁴ “British Columbia,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 27 January, 1865. Although an attempt may have occurred some years earlier: Argus, “Letter From Beaver Lake,” *Daily British Colonist*, 11 June, 1861.

¹⁷⁵ “Later From the Cariboo,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 January, 1865.

¹⁷⁶ “Later From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 5 September, 1864. “Later From Cariboo,” *British Columbian*, 5 August, 1865. “Hospital,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866.

¹⁷⁷ Argathalian, “Letter From Lytton,” *British Columbian*, 2 May, 1865. Jas. Reynard, “Correspondence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 January, 1869. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 14 February, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Record Book. July 30, 1866-May 18,” 18 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0822.

approaching 1871.¹⁷⁸ As their numbers increased, the Chinese both had less need for the safe social site of the Chinatowns and the non-Chinese were less able to exist without an increasing amount of interaction with the Chinese population. This shift meant that those Chinese who wished to integrate could more easily do so.

However, demographics did not cause this movement toward integration alone. Other social and economic changes were also factors. Over the gold field period, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese changed their attitudes toward the Chinese place within the gold field towns. On one hand, the Chinese seem to have begun to see themselves as belonging to the wider community of the gold field towns and began to act accordingly.¹⁷⁹ This trend was most noticeable with the increasing numbers of Chinese who began to take out mining licences.¹⁸⁰ To the Blacks and Whites, the lack of Chinese mining licences signalled that the Chinese did not wish to abide by the social and legal norms of the Cariboo. The Chinese movement to conform to this basic regulatory practice of the gold fields greatly diminished the passion with which the Whites portrayed the Chinese as “leeches” on the economy and changed the nature of Chinese interracial interactions, especially with the elites.¹⁸¹ At the same time, the demographic shift and the depression of the main gold field economy that sparked an exodus of many

¹⁷⁸ “The Census,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 December, 1866. Mallandaine, Edward, First Victoria Directory, 3^d issue, and British Columbia Guide. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871), 94-95.

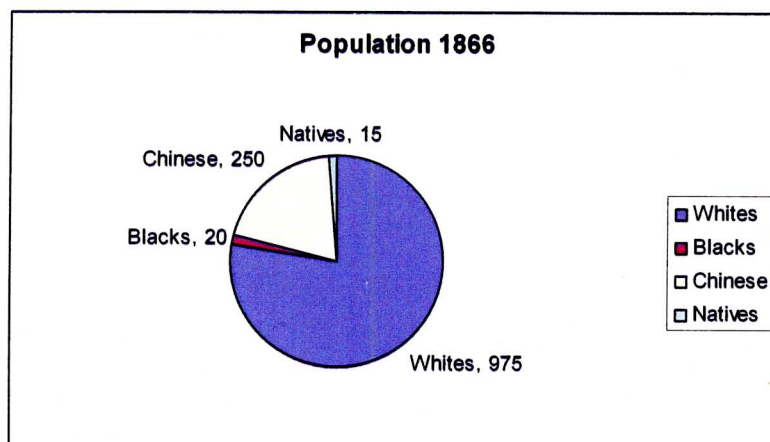
¹⁷⁹ Argathalian, “Letter From Lytton,” *British Columbian*, 2 May, 1865.

¹⁸⁰ “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1865. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869. Government Agent, “Cariboo West Collectorate,” 15 August, 1863; 12 October, 1863; 12, 14 March, 1864; 18 April, 1864, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 2.

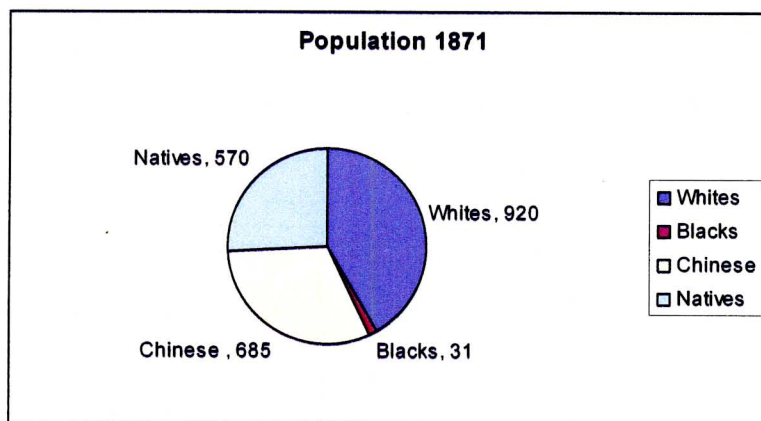
¹⁸¹ “Arrival of the Governor Douglas,” *Daily British Colonist*, 8 May, 1860. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

the intensity with which Whites, in particular, defended a non-Chinese space in the gold field towns. Ironically enough, this greater acceptance of the multi-racial character of the gold field towns came at a time when racial ideologies began to gain pseudo-scientific currency and popular acceptance among White and Black society.

Graph 2: Population of the Gold Field Towns, 1866.



Graph 3: Population of the Gold Field Towns, 1871.⁴⁶



⁴⁶ "Cariboo Sentinel," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 7 May, 1866. Mallandaine, Edward, *First Victoria Directory*, 3^d issue, and *British Columbia Guide*. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871), 94-95. Note: This population data is extremely suspect and should be taken only as indicator of the growing heterogeneity of the population of the gold field towns. The 1866 "census" was extremely informal and did not include the smaller towns beyond Barkerville and Richfield and probably did not count all those Natives present in the towns. The later Mallandaine census, while more formal, was also conducted haphazardly and unequally applied. Other population figures exist, but they are often the result of conjecture rather than any attempt at a systematic survey.

Unlike the hinterland or, to a lesser extent, the mines, where Whites and Blacks generally welcomed the Chinese as a source of labour, the Chinese faced much more economic resistance in the gold field towns.¹⁸³ In some ways, the Chinatowns helped mitigate this reality. The Chinatowns provided a safe economic site where Chinese merchants and businessmen located their stores and provided an array of goods, including specialty items, to the Chinese inhabitants.¹⁸⁴ While it is uncertain to what degree non-Chinese did business in Chinatowns,¹⁸⁵ it is known that as consumers, the Chinese frequented non-Chinese establishments, especially for specialty items such as “brandy, wine, oysters, and meats.”¹⁸⁶ After 1865, the depressed economic situation of the Cariboo gold field towns meant that the non-Chinese could not afford the luxury of refusing to sell to Chinese customers.¹⁸⁷ While non-Chinese society did not refuse Chinese business, paradoxically, they refused to acknowledge its presence. Despite the

¹⁸³ “Quesnellemouth,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 10 September, 1866. “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Vegetables,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. “A Hint to the Unemployed,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 October, 1867. “The Chinese Labour Question,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 July, 1869. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 16 July, 1866, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 3. William George Cox, “Colonial Correspondence,” 2 November, 1865, BCARS B1312, file 379. Kay Anderson, “Engendering Race Research,” in *Bodyspace*, 204-207.

¹⁸⁴ K., “Letter From Richfield,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 July, 1864. “Burning of Barkerville,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868. “Porcine,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 June, 1869. “Stabbing Affray,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 May, 1871. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 20 March, 1868, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 5. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 22 February, 1868, 22 September, 1868, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

¹⁸⁵ County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 20 December, 1867, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 5. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 13 November, 1865, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 3. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 16 July, 1866, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 3. Cariboo Quesnelle, “County Court Book. July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877,” 27 April, 1865, BCARS GR 0570. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868,” 19 January, 1868; 3 February, 1868; 10 April, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1.

¹⁸⁶ “Latest From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 31 August, 1863. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 24 April, 1868, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 5. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 22-23 May, 1866; 19 September, 1866, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. W.D. Moses, “Diary #3, 1871,” 15 August, 1871, BCARS A01046. Richard Thomas Wright, *Quesnelle Forks*.

¹⁸⁷ “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “A Hint to the Unemployed,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 October, 1867.

Chinese involvement throughout the gold field economy, non-Chinese society, especially White society, publicly articulated a stereotype of the Chinese as economic parasites who gave nothing back to their host community.¹⁸⁸ This stereotype began to recede later in the gold field period when the changing economic and demographic situation made it increasingly difficult to ignore the contradictions in such a position.

The Chinese also sought employment in the otherwise non-Chinese areas of the gold field towns. While Chinese butchers, cooks, and woodcutters worked either directly in, or as suppliers for, various non-Chinese hotels, saloons, and other employers in the gold field towns, they tended to move into lower-status jobs usually reserved for women or Natives.¹⁸⁹ These jobs were usually manual labour such as woodcutting, but also included gendered feminine jobs, such as work as domestic servants.¹⁹⁰ The low status of these jobs meant that even when the economy of the Cariboo was depressed, very little conflict seems to have occurred between the Chinese and Whites or Blacks over employment. Indeed, the only group they did compete against, the Natives, had little power in the gold towns.

¹⁸⁸ "The Chinese Labour Question," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 July, 1869. "The Chinese on the Pacific Coast," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 31 July, 1869.

¹⁸⁹ Furnte, "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January 1865. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Aug. 1868-Oct. 1869," 11, 24 March, 1869, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 2. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868," 7, 25 May, 1868; 23 July, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1. Bohanon/Fuller, "Day Books: October 1869-October 1870," 28 October, 1869; 6, 15 November, 1869; 3 January, 1870, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 2, box B, item 3. Bohanon/Fuller, "Oct. 1870-Nov. 1871," 22 December, 1870, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 2, box B, item 4. Government Agent, "Cariboo West Collectorate," 6 February, 1866; 5 May, 1866; 5 October, 1866, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 5.

¹⁹⁰ Furnte, "John Chinaman," *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January, 1865. "The Street," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 June, 1868. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 30 September, 1864; 31 October, 1864; 31 January, 1865; 1 February, 1865; 30 April, 1865; 1, 3, 7 May, 1865, 6 February, 1866, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. Government Agent, "Cariboo West Collectorate," 6 February, 1866; 3 April, 1866; 5 May, 1866; 16 June, 1866; 5 October, 1866, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 5. J. Monroe Thoington, ed, *The Cariboo Journal of John Macoun*, 27 November, 1872, BA. Vera Baker Currie, *Susie: A Manuscript on the Life and Times of Cecila Elmore Baker, 1867-1958*. Unpublished Manuscript, (Cariboo Historical Society, Jan. 14, 1978), 3, 5, QA.

As geographer Kay Anderson has indicated though, the desire for cheap Chinese labour was spatially variable.¹⁹¹ When the Chinese worked for large capitalists, either in the hinterland on road construction or maintenance, or in the mines as wage labour, developers viewed the low cost of their labour positively.¹⁹² In the towns however, the Chinese had no such readily available “Chinese work.” This contributed to the general White view of the Chinese in the Chinatowns as a drain on the economic and social well being of the gold field towns.¹⁹³

One of the most public debates on Chinese labour within the gold field towns took place over the hiring of a steward for the Williams Creek hospital. The goodwill and financial contributions of the inhabitants of the gold field towns sustained the Cariboo hospital, located in Barkerville.¹⁹⁴ When the gold field economy was booming, the hospital appears to have been little burden, but in times of economic depression, the cost of maintaining the hospital could become an issue, as it did in 1866.¹⁹⁵ However, the suggestion of hiring a Chinese steward to cut costs divided the hospital board.¹⁹⁶ Initially, John McLaren favoured hiring a Chinese steward for fiscal reasons,¹⁹⁷ but when Judge Cox pointed that “he did not think a chinaman [sic] was a fit and proper person to undertake the duties of steward where white men required attention,” McLaren reversed

¹⁹¹ Kay Anderson, “Engendering Race Research,” in *Bodyspace*, 204-207.

¹⁹² “The Chinese Labour Question,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 July, 1869. Kay Anderson, “Engendering Race Research,” in *Bodyspace*, 204-207.

¹⁹³ “Arrival of the Governor Douglas,” *Daily British Colonist*, 8 May, 1860. Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963. Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of *Mainland Guardian*) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

¹⁹⁴ “Hospital,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866.

¹⁹⁵ “Cariboo Sentinel,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 7 May, 1866. “Hospital,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866.

¹⁹⁶ “Mining Board Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 August, 1866.

¹⁹⁷ “Hospital,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866. Mr. McLaren was also a local literary figure. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 86.

his opinion.¹⁹⁸ The suggestion of the Chinese steward, while economical, raised racialized fears of mixing of the blood and the desire to avoid placing vulnerable White men in the hands of a Chinese steward, which would reverse “proper” racial dynamic of “strong” Whites and “weak” Chinese. These concerns trumped the racially-based economy of using Chinese labour in the hospital. Because the town elites saw the hospital as a critical site for the protection of “Whiteness” it therefore became a site where one aspect of the systemic racism of the Cariboo was reinscribed at the cost of another. In short, White masculinity was deemed to be more important than the economy of subordinated Chinese labour.

Black Interracial Interactions and the Idealized Space

While Blacks made use of White society’s concern with the Chinese population to spatially integrate with relative ease, Whites contested the social integration of Blacks, though not to the same extent as either the Chinese or the Natives. Although, as many Blacks quickly pointed out, British law guaranteed them equal rights, the actual implementation of this law was often far less equitable.¹⁹⁹ In response, Blacks were very politically active, voting and using letters to the editor of *The Cariboo Sentinel* to publicly call into question the hypocrisy of British law in practice, though not the social norms that informed this practice.²⁰⁰ That is, many Blacks tended to assert equality before the law, but neglected social discrimination and other forms of day-to-day

¹⁹⁸ “Mining Board Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 27 August, 1866.

¹⁹⁹ Colored Miner, “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866. D.L., “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 July, 1866.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

systemic racism. The Blacks had a vested interest in maintaining a version of the idealized space of the Cariboo, especially given the alternative of the racially intolerant California that many of them had fled.²⁰¹

Occasionally, Blacks used newspapers to push for social equality in addition to legal equality. An example of this can be seen in Anne Wheeler's defence of her actions in the *Sentinel*. On 1 October, 1870 the *Sentinel* ran an article stating that

On Tuesday night last the house occupied by Mrs. Ann Wheeler (colored), Richfield, was broken into and a trunk abstracted containing clothing and jewellery valued at \$400. At the time of the robbery the "fair" lady was enjoying the hospitalities of a distinguished colored resident.²⁰²

Besides indicating that Wheeler was wealthy enough to have \$400 in "clothing and jewellery" in a trunk, the article contrasted Wheeler's skin colour with her social aspirations.²⁰³ Wheeler was fair with quotation marks because her skin colour and her choice of companions, the unnamed "colored resident," denied her the ability to become a fair lady without quotation marks. In other words, Wheeler's race constrained her identity so that she was unable to become a true member of elite society, because the elite were, in the definition of the Cariboo, White Britishers. While Wheeler's status was above that of the Chinese or Natives, she was constrained from becoming elite because of her race and, to an extent, her gender.

In the next issue of the *Sentinel*, Wheeler posted an advertisement asking for the return of "the deeds and other papers taken" from her house.²⁰⁴ In the second half of the advertisement, Wheeler stated that she

²⁰¹ James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 15-33, 35.

²⁰² "Burglary," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 October, 1870.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ "Notice," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 October, 1870.

begs to correct the statement that she was “enjoying the hospitalities of a distinguished colored gentleman the night of the robbery,” having adjourned at the house of a white friend on the evening referred to.²⁰⁵

The first half of Wheeler’s advertisement in the *Sentinel* was not only a simple request for the return of stolen items; it was also an assertion of property rights. When Wheeler demanded the return of “the deeds and other papers taken” she asserted ownership over a house that the *Sentinel* had previously classified as simply being “occupied” by her.²⁰⁶ In this way, Wheeler re-asserted some of the legitimacy of her claim to “fairness.” Wheeler also responded to the criticism of her personal associations by stating that she had not been with a Black man; rather, she had been with a White, probably female, friend.²⁰⁷ By distancing herself from other Blacks and by putting forth a “proper” public persona, Wheeler asserted a claim to a particularly British conception of “fairness.” Ultimately, however, Wheeler could not fully move past the imposed quotation marks on her “fairness” because she could not erase the primary signifier of her race, her skin colour. Wheeler defended her right to own property in the White area of town and to a certain type of racial equality and gender respectability vested in British notions of propriety without questioning the racial assumptions that positioned her there originally.

Economically, Blacks also integrated fairly well into the gold field towns of the Cariboo. Blacks appear to have been the proprietors of a number of small business and

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ “Burglary,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 October, 1870. “Notice,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 October, 1870.

²⁰⁷ “Notice,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 October, 1870. My thanks to James Murton for his insight into the gender of Mrs. Wheeler’s companion. Murton has suggested that the “White friend” was female on the basis that Mrs. Wheeler was attempting to defend a claim to certain kind of gendered respectability, especially because as a Black woman she would have been assumed to be more sexually available. James Murton, Personal Communication, May, 2004.

hotels scattered throughout the gold field towns.²⁰⁸ These Black-owned businesses served White, Black, Chinese, and Native clientele.²⁰⁹ However, Blacks seem to have dominated within a few “Black trade” sectors of the economy, most notably barbering and washing.²¹⁰ Some of the most influential Blacks in Barkerville, W.D. Moses and Isaac Dickinson, worked as barbers.²¹¹ While both of these men were involved in other economic ventures, their barbering was the focus of their economic activity.²¹² In

²⁰⁸ “News from Cariboo,” *British Columbian*, 14 June, 1862. “Letter From Williams Creek,” *Daily British Colonist*, 10 July, 1862. Dixie, “Shampooin ‘Stablismen,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 12 June, 1865. “Moses Hair Invigorator,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 July, 1865. “Prevention is Better than Cure,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Burning of Barkerville,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868. W.D. Moses, “Description. James William Pilton. Negro Settlement in British Columbia with Notes Concerning W.D. Moses (1858-1871),” BA, Barkerville Archival System. Chartres Brew, “Report on Barkerville Fire to Col. Sec. List of Cases. Report on Rebuilding,” 15 September, 1868, BA. Bohanon/Fuller, “Day Books: Jan. 1868-Aug. 1868,” 18 January, 1868, QA, fonds #8, series 2, box B, item 1. A. Hickman, “Hickman, A,” 6 July, 1868; 22 September, 1868; 20 October, 1868; 2, 9 July, 1870, Barkerville Archival System, BA. Bathhouses, “Bathhouses,” 9 July, 1866; 16 June, 1869, Barkerville Archival System, BA. Bishop George Hills, “Diary,” transcribed, 15 July, 1862, ADCA.

²⁰⁹ Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 11 March, 1869, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. W.D. Moses, “Diary #3: Memoranda,” 27 July, 1870; August, 1871, BCARS A01046. Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook, Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963. Letter to Mr. Thomas Dearberg, Victoria V.I. Jan 2, 1868 from Williams Creek, 31 December, 1867, BA. W.D. Moses, “Description. Sentinel ref’s. Advertising,” Barkerville Archival System, 23 October, 1868, BA.

²¹⁰ “Letter From Williams Creek,” *Daily British Colonist*, 10 July, 1862. Dixie, “Shampooin ‘Stablismen,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 12 June, 1865. “Moses Hair Invigorator,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 July, 1865. “Prevention is Better than Cure,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Burning of Barkerville,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868. W.D. Moses, “Diary #1,” 10 September, 1865, BCARS A01046. Bohanon/Fuller, “Cash/Account Books ca 1869-1876,” 9 January, 1872, QA, fonds #8, series 2, subseries 3, box D, item 3, BA. J.P. Gibbs, “Barkerville Computer Index Search: Gibbs, J.P.,” 16 August, 1868, BA. R. Byron Johnson, *Very Far West Indeed: A Few Rough Experiences on the North-West Pacific Coast* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, 1872), 179.

²¹¹ Dixie, “Shampooin ‘Stablismen,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 12 June, 1865. “Moses Hair Invigorator,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 July, 1865. “Prevention is Better than Cure,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Burning of Barkerville,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1868. BCARS GR 0584 vol. 4 County Court Summons Book, 6 November, 1866. “Dixon,” 24 June, 1865; 26 August, 1865, Barkerville Archival System. W.D. Moses, “Description. James William Pilton. Negro Settlement in British Columbia with Notes Concerning W.D. Moses (1858-1871),” BA.

²¹² W.D. Moses, “Diary #2, 1869,” 9 May, 1869; 17-18 November, 1869, BCARS A01046. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 17, 21 August, 1866; 11 March, 1869, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. W.D. Moses, “Diary #1,” 7 July, 1865; 21 September, 1865; 4 October, 1865; 20 March, 1866; 9 January, 1869, BCARS A01046. W.D. Moses, “Description. Sentinel ref’s. Advertising,” BA. W.D. Moses, “Description, The British Columbia Genealogist. Vol. 14. June 1985, no.2 ed. Catherine J. Aitchison,” BA. Chartres Brew, “Report on Barkerville Fire to Col. Sec. List of Cases. Report on Rebuilding,” 15 September, 1868, BA, 971.12 BRE 1868.

contrast, there do not appear to have been any non-Black barbers and few, if any, non-Black washermen outside of Chinatown. Black concentration in these industries is hardly surprising given that many Blacks came from the United States where those professions were considered “Black work” and therefore would have had the necessary experience and skill sets to continue those jobs in the Cariboo.²¹³ Additionally, the lack of substantial competition from non-Blacks speaks to the degree that both Blacks and non-Blacks considered these jobs the domain of Blacks, even when the economy of the Cariboo suffered a downturn. This limited integration into the White aspects of the economy, still far more than any other group, is indicative of the influence of the expectations of both Blacks and Whites as to what place Blacks should occupy within the gold field towns. Perhaps by occupying “Black” jobs, Blacks made the other, more integrated, aspects of their participation, such as voting or ownership of mining companies, more palatable to Whites. In that case, for a modicum of conformity to racial difference, White society rewarded Blacks with a degree of integration.

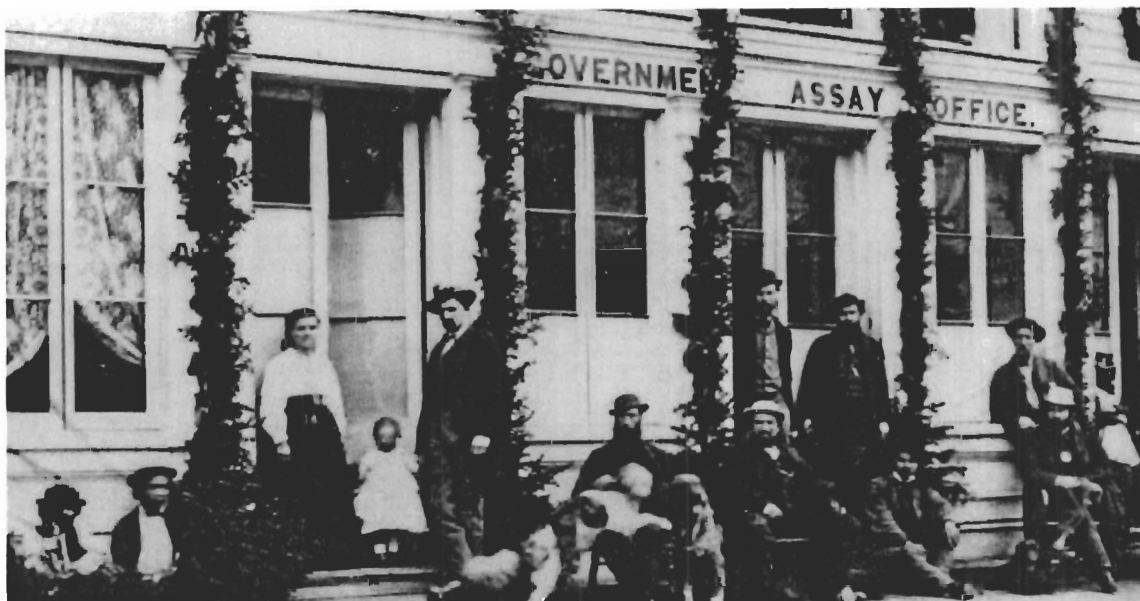
Native Interracial Interactions in the Gold Field Towns

The Native presence in the gold field towns also challenged idealized notions of White space in the towns. The physical locations of Native spaces in the towns are hard to specify, but it appears they tended to either live along the outskirts of the towns or

²¹³ John B. Wilkinson, “Letters. Fergeson's or Rich Bar- forty Miles above Alexander Fraser River,” 22 September, 1860, BCARS MS 0048, file I. James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 47-48.

within multi-racial dwellings closer to the core of the towns.²¹⁴ Whatever the exact locations, Natives were, as written and visual records attest, a part of the gold field towns.²¹⁵

*Photo 2: Government Assay Office, Two Natives Far Left.*²¹⁶



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The Native presence in the towns posed a challenge to White conceptions of space. To Whites, Natives properly belonged in the hinterland and constituted a threat to the social

²¹⁴ "Important From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 30 January, 1863. "Important From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 25 February, 1863. "News From Cariboo!," *Daily British Colonist*, 27 February, 1863. "Letter From Lillooet," *Victoria Chronicle*, 19 February, 1864. El Oro, "Another Letter from Lillooet," *Victoria Chronicle*, 11 May, 1864. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 17 March, 1865. Winnemucca, "Gossiping Letter from Quesnellemouth," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 3 June, 1865 [sic, 1865]. "The Indian Liquor Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. C.H. Heath, Foreman, "Quesnelmouth Assizes," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 June, 1866. "The Census," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 December, 1866. "Indian Row," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 January, 1869. "The Mosquito Affray-Fatal Results," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 March, 1869. "Coroner's Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 17 April, 1869. "Sudden Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1870. British Columbia Colony Court, "Cariboo West, 1864-1871," BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 11 February, 1867, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

²¹⁵ Ibid newspapers. L.A. Blanc, "Government Assay Office..." 1869, BCARS Visual Records, A-03754. "Ah Bau in the Centre," ca. 1858, A-04279. "Nan Sing," ca. 1860, G-03059.

²¹⁶ L.A. Blanc, "Government Assay Office...", 1869, BCARS Visual Records, A-03754.

order of the towns. The elites worried that the influence of “savage” Natives would corrupt British-dictated standards of “civilization” within the gold field towns.²¹⁷ The Native presence in the towns therefore directly challenged the White dichotomy of civilization/ savagery and the assumption of White superiority on which it was based, raising a fear of degeneracy among many Whites.²¹⁸ In response, the elites tended to simply deny the Native presence in the towns by excluding them from the census and other records.²¹⁹ Indeed, Whites tended to remark on Natives in the town only when they acted in a “criminal” or “anti-social” manner.²²⁰

In many ways, Natives in the towns bore the brunt of the colonial justice system. Natives lacked the safe social space of a Chinatown or the fluency of the Blacks in the language and ideas that underlay British justice and had to cope with stereotypes that portrayed them as naturally criminal.²²¹ These factors combined to make the legal system in the Cariboo grossly unfair to Natives.²²² Judge Begbie convicted and sentenced Natives to death on flimsy, circumstantial evidence that, even according to himself, “would [not] have convicted a White man.”²²³ Natives also tended to suffer harsher penalties for major offences than their non-Native compatriots. For example,

²¹⁷ “Indian Row,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 January, 1869. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 16-17, 21.

²¹⁸ Albert Holloway, “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 16-17, 21.

²¹⁹ “The Census,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 December, 1866. Mallandaine, Edward, *First Victoria Directory, 3^d issue, and British Columbia Guide*. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871), 94-95.

²²⁰ See, for example, Native “criminality” in the court records.

²²¹ “Criminal Trials,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 July, 1867. “Trans-Continental Railroad” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August 1868. “Stewart’s Lake Indians,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

²²² M.B. Begbie, “Colonial Correspondence, 1863,” BCARS B01308, file 142f. Bishop George Hills, “Diary,” transcribed, 30 November, 1861, ADCA.

²²³ M.B. Begbie, “Colonial Correspondence, 1863,” 2 July, 1867, BCARS B01308, file 142f.

Natives accounted for twenty-two of Judge Begbie's twenty-seven hangings.²²⁴

Additionally, for lesser offences, Natives served longer and harsher sentences than their non-Native counterparts, with the exception of the Chinese.²²⁵ This is probably due to the town elites' perception of the Chinese as a growing threat, whereas the Natives were both "vanishing" and "savage."²²⁶

As in the hinterland, Newcomers also employed Natives throughout the gold field towns. However, unlike non-Native groups, Natives did not own their own businesses but seem to have primarily used short to medium-term wage labour as a subsistence strategy. In particular, Whites and Blacks employed Natives to chop wood, cook, clean, and do miscellaneous other odd jobs.²²⁷ This small-scale economic activity posed little threat to non-Native labour, with the occasional exception of Chinese labour, and therefore did not trigger repressive measures against Native economic activity. Natives took part economically in the gold field towns, largely because Native economic participation, like Black participation, seems to have been overlooked by the majority of White society because White attention was fixated on the Chinese. While the town elites

²²⁴ Jean Barman, *The West Beyond The West*, 77. Cariboo Quesnelle, "County Court Book. July 28, 1864-Oct. 10th, 1877," 24, 26 October, 1864, BCARS GR 0570. Other examples: British Columbia Supreme Court, "British Columbia Court of Assizes, Dec. 2, 1864-March 22, 1867.," 13 May, 1865; 7 November, 1865, BCARS B14170.

²²⁵ "Cariboo Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 September, 1865. "British Columbian Telegram," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 3 May, 1866. "Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 September, 1866. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 30 March, 1866; 10 March, 1868, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18," 19 April, 1867; 26 April, 1868, BCARS GR 0822. British Columbia Supreme Court, "British Columbia Court of Assizes, Dec. 2, 1864-March 22, 1867.," 13 May, 1865; 7 November, 1865, BCARS B14170.

²²⁶ Oliver Hare, "Colonial Correspondence," 26 June, 1872, BCARS GR 0216, vol.1, f14-376. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 19 September, 1866; 9 November, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18," 14 November, 1866; 8 January, 1867 BCARS GR 0822.

²²⁷ Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 31 October, 1864; 1, 30 November, 1864; 1 December, 1864; 12 September, 1865, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. Government Agent, "Cariboo West Collectorate," 2 February, 1866; 30 March, 1866, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 5.

concentrated on regulating the Chinese, Natives managed to quietly integrate within the gold field towns to a remarkable extent.

Natives also found support from some sectors of White society. The demographic imbalance of the Cariboo meant that Native women could use their sexuality to gain access to the space of the gold field towns.²²⁸ Much to the consternation of the town elites, some Native women had personal relationships with working class miners.²²⁹ Equally prominent were the several “squaw” dance houses in the gold field towns, such as Loring’s Dancing Saloon in Cameronton, a dance house at Quesnellemouth, two at Lytton, and two on Williams Creek, one of which a Black woman, Ann Wheeler, owned.²³⁰ Along with prostitution, these interactions created a space for Native women in the gold field towns that the town elites saw as antithetical to their idealized space.²³¹ Despite this “official” disapproval, Native women made a place for themselves in the towns with support of working class Whites and non-Whites alike.

The sexualization of Native women had other social repercussions. Shortly before Christmas Eve, 1870, W.D. Moses, a Black man, got a Native woman, Full Moon, drunk

²²⁸ Joseph Haller, "Cariboo Letters, 1858-1866," 26 December, 1862, CVA. Edward Mallandaine, *First Victoria Directory, 3^d issue, and British Columbia Guide*. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871).

²²⁹ I.D.C. "A Man's A Man For That," *British Columbian*, 4 June, 1862. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 23 August, 1863. El Oro, "Letter from Lillooet, B.C.," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 16 April, 1864. Yelkcab, "Letter from Lillooet, B.C.," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 22 April, 1864. "Letter From William Creek," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 27 November, 1864. "The Indian Liquor Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. "The Mosquito Affray-Fatal Result," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 March, 1869. "Profits of Agriculture," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869. "Sudden Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1870. W.M. Mark, *Cariboo: A True and Correct Narrative*. (Stockton: W.M. Wright, 1863), 1862, BA, 971.12 MAR 1863. James Reynard, "Barkerville, 1869-1906, Cariboo Mission-Rev. J. Reynard," 16-17, ADCA. Bishop George Hills, "Diary," 26 June, 1861; 10 June, 1861, ADCA, vol.3.

²³⁰ "Letter From Lillooet," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 19 February, 1864. El Oro, "Another Letter From Lillooet," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 11 May, 1864. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 17 March, 1865. "The Indian Liquor Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. B.D. "Letter From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 27 March, 1868. W.D. Moses, "Diary #2, 1869," 27 July, 1869, BCARS A01046. W.D. Moses, "Description. Barber," Barkerville Archival System, BA.

²³¹ "Profits of Agriculture," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869.

and sexually assaulted her, tearing her clothes.²³² In the majority of cases in the Cariboo, men from all racial backgrounds perpetrated sexual assaults against Native women.²³³ This trend partly stemmed from the massive demographic imbalances in the non-Native populations in the Cariboo that meant that Native women were the most available target for sexual assaults.²³⁴ Demography did not account for these assaults alone, instead racial and gender ideologies that depicted Native women as both inferior and sexually available facilitated these crimes.²³⁵ In the official records, the attacks on Native women were not described as sexual assaults; instead, as in the case above, euphemisms were used, underscoring the degree to which Native women were legally disempowered in the gold towns.

Sites of Multi-Racial Alternatives to the Social Norms of the Idealized Space

Multi-racial alternatives to the idealized space of the Cariboo are most evident in the gold field towns within the context of interracial interactions. The consumption of alcohol in the Cariboo provides an illuminating example of the different permutations and effects of space in which interracial interactions occurred. The town elites subjected the

²³² Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 24 December, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

²³³ "Local Intelligence From Above," *British Columbian*, 21 March, 1861. I.D.C. "A Man's A Man For That," *British Columbian*, 4 June, 1862. British Columbia Colony Court, "Cariboo West 1864-1871," BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2. Richfield Police, "Court Case Book, July 30th 1862-July 15th, 1874," 5 December, 1863, BCARS GR 0598, vol. 1. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 22 August, 1865; 24 December, 1870; 18 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. John Boyles Gaggin, "Colonial Correspondence; Gold Commissioners office at Quesnellemouth to Colonial Sec. (Victoria), 13 March, 1865," BCARS B1330, file 624.

²³⁴ "The Census," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 December, 1866. Edward Mallandaine, *First Victoria Directory*, 3^d issue, and *British Columbia Guide*. (Victoria, B.C.: Mallandaine, 1871), 94-95.

²³⁵ Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex," in *Unequal Sisters: A Multi-Cultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, Ellen Carol Dubois and Vicki Ruiz, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1990), 17-19.

consumption of alcohol to social and legal regulation.²³⁶ Public drunkenness was illegal for all groups and Native consumption of alcohol was completely banned.²³⁷ Because the town elites wanted to limit the effects of drinking on society, they officially tolerated drinking in saloons, and to a lesser extent, homes. However, the town elites made exceptions for “colourful” characters and private “excessive” drinking among Whites.²³⁸

Even a cursory examination of criminal charges in the gold field towns reveals that members of all the different racial groups in the Cariboo frequently broke these social and legal regulations. Blacks and Whites both seem to have drunk primarily in the saloons or dance houses, mixing their alcohol with dancing, singing, gambling, and gossip.²³⁹ Consumption of alcohol provided a way for individual Blacks to make social connections with Whites at the same time that it asserted their position within Cariboo society as equitable to that of Whites.²⁴⁰

The Chinese, on the other hand, do not appear to have frequently drunk outside of Chinatown during the early period in the gold field towns. However, they did purchase some alcohol from White suppliers, most notably Brandy, while undoubtedly purchasing the bulk of their alcohol from Chinese suppliers.²⁴¹ Conversely, very few non-Chinese appear to have drunk within the Chinatowns during this period. This trend began to shift

²³⁶ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 40-44.

²³⁷ Sinbad, “Letter from Lytton,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 July, 1864. “Yung Hang,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1870. “Letter from Lillooet,” *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 19 February, 1864. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 14, 15 January, 1869, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

²³⁸ “Fourth of July in Cariboo,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1865. H.M. Ball, “Journal,” transcribed, 18 May, 1864, BCARS MS 0750.

²³⁹ “Shall a Colored Man Drink at a White Man’s Bar?,” and “The Vexed Question Settled,” *Daily British Colonist*, 5 July, 1862.

²⁴⁰ “Shall a Colored Man Drink at a White Man’s Bar?,” and “The Vexed Question Settled,” *Daily British Colonist*, 5 July, 1862. But it was also a way to get free drinks: Furnte, “John Chinaman,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January, 1865.

²⁴¹ See, for example: Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the T’ang*, 191-192.

towards the latter half of the gold field period, with increased drinking by Chinese outside of Chinatown and vice versa, though overall numbers appear to have remained low.²⁴²

*Photo 3: Chinese-White Drinking in a Chinese Miner's Cabin, 1904.*²⁴³



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This greater degree of interracial drinking across the “line” that separated the Chinatowns from the gold field towns is indicative of both the greater degree of Chinese conformity to the social norms of Cariboo and a concurrent shift by the non-Chinese population of the Cariboo to an acceptance of the Chinese place within the gold field towns. These twin processes resulted in the first significant breakdown of the separation between the Chinatowns and the gold field towns. Multiracial drinking also set both the Blacks and the Chinese apart from the Natives.

²⁴² Furnte, “John Chinaman,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January, 1865.

²⁴³ “Interior of Miner’s Cabin; White and Chinese Miners,” 1904, BCARS Visual Records, A-06021.

Unlike the Chinese or Blacks, the town elites denied Natives the right to drink; yet the historical record is full of instances of Native men and women drinking in the gold field towns.²⁴⁴ Native drinking tended to occur in what spaces they created for themselves, usually in their homes or in the homes of miners who supplied them with alcohol.²⁴⁵ Through the consumption of alcohol, Natives signalled their rejection of the town elites' authority at the same time that they staked a claim to a type of basic equality between themselves and non-Natives. This claim rejected the Newcomer construction of the gold field towns as either a non-Native space or as a space in which Natives were inferior. This claim to equality was a necessarily subversive claim that needed to avoid the regulatory power of the state.

Gold field society tended to view Native drinking and drunkenness as confirmation of Native inferiority and it was the non-Natives that supplied Natives with alcohol that especially concerned the regulators of social order in the gold field towns.²⁴⁶ These non-

²⁴⁴ "The Missing Four Thousand Dollars," *British Columbian*, 19 November, 1862. "The Indian Liquor Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. "Indian Row," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 January, 1869. "Sudden Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1870. British Columbia Colony Court, "Cariboo West, 1864-1871," 31 August, 1863; 11 March, 1865; 15 December, 1871, BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 10, 30 March, 1866; 20 April, 1867; 10 March, 1868; 27 June, 1868; 14, 15 January, 1869; 25 June, 1869; 4 September, 1869; 7 January, 1870; 4, 22 April, 1870; 12 September, 1870; 24, 31 December, 1870; 16 January, 1871; 17 March, 1871; 24 April, 1871; 5, 18, 28 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18," 19 April, 1867; 13-14 January, 1869; 3 September, 1869; 6 January, 1870; 3, 13, 22 April, 1870; 11 September, 1870, BCARS GR 0822.

²⁴⁵ "The Mosquito Affray-Fatal Result," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 March, 1869. "Sudden Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1870. "Yung Hang," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1870. British Columbia Colony Court, "Cariboo West, 1864-1871," 31 August, 1863, BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2.

²⁴⁶ White supplier: "The Indian Liquor Traffic," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 October, 1865. "Sudden Death and Inquest," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 July, 1870. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 10, 30 March, 1866; 6 September, 1869; 6 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. Chinese supplier: "Yung Hang," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1870. Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 4 August, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18," 4 August, 1870; 18 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0822. Indians, "Indians," 6 August, 1870, Barkerville Archival System, BA. Black supplier: Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 24 December, 1870, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

Natives rejected the authority of the town elites to regulate social norms and, largely inadvertently, opened the door for the Natives to articulate different racialized meanings of space through drinking. These White, Black, and Chinese suppliers received far harsher penalties than the Natives convicted of drinking the alcohol because their actions represented a greater threat to the social order of the Cariboo than the Natives who the town elites “expected” to behave in a manner counter to the idealized space of the gold fields.²⁴⁷

The social order of the Cariboo towns was most clearly articulated during Governor Musgrave’s 1869 visit. The Governor’s visit was important because he was an important figure not only for the political and economic patronage he could dispense but also because he represented the pinnacle of British society during the gold field period and was, in of himself, a potent symbol of that order.

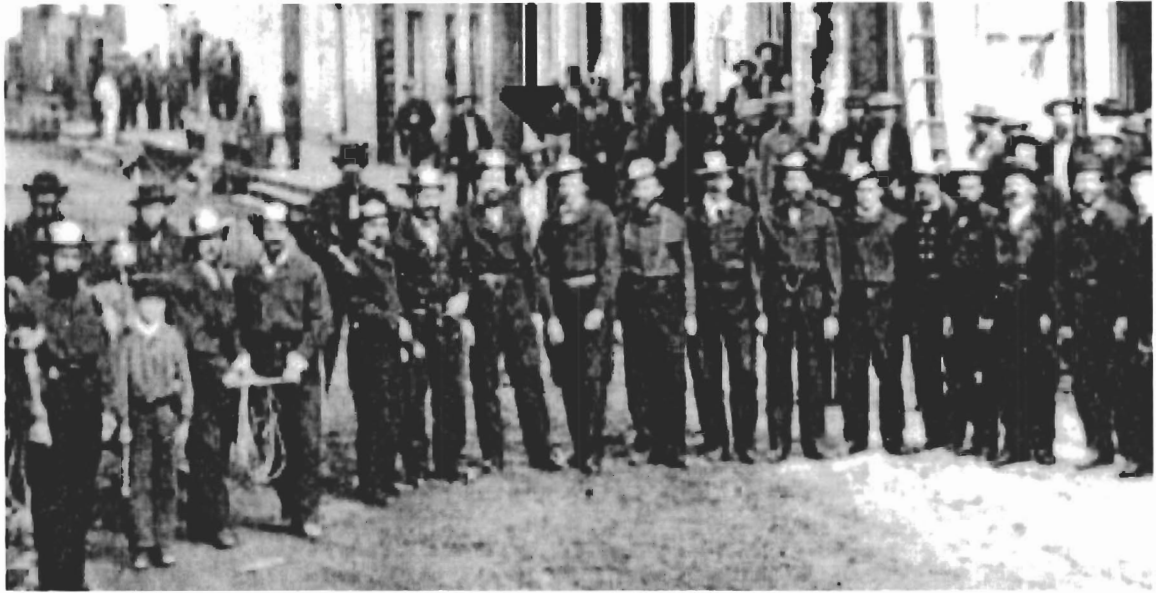
Local commentators singled out the efforts of the fire brigade to provide a “proper” greeting for the Governor.²⁴⁸ Like contemporary fire brigades in other parts of North America, the fire brigade in the Cariboo was an important social institution and its members tended to have some standing within the community. The fire brigade provided its members with “badges of office” in the form of fireman hats with a badge on the front. Further underscoring Black integration, W.D. Moses appears to have been a member of

²⁴⁷ “Yung Hang,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1870. British Columbia Colony Court, “Cariboo West, 1864-1871,” 31 August, 1863, BCARS GR 2528, box 1, file 2. Provincial Court, “Cariboo West,” 10, 30 March, 1866; 27 June, 1868; 14, 15 January, 1869; 25 June, 1869; 4 September, 1869; 7 January, 1870; 4, 22 April, 1870; 4 August, 1870; 24, 31 December, 1870; 16 January, 1871; 17 March, 1871; 24 April, 1871; 5, 6, 18, 28 July, 1871, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Record Book, July 30, 1866-May 18,” 19 April, 1867; 13, 14 January, 1869; 3 September, 1869; 6 January, 1870; 3, 13, 22 April, 1870; 4 August, 1870, BCARS GR 0822. Indians, “Indians,” 6 August, 1870, Barkerville Archival System, BA.

²⁴⁸ “Preparations for the Governor’s Reception,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 September, 1869.

the fire brigade at the time of Governor Musgrave's visit.²⁴⁹ In a photograph showing the fire brigade posing under the arch they constructed to welcome Governor Musgrave, Moses can be seen standing just behind the first row of firemen.

*Photo 4: Moses with Fire Brigade (Centre Rear, Arrow).*²⁵⁰



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Moses' participation in the fire brigade re-emphasizes the success and limitations of Black integration in the Cariboo. By greeting Governor Musgrave with the fire brigade, Moses took part in a ritual that firmly ensconced him, and Black people in general, within a British-dominated social system. Moses' participation is remarkable, as no other non-Whites appear with the firemen. But Moses does not stand in the first row; instead he stands behind without the trademark hat and badge. Moses' position in the fire brigade

²⁴⁹ W.D. Moses, "Diary #2, 1869," 7 April, 1869, BCARS A01046. "Firemens Arch; William's Creek Fire Brigade Welcoming Governor Musgrave, Barkerville," 1869, BCARS Visual Records, A-03762.

²⁵⁰ "Firemens Arch; William's Creek Fire Brigade Welcoming Governor Musgrave, Barkerville," 1869, BCARS Visual Records, A-03762.

would appear somewhat peripheral and subordinate to the White firemen, underscoring the limitations of Black integration in the Cariboo gold field towns.

The Chinese also decorated a large arch at the entrance to Chinatown and set off fireworks in celebration of Governor Musgrave's visit.²⁵¹ By erecting this arch, the Chinese made a dramatic assertion of their place in the wider society of the gold field towns.²⁵² At the same time however, the Chinese also asserted a separate Chinese space by positioning the arch at the entrance to, instead of within, Chinatown.²⁵³ The Chinese speech to the Governor and his response to the Chinese were equally mixed. The Chinese thanked Governor Musgrave for the equality of British law and Musgrave reciprocated by thanking the Chinese for their loyalty and assured them that the law would continue to be implemented equitably.²⁵⁴ Given the disparity in the treatment of Chinese and Whites in the courts, these statements can be read as political theatre. The Chinese speech used British notions of equality before the law that were so important to the British identity at exactly that time when that identity was being very publicly articulated and celebrated. The Chinese used the discourse of equality before the law to both position themselves publicly within the gold town society and to try and ensure that the law would, in fact, be implemented somewhat equitably. Given the public discourse over British identity and loyalty his visit had excited, Governor Musgrave had to acknowledge the Chinese arch and speech in a manner that reflected the public articulation of idealized British social norms being celebrated by the inhabitants of the

²⁵¹ "Preparations for the Governor's Reception," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 September, 1869. "Reception of the Governor," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ "Reception of the Governor," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 September, 1869.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

gold field towns. While these events may have meant a great deal to the Chinese, they do not seem to have effected any great change in the society of the Cariboo gold field towns.

Conclusions

The social norms embodied in the idealized space of the gold field towns acted to shape the nature of the interracial interactions that occurred in the towns. The different “racial” groups of the gold field towns: the Chinese, Blacks, Natives, and Whites, all responded to the social norms articulated by the town elites in different ways resulting in a space characterized by a variety of meanings and interracial interactions.

These different articulations of space were not static over time or between gold field towns. In the southernmost extent of the Cariboo in Cayoosh and Lillooet, Natives were far more accepted than in the Cariboo Mountain gold field towns.²⁵⁵ Additionally, there was a noticeable shift in the attitude of the inhabitants of the gold field towns toward the Chinese from the early exclusionary movements of the 1860s to a more widespread acceptance of the Chinese place in the towns by the late 1860s and early 1870s.²⁵⁶ Both of these are indicative of a “letting go” of the idealized space of the gold field towns by dominant echelons of society and of a *de facto* recognition of the challenges to the idealized space. This did not translate into recognition of equality, but rather was simply recognition of the place of non-Whites within the gold field towns.

²⁵⁵ Attorney General, “Colonial Correspondence,” 4 July, 1860, BCARS B01304, file 95.

²⁵⁶ “News From Above,” *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. “Arrivals From the River,” *Daily British Colonist*, June 10, 1861. Argus, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. Vialor, “En Route to Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863. Furnte, “John Chinaman,” *Daily British Colonist*, 6 January, 1865.

The Miners' Community of the Gold Mines

While the town elites believed that the gold towns were important as markers of social status, the gold mines were the *raison d'être* of the gold field society of the Cariboo. More than just the economic base of gold field society, the gold mines also represented a place where dreams of social and financial aggrandizement could be realized. Because of their economic and social significance, the society of the Cariboo closely scrutinized the mines. The greatest attention came from the White miners who subjected themselves and others to intense levels of surveillance. In particular, White working class miners articulated a discourse of legal and social egalitarianism based on equality before the law and the sanctity of property and sought to implement that discourse “on the ground” in the gold fields. This discourse and the other social, economic and environmental factors present in the mines affected the interracial interactions of Black, White, Chinese, and Native miners. While the Chinese found their participation constrained by the working class White miners, the White miners quickly accepted the Blacks, though the Blacks were soon to discover the limits to this acceptance. Finally, due to a combination of social, economic, and environmental factors, Native participation in the gold mines was virtually non-existent for the majority of the gold field period.

A greater degree of surveillance permeated the mines than in the towns or the hinterland. The apparatus of the colonial state monitored and regulated the gold mines

through surveys, licences, claims, and mining courts.²⁵⁷ The physical location of the majority of the main gold fields concentrated in the Cariboo Mountains near, or in some cases within, the towns aided the state in monitoring and regulating the mines. Even with these advantages however, the town elites, through the apparatus of the colonial state, could only exercise partial surveillance over interracial interactions in the mines.

Unlike in the gold field towns, where the town elites controlled the upper echelons of society, the “community of miners” in the mines was far more egalitarian. The social and legal norms articulated by White working class miners in the mines centred on a discourse of equality and the sanctity of property.²⁵⁸ Appearing to abide by these dictates through ownership of a mining licence, compliance with mining regulations and etiquette, and patterns of consumption that stressed European goods, and a “proper” level of local spending meant that an individual was a “proper” miner, rather than a “leech” on the economy.²⁵⁹ Membership in the community of miners translated into relative freedom from social and legal sanctions from other miners or the state. While the town elites were members of the community of miners, they, despite attempts to monitor the

²⁵⁷ See, for example: “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866. “The Gold Commissioner’s Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 August, 1866. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869. “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 August, 1867. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 August, 1868. County Court of the Cariboo, “County Court Summons Book,” 9 June, 1865, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 2.

²⁵⁸ “Mass Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866.

²⁵⁹ “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Prospecting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

mines, did not control the attitudes of this group.²⁶⁰ Instead, the attitude of the working class members determined the outlook of the community of miners.

As historian Tina Loo argued in her study of the Cariboo gold fields, miners used the legal system to regulate their interactions with each other.²⁶¹ The miners had a vested interest in maintaining a system of order among themselves to minimize disputes and lessen distractions that could interfere with gold mining. As Loo noted, miners consistently filled the mining courts of the Cariboo with disputes over claims, wages, and other aspects of the extraction of gold.²⁶² This internal surveillance meant that the wishes of the working class miners and the town elites were often indistinguishable. By safeguarding a social system that placed Whites ahead of non-Whites, the town elites preserved their dominance while the White working class miners kept their wages elevated above those of the Chinese.²⁶³

The working class miners attempted to shape the interracial interactions of the mines to conform to their priorities through surveillance. If an individual or group did not abide by one or more of the legal and social precepts of the “community of miners” they were fair game for discrimination and recrimination by the mining community and

²⁶⁰ “Mass Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866.

²⁶¹ Tina Loo, *Making Law*, 13.

²⁶² Ibid. See for example: “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866. “The Gold Commissioner’s Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 August, 1866. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 August, 1867. “County Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 August, 1868.

²⁶³ Argus, “Letter From Cayoosh,” *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861. “News From Above,” *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 September, 1867. WM. Smithe, “Editor Cariboo Sentinel,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 June, 1868.

the town elites.²⁶⁴ Moreover, the working class miners saw some groups, such as the Chinese and Natives, as naturally incapable of acting “properly” in the mines.²⁶⁵

Physical realities also shaped interracial interactions in the gold mines. Unlike the surface deposits of the lower Fraser River, gold deposits in the Cariboo Mountains tended to be located metres below the surface.²⁶⁶ Extracting these deposits required the formation of companies to re-route and harness rivers and to dig substantial underground mining shafts.²⁶⁷ In this environment, these companies needed significant amounts of capital and experience to operate.²⁶⁸ These environmental conditions particularly constrained Native involvement in the gold mines. Natives in the Cariboo lacked the capital to fund mining companies and the experience to build the mechanisms and structures such as flumes or fly wheels needed to access the main gold deposits. The environment also shaped the nature of the mining companies in general. The underground gold deposits encouraged company formation and while some of the smaller companies were made up entirely of shareholders, it was far more common in the Cariboo Mountains to have large companies with waged employees who could help

²⁶⁴ “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

²⁶⁵ “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Prospecting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. “Trans-Continental Railroad,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August, 1868. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

²⁶⁶ Robert M. Galois, *Gold Mining and its Effects*, 3.

²⁶⁷ “Forks of Quesnelle,” *British Columbian*, 13 February, 1864. “British Columbia,” *Daily British Colonist*, 31 December, 1864. Robert M. Galois, *Gold Mining and its Effects*, 23, 34.

²⁶⁸ Robert M. Galois, *Gold Mining and its Effects*, 34.

extract the ore.²⁶⁹ The physical environment of the Cariboo shaped interracial relations in the gold mines by constraining who could participate and in what manner.

Unlike either the hinterland or the towns, the gold mines tended to lack safe social spaces for non-Whites, especially the Chinese. Even the Chinese languages did not create enough of a barrier to form safe social sites in the mines.²⁷⁰ The main mines located near the gold field towns tended to have Chinese and non-Chinese mining companies inter-mixed along a gold seam and this heterogeneity and close proximity to the gold field towns exposed the Chinese in these locations to a fair degree of surveillance despite the language barrier.²⁷¹ Only in the more remote mines located further away from the Cariboo Mountains could the Chinese create safe social sites and even then, miners, reporters, and tax collectors attempted to subject these sites to surveillance.²⁷² These outer mines tended to have already been worked by Whites and had predominately Chinese populations.²⁷³ In these locations, the Chinese mostly avoided the regulatory powers of the state and other miners, but these exceptions were, by definition, spatially, economically and socially peripheral.

²⁶⁹ "Supreme Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. Bedrock Drain, "Bedrock Drain," 28 June, 1864, Barkerville Archival System, BA. W.D. Moses, "Diary #2, 1869," 9 January, 1869, BCARS A01046.

²⁷⁰ "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866.

²⁷¹ "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1867. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 July, 1867. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 29 July, 1867. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 September, 1867.

²⁷² "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867.

²⁷³ "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. "Mining Intelligence," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867.

From “Leech” to Miner: The Chinese Adaptation to the Gold Mines

From 1860 to approximately 1864, White miners, with the complicity of the colonial state, excluded the Chinese from the main gold fields in the Cariboo Mountains.²⁷⁴ Instead, during this early gold field period, the Chinese predominately mined along the Quesnel and Fraser rivers.²⁷⁵ White miners justified this exclusion on the basis of stereotypes that portrayed the Chinese as unfair competition and as drains on the colonial economy because it was believed they could cheaply subsist on rice and vegetables, while White men needed meat, especially expensive red meat.²⁷⁶ According to this logic, the Chinese could live on cheaper wages than a White man possibly could.²⁷⁷ Additionally, White society understood sojourning as a drain on the colonial economy. In combination with their reputed frugality, the sums of money Chinese sojourners sent home shaped the White miner’s image of the Chinese population as an economic and social ill.²⁷⁸

Correspondingly, sharp racial divisions in mining areas characterized the early gold field period, with the Chinese dominating the more peripheral gold mines outside the

²⁷⁴ “News From Above,” *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. “Arrivals From the River,” *Daily British Colonist*, June 10, 1861. Argus, “Letter From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 7 October, 1861. Vialor, “En Route to Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 1 June, 1863.

²⁷⁵ “Later Mining News,” *Daily British Colonist*, 11 September, 1860. Argus, “Letter From Williams’ Lake,” *Daily British Colonist*, 3 June, 1861. A.W.C., “Correspondence,” *British Columbian*, 4 July, 1861. “Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 22 July, 1861. “Arrival of the Enterprise-Later From Cariboo,” *Daily British Colonist*, 25 August, 1862. “Mining News,” *British Columbian*, 1 October, 1862.

²⁷⁶ “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Prospecting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867. Elizabeth Vibert, *Trader’s Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Columbian Plateau, 1807-1846*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1997), 179-181.

²⁷⁷ Argus, “Letter From Cayoosh,” *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861. “News From Above,” *British Columbian*, 30 May, 1861. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 September, 1867.

²⁷⁸ “Our Chinese Population,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 May, 1867. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 September, 1867.

Cariboo Mountains and non-Chinese miners dominating within the Cariboo Mountains. While the exclusion of the Chinese appears to have collapsed in 1864 due to Chinese miners finding alternate routes into the Cariboo Mountains, this collapse also corresponds to the end of the major gold rush in the Cariboo and the beginning of the long decline of the gold field economy.²⁷⁹ The depression of the gold economy and the exodus of White miners to new diggings may have helped facilitate the Chinese entry into the gold fields by lessening the intensity with which Whites defended the mines.

Non-Chinese miners still discriminated against Chinese miners after they managed to penetrate into the main gold fields of the Cariboo Mountains. While the Chinese may have entered the main gold fields, they did not conform to White or Black expectations of what proper members of a mining community should act like. In particular, non-Chinese miners seized on the lack of Chinese mining licences as a major and visible issue.²⁸⁰ Mining licences were important, not only because they provided a basic standard of conformity for members of the mining community, but also because the revenue generated from them went to support public services and projects in the Cariboo.²⁸¹ Additionally, discrimination against the Chinese on the basis of a lack of licences allowed the town elites to present the attacks on the Chinese as a response to the criminality of the Chinese instead of the result of bigotry on the part of White miners. The British-

²⁷⁹ K., "Letter From Richfield," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 20 July, 1864. "Later From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 20 May, 1865. "Later From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 6 June, 1865. The main entry into the Cariboo was from the West along the Quesnelle River. The Chinese began to come over various routes from the South and Southwest in 1864.

²⁸⁰ "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. "Untitled," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. "Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. "Jumped," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

²⁸¹ "Chinese Licences," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866.

influenced town elites wished to set themselves apart from a California that was actively discriminating against the Chinese on the basis of racial difference during this period.²⁸² Under colonial law, mining without a licence nullified any right to a claim a miner might have, and some Whites took advantage of this, jumping Chinese claims that appeared to be doing well.²⁸³ Alternatively, some miners “raided” Chinese miners, convincing the Chinese to take out licences through the application of force.²⁸⁴ Intense resistance by White working class miners and British-influenced town elites to “unfair” Chinese participation characterized the initial period of Chinese penetration into the gold fields of the Cariboo Mountains.

However, the movement in 1866 by Chinese miners to procure mining licences diminished the occurrence of these claim “jumps” and seems to have sparked a shift in the perception of the Chinese in the gold mines.²⁸⁵ After the Chinese began to take out mining licences, the town elites began to call for non-Chinese miners to imitate Chinese mining, specifically, to return to supposedly “played-out” claims and re-work them, extracting any possible gold.²⁸⁶

By taking out mining licences, the Chinese gained limited legal and social legitimacy in the eyes of the town elites and partially entered into the White-defined

²⁸² “The Chinese of the Pacific Coast,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 31 July, 1869.

²⁸³ “Lightning Creek,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 June, 1865. “British Columbia,” *Daily British Colonist*, 20 July, 1865. “Bridge River,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 17 May, 1866. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869.

²⁸⁴ “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1865.

²⁸⁵ “Lightning Creek,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 June, 1865. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 July, 1865. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 5 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866. “Chinese Licences,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 19 July, 1866. “Untitled,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July 1866. “Police Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 August, 1866. “Jumped,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 13 May, 1869. Government Agent, “Cariboo West Collectorate,” 15 August, 1863; 12 October, 1863; 12, 14 March, 1864; 18 April, 1864, BCARS GR 3052, vol. 2.

²⁸⁶ “Prospecting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 22 July, 1867.

mining society. Having discriminated against the Chinese because of their lack of mining licences, working class miners found themselves forced by the town elites into at least partly recognizing the legitimacy of Chinese miners when they acquired mining licences. In one example, John Williams, R. Booth, and James Wooten jumped Ah Wah's claim asserting that he did not have a mining licence and had not recorded his claim. However, Ah Wah proved his ownership of both the claim and a mining licence and Judge Cox promptly returned his property. Despite the clearly calculated attempt by the defendants to unlawfully deprive Ah Wah of his claim (the defendants had surreptitiously removed his stakes), Judge Cox only issued them a warning.²⁸⁷ By removing Ah Wah's stakes, Williams, Booth, and Wooten showed that they understood Ah Wah's legal rights but that this was not enough to protect his claim from them. Williams, Booth, and Wooten's actions demonstrated how little Ah Wah's rights meant without legal enforcement. Additionally, Judge Cox's warning to Williams, Booth, and Wooten, especially when contrasted with the sentence handed out for theft against Whites,²⁸⁸ underscores the degree to which the Chinese were excluded from the full extent of the protection of the law and the community of miners, even when seemingly protected by them.

As the numbers of Chinese increased in the Cariboo and they became tolerated by the wider mining community, White-owned mining companies began to hire Chinese miners as cheap labour. To White employers, the supposed cheapness of the Chinese miner's diet justified the paying of "Chinese wages."²⁸⁹ This trend raised concerns

²⁸⁷ "Gold Commissioner's Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 28 June, 1866.

²⁸⁸ Provincial Court, "Cariboo West," 19 September, 1866, BCARS GR 0597, vol. 1.

²⁸⁹ Argus, "Letter From Cayoosh," *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861. Alexander Allan, "Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876," (Transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963), Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of the Mainland Guardian) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

among some of the White mine labourers and unemployed White men who believed the Chinese were taking their jobs. In their protests against the Chinese employees, these White miners stressed Chinese social and cultural differences.²⁹⁰ Alexander Allan, a former editor of *The Cariboo Sentinel* who had fallen on hard times, was representative of the animosity of dispossessed Whites who felt that the Chinese were to blame for their poor position when he called the Chinese “d____d heathen[s]” and stated that it was an “uncontroverted fact that the Chinamen are a curse to any country they inhabit and the blight caused by their presence here is everyday more apparent.”²⁹¹ Race still mattered and set the Chinese apart in the society of the gold mines despite their procurement of mining licences.

*Photo 5: White Employers (Foreground), Chinese Employees (Background).*²⁹²



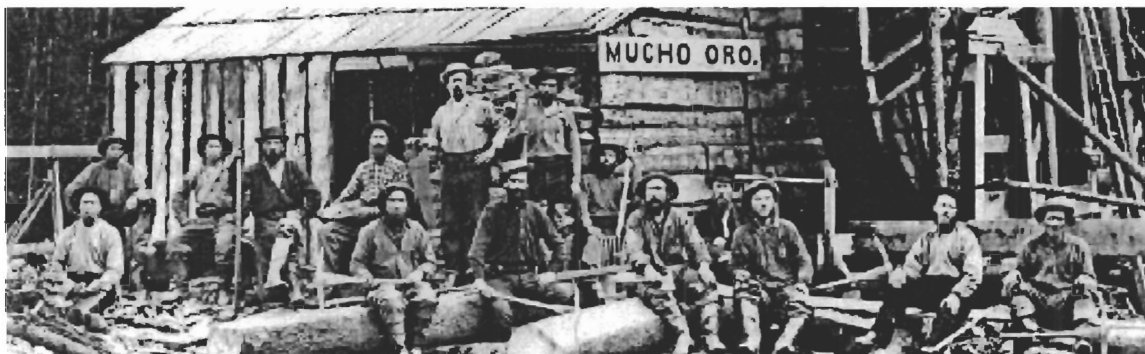
©B.C. Archives, by permission.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Alexander Allan, “Alexander Letterbook Jan. 2, 1868-Oct. 20, 1876,” (Transcribed: Winnifred Macintosh, July 12, 1963), Letter to Mr. Suter (ed. Of the Mainland Guardian) 6 Jan. 1870 from Barkerville, 6 January, 1870, BA.

²⁹² Frederick Dally, “Shaft Entrance of the Neversweat Tunnel Co. Claim, Williams Creek,” ca. 1868, BCARS Visual Records, A-00937.

Photo 6: *Chinese Employees (Left) at Mucho Oro Claim.*²⁹³



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The Chinese experience of employment in White companies is somewhat hard to determine. Tellingly, there are no accounts in the historical record of White and Chinese labourers forming friendships while working. Separate jobs for White and Chinese labourers, the language barrier, and the tendency to hire several Chinese at once may have contributed to exclusive social groups in the mines.²⁹⁴ The wage differential between White and Chinese labour undoubtedly contributed to a sense of difference between the two groups and reinforced feelings of superiority by White labourers over Chinese labourers.

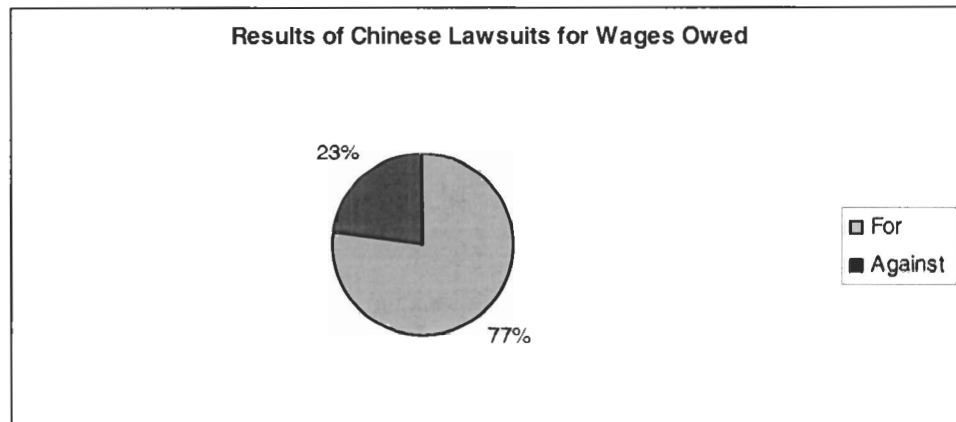
By the very nature of their employment in White mining companies, Chinese employees gained access to the discourse of equality and sanctity of property that underlay the legal basis of the mines. The importance of precedent to British law meant that once the Chinese met the legal requirements to mine in the gold fields any legal decisions involving them could have repercussions for White labourers. Neither the town elites nor the working class White miners wished to set a precedent for unjustly

²⁹³ Frederick Dally, "The Mucho Oro Goldmining Co. Lowhee Creek," ca. 1868, BCARS Visual Records, A-00613.

²⁹⁴ Argus, "Letter From Cayoosh," *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861.

denying the Chinese their wages as it could lead to the mistreatment of Whites and, therefore, a questioning of the entire social and legal basis of the Cariboo. This meant that the Chinese labourers had recourse to the law if their White employers did not pay them. Indeed, the Chinese were remarkably successful in their lawsuits, losing only a fraction of the total cases they brought to trial.²⁹⁵ In order to maintain the legitimacy of the legal system and the society predicated on those laws, the town elites who administered the law had to treat the Chinese equitably in the courts.

*Graph 4: Results of Chinese versus White Lawsuits for Wages Owed in the Gold Field Towns, 1860-1871.*²⁹⁶



Despite the many Chinese mining companies working in the Cariboo and the increasing numbers of Chinese employees working for White companies, there is virtually no record of Chinese companies employing White miners. This is explained, in

²⁹⁵ "Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866. "The Gold Commissioner's Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 August, 1866. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 August, 1867. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 August, 1868. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 9 June, 1865, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 2.

²⁹⁶ "Police Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 August, 1866. "The Gold Commissioner's Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 30 August, 1866. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 August, 1867. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 May, 1868. "Ah How v. C. Gallagher," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1868. "County Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 6 September, 1868. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 28 August, 1866, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 3. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 6 July, 1864; 20 November, 1866; 31 July, 1867; 8 November, 1867, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 4. County Court of the Cariboo, "County Court Summons Book," 13 May, 1868; 4 September, 1868; 16 October, 1868; 12 November, 1868, BCARS GR 0584, vol. 5.

part, by the wage differential between White and Chinese labourers. White labourers expected higher wages than Chinese labourers and to work for a Chinese company would have reversed the power dynamic that Whites believed should properly exist in the Cariboo.²⁹⁷ Whites believed that the majority of Chinese mining companies only took out “Chinese wages” from the claims they worked and that they would only earn Chinese wages working in a Chinese mine.²⁹⁸ Finally, the Chinese mining companies may not have been willing to hire non-Chinese. The Chinese mining companies may have operated on social networks, like kin or clan networks, rather than a European-style employer and employee company structure.²⁹⁹ If so, this company structure would have lessened the chances of Chinese mining companies employing White miners.

There is, however, one notable exception to this trend. In 1869, a forest fire killed at least eleven Chinese miners working claims along the North Fork of the Quesnelle River.³⁰⁰ The Kwong Lee Company had to hire White labour to recover the bodies from the mines because Chinese labourers refused to, believing they had been targeted by supernatural forces.³⁰¹ This one example of a Chinese company employing Whites in the gold mines demonstrates the exceptionalism of the situation. It took a major disaster and the refusal of Chinese labour for a Chinese employer to hire White labour. Additionally, the White employees could justify their involvement in the recovery of the bodies by

²⁹⁷ Argus, “Letter From Cayoosh,” *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861. WM. Smithe, “Editor Cariboo Sentinel,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 1 June, 1868.

²⁹⁸ Argus, “Letter From Cayoosh,” *Daily British Colonist*, 2 May, 1861. “Mining Intelligence,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 July, 1866.

²⁹⁹ Ying-ying Chen, *In the Colonies of the Tang*, 139.

³⁰⁰ “The Quesnel River Disaster,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 August, 1869.

³⁰¹ “Recovery Expedition,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 31 July, 1869.

stressing the superstitious nature of the Chinese that prevented them from doing it.³⁰² Both sides understood this occurrence as a justified exception and it did not affect the other interracial interactions between Whites and Chinese in the gold mines. Overall, where Whites and Chinese worked together, it was as Chinese employees in White companies.

The practical limits of Chinese legal equality became apparent when, in May 1869, Chinese employees of a White mining company struck for higher wages.³⁰³ In response to the strike, the White mine owners brought in White labourers whose wages were higher than the increase that the striking Chinese asked for.³⁰⁴ The Chinese strike collapsed shortly thereafter.³⁰⁵ In this case, the White employers used racial divisions to break a strike. While keeping Chinese wages depressed was undoubtedly a major motivating factor in using strike-breakers, by using White strike-breakers, the White employers signalled the limits of Chinese participation within the community of miners. While Chinese miners may have been entitled to equal protection under the law, those aspects of the gold mines that fell outside legal regulation, such as the setting of wages, remained explicitly raced. White employers could not raise Chinese wages without threatening the White-Chinese wage disparity that was one of the significant remaining indicators of White and Chinese difference in the Cariboo gold mines. In the gold field period, the Chinese in the Cariboo only ever earned a partial and conflicted acceptance into the community of miners. As partial as this acceptance was, it still enabled the

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ "Had To Come Back," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 15 May, 1869.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

Chinese to use the legal system of the Cariboo to exercise a basic right to payment for work done.

The Davis Dispute and the Limits of Black Integration

Black miners integrated more successfully than the Chinese because Blacks better met the basic standards of the community of gold miners. Blacks tended to own mining licences, abide by the rules and etiquette of mining and display a pattern of consumption and investment that closely paralleled that of the majority of the White working class miners and town elites.³⁰⁶ This conformity accounted for the radically different nature of Black compared to Chinese or Native interracial interactions in the mines. Indeed, Blacks integrated on many levels throughout the mines. Some Blacks, such as W.D. Moses, owned shares in mixed-race or all-Black companies and hired non-Black employees to work for them.³⁰⁷ Blacks also mined as employees in mixed-race or all-Black companies.³⁰⁸ The most prominent example of an all-Black mining company was originally known as the Harvey-Dixon Company.³⁰⁹ In 1865, the Harvey-Dixon Company became embroiled in a legal battle that revealed the limited extent to which the

³⁰⁶ See, for example: British Columbia Gold Commissioner, "Cariboo, Mining Licences," 1, 28 May, 1866; 6 June, 1866; 29 May, 1867; 6, 20, 26 July, 1867; 5 July, 1868; 23 May, 1870; 26 July, 1870; 23 May, 1871; 2 October, 1871, BCARS GR 0255, box 1, file 5.

³⁰⁷ W.D. Moses, "Diary #2, 1869," 9 January, 1869; 9 May, 1869, BCARS A01046. W.D. Moses, "Diary," 15 May, 1869, BA.

³⁰⁸ "Arrival of the Enterprise- \$250,000 in Gold Dust," *Daily British Colonist*, 20 October, 1862. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 10 July, 1863. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 12 July, 1863. "News From Cariboo," *British Columbian*, 15 July, 1863. "Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 30 July, 1863. "Correspondence," *British Columbian*, 5 August, 1863. "Later From Cariboo," *Daily British Colonist*, 20 July, 1864. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 18 September, 1865. "British Columbia," *Victoria Daily Chronicle*, 28 September, 1865. "Mining Intelligence," *Daily British Colonist*, 17 October, 1865. "British Columbia," *Daily British Colonist*, 4 December, 1865. "Accident," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1870.

³⁰⁹ James Pilton, *Negro Settlement*, 157.

unifying category of “miner” superseded divisive racial classifications and the different ways Blacks used racial and social classifications in the gold mines.

In 1864, the Harvey-Dixon Company on William’s Creek extended their claim into land that had been allowed to lapse by the neighbouring Aurora Company.³¹⁰ After the Harvey-Dixon Company expanded their claim, they amalgamated with the White-owned Davis Company and, in 1865, made a strike on the disputed ground between the newly-formed Davis and Aurora Companies.³¹¹ The Aurora Company immediately began litigation to reclaim the land they claimed had been “jumped” by the amalgamated Davis Company.³¹² It was this litigation that propelled the Davis Company, and especially its Black shareholders, to the forefront of public awareness and concern in the Cariboo.

After Judge Cox of the County Court threw out the Aurora Company’s initial lawsuit,³¹³ the Aurora Company appealed to Judge Begbie of the Supreme Court for a stop-work injunction.³¹⁴ Begbie agreed, but a broken-down wagon kept him from issuing the injunction himself and he ordered Cox “as Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, to issue an injunction, and attach the Seal of that Court to the same.”³¹⁵ Cox’s reply was public and unequivocal. Cox claimed to “HOLD NO COMMISION AS DEPUTY REGISTRAR OF THE SUPREME COURT, NOR NEVER DID HOLD ONE” and although he professed to hold Begbie and his office in high regard, Cox emphatically voiced his opposition to Begbie’s request:

³¹⁰ Ibid., 154.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² “Gold Commissioner’s Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 May, 1866.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ “Irresponsible Deputies: Decisive Stand Taken By Judge Cox,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 31 May, 1866. Uppercase in original.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

BUT FINDING NOW THAT IT IS ATTEMPTED TO DRAG ME INTO THIS DISAGREEABLE QUARREL AND ACT CONTRARY TO MY OWN RULING AND CONSCIENCE, I WOULD, IF I ACTUALLY DID HOLD A COMMISSION AS DEPUTY REGISTRAR OF THE SUPREME COURT AT THIS MOMENT, RESIGN THE POST AT ONCE.³¹⁶

At the heart of Cox's opposition was his desire to protect the integrity of property rights in the Cariboo mines.³¹⁷ Many White miners and the *Sentinel* shared this concern, as is evidenced by the differing treatment Cox and Begbie received in the paper and the protests that shadowed Begbie for the rest of the affair.³¹⁸

Despite this opposition, Begbie eventually succeeded in issuing an injunction against the Davis Company without Cox's assistance and brought the case to trial before a jury.³¹⁹ This trial launched a war of words between the few supporters of Begbie and his various detractors. Begbie's supporters, like "Onyx," upheld the Judge's right to make and interpret law because of his "intimate knowledge," while his critics argued that he acted in an autocratic manner and was demonstratively biased against the Davis Company during the proceedings.³²⁰ One of the most articulate of Begbie's detractors, "Miner," concluded that Begbie was "absurd, oppressive, and unjust" and Begbie and his supporters sought to rule over the miners, "who alone maintain this colony."³²¹ Begbie's actions and autocratic style of ruling became increasingly identified as opposed to the interests of the working class miners' community in the Cariboo.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Compare the treatment of Cox and Begbie in: "Irresponsible Deputies: Decisive Stand Taken By Judge Cox," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 31 May, 1866. and Onyx, Allan, and Lambert, "Judge Begbie and His Judges," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866.

³¹⁹ "Davis Co'y vs. Aurora," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 7 June, 1866.

³²⁰ Onyx, Allan, and Lambert, "Judge Begbie and His Judges," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 4 June, 1866. Caustic, "Judge Begbie and His Judges," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 11 June, 1866. Miner, "A Daniel Come To Judgement, Yea A Daniel!!," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 June, 1866.

³²¹ Miner, "A Daniel Come To Judgement, Yea A Daniel!!," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 14 June, 1866.

With these property issues in mind, the jury returned a verdict on 18 June, 1866 that rejected the Aurora Company's claims but recognised the labour they had put into the disputed land and therefore recommended that the land be divided evenly between the two companies.³²² This ruling apparently met with widespread satisfaction, at least from the Davis Company supporters,³²³ but Begbie stated that while he "quite agree[d] with the findings of the Jury with the exception of one small point," he was concerned that the ruling would "not end the litigation, and the expense of actions in one or two other branches of this Court would be heavy on both parties."³²⁴ Begbie thus suggested binding arbitration, to which both parties consented.³²⁵

In arbitration the next day, Judge Begbie announced that if he had known the particulars of the case, he would never have called a special jury, and that the Aurora Company had actually, and contrary to the testimony provided during the trial, staked out the disputed ground, and that the Harvey-Dixon Company had therefore "jumped" the Aurora Company's claim.³²⁶ Begbie drew a further distinction between the shares in the Davis Company owned by the Blacks of the Harvey-Dixon Company and the shares owned by the White members of the Davis Company. Begbie ruled that the disputed land be divided up into nineteen and three-quarter sections, corresponding to the total shares owned by the Aurora Company and the total White shares in the Davis Company. Five and three-quarter sections of land were given to the White partners of the Davis Company in recognition of their shares, while the other fourteen sections of land were ceded to the

³²² "Supreme Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866.

³²³ "Untitled," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 June, 1866.

³²⁴ "Supreme Court," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ "Supreme Court," and "Davis Co. vs. Aurora Co.," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866.

Aurora Company in keeping with the amount of their company shares.³²⁷ The Blacks, who Begbie held accountable for claim “jumping” and who controlled two and a quarter shares of the Davis Company, got nothing.³²⁸

In response to this ruling, a “mass meeting” of approximately six hundred men, mostly miners, met on the 23rd of June 1866 in front of the courthouse in Richfield.³²⁹ Tina Loo has suggested that the reaction of Cariboo miners to Begbie’s decision needs to be understood as originating out of a conflict between two competing conceptualizations of the law, one originating from the state, the other originating from the community of miners.³³⁰ Begbie’s decision did not support the interests of the community of miners because it appeared to undercut the basis of the mining economy and society, the sanctity of property rights and law.³³¹ Begbie had discriminated against Black miners, but the Blacks were firmly ensconced as part of the mining community. White miners, therefore, interpreted Begbie’s decision as a threat to the community as a whole, while overlooking that it had been an all-Black Company that had felt the full weight of Begbie’s decision.³³²

Indeed, working class White miners extended solidarity to the Blacks of the Davis Company despite their status as Black men. Mr. Laumeister, a White owner of the Davis Company, made this clear when he labelled his Black partners of the Harvey-Dixon

³²⁷ “Supreme Court,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 21 June, 1866.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*

³²⁹ “Mass Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866. This, in an area with only several thousand inhabitants.

³³⁰ Tina Loo, *Making Law*, 128.

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² “Mass Meeting,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 25 June, 1866.

Company “colored” and “darkies.”³³³ Yet, in spite of their race and the decision of Judge Begbie, Laumeister re-affirmed that the Blacks of the Davis Company would earn their “pro-rata share.”³³⁴ Laumeister framed the Black miners of the Davis Company as miners, who, despite their Blackness, were entitled to the same equitable distribution of recovered gold that the White miners were.

In spite of not speaking at the mass meeting, Blacks found other avenues through which to raise the issue of race.³³⁵ For example, “Colored Miner” wrote to the *Sentinel* on the same day as the mass meeting with the following questions:

- First- Have we as colored men the right to pre-empt ground for mining purposes?
- Second- Have we any rights in common with White men?
- Third- Why were our interests taken from us and given to White men?³³⁶

With these three questions, “Colored Miner” cut to the heart of the contradiction in the White miner’s definition of a unitary mining community that existed in concert with a racially divided colonial society. By questioning Judge Begbie’s decision through an explicitly racial lens, “Colored Miner” highlighted the effects of race within the supposedly equitable community of miners. Additionally, “Colored Miner’s” comments underscored that while White miners may not have understood the Davis dispute as a racial case, the Blacks perceived and experienced the situation through an explicitly racial understanding of law and society.

“Colored Miner’s” questions elicited an immediate and sustained response.

Directly below “Colored Miner’s” letter, the editor of the *Sentinel* opened his response

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Colored Miner, “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” 25 June, 1866.

with a rather peculiar statement given the full page, four-column coverage of the “mass meeting” in the same issue. The editor of the *Sentinel* stated that he “had hoped that discussion in this matter would have ceased with the decision of the case, and were it not that we consider a great injury has been done to men whose rights have been outraged... we should have let the matter drop.”³³⁷ The editor went on to make it perfectly clear that he was concerned with the violation of miners’, not Black, rights. The editor felt that it was “unnecessary to state in answer of “Colored Miner’s” first and second questions, that the mining laws of this colony make no distinction as to the color of a man’s skin; the laws have been wisely and judiciously framed.”³³⁸ Furthermore, in responding to “Colored Miner’s” third question, the editor merely restated Judge Begbie’s justification that the Blacks had knowingly claim jumped and did not question this reasoning other than to say that it had not been accepted by the jury.³³⁹

On July 2, 1866 the *Sentinel* carried another response to “Colored Miner.”³⁴⁰ D.L. went to great lengths to stress that “[w]hatever might appear wrong in that judgement let it not be attached to any bias, feeling, or prejudice, so far as English justice is concerned, her history is known in every quarter of the globe.”³⁴¹ D.L. went on to state that he did “not think that one holding the position that Hon. Chief Justice does could be biased with any feeling respecting color.”³⁴² In the face of “Colored Miner’s” attack on one of the law’s symbolic cornerstones, equality, D.L., a Black man, while disagreeing with Judge

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ D.L., “To the Editor of the ‘Cariboo Sentinel’,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 2 July, 1866.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

Begbie's decision, felt it necessary to defend the institution of British Law. In D.L.'s estimation, Judge Begbie could be wrong, but neither he, nor the system he represented, could be fundamentally biased because to be so would undermine the system as a whole. While D.L. responded to "Colored Miner's" questions in much the same manner as the *Sentinel* had previously, he also voiced criticism of Mr. Laumeister's comments at the Richfield Courthouse meeting.³⁴³ D.L. felt that that "word (darkies I mean) should not be used by any gentleman."³⁴⁴ Under a guise of English civility, D.L. attempted to minimise the role of race in the dispute largely because of the threat that the discourse of race posed to the supposed sanctity of equality in British law. D.L. attempted to keep from the public's view the underlying discourse of race and discrimination in Begbie's ruling in order to help maintain the legitimacy of one of the main institutions that, at least theoretically, gave the Blacks equality and so that Blacks would still be able to use it to assert equality in their relationships with Whites.³⁴⁵ While the Blacks' day-to-day interactions with Whites in the gold mines may have been somewhat free of racial tension, undercurrents of racial difference were always present and capable of being manifested.³⁴⁶

Natives: The Missing Presence

Economic and social factors also affected Native interracial interactions in the gold mines. While environmental constraints explain the lack of Native mining companies in the Cariboo Mountains, they do not explain the complete lack of Native employees in

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ D.L. "New Advertisements," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 23 July, 1870.

³⁴⁶ Argus, "Letter From Cariboo," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 16 September, 1861.

multi-racial companies until 1870.³⁴⁷ Economic and social factors can explain this late adoption of Native wage labour. The labour surplus of skilled White and Chinese miners meant that any potential Native miners entered a highly competitive job market.³⁴⁸

Additionally, aspects of the gold field economy in other sub-regions such as packing in the hinterland may have been more appealing to Natives because they could more easily be incorporated into their “traditional” rounds. Alternatively, Natives may have chosen to remain independent of the gold field economy entirely by working in the fur trade or subsistence economies rather than attempting to work directly in the mines.³⁴⁹

Natives seeking employment in the gold mines faced the added constraint of Newcomers socially understanding Natives as properly belonging in the “savage” wilderness beyond the frontier of “civilization.”³⁵⁰ Newcomer society in the Cariboo perceived the gold field economy to be the epitome of civilization, and the industrialized extraction of gold was central to their understanding of the progress of civilization over savagery.³⁵¹ The Newcomer inhabitants of the gold field towns of the Cariboo Mountains saw themselves living on the frontier of civilization and Native participation in the gold mines, even as subordinated wage labour, challenged the legitimacy of the advance of that frontier.³⁵² Moreover, unlike in the towns, Newcomers could effectively exclude Natives from the mines by choosing not to hire them. Only in 1870, when the demand

³⁴⁷ “Bridge River,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 17 May, 1866. “Lillooet and Douglas,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 20 September, 1866. Clip, “Letter From Lytton,” *British Columbian*, 16 April, 1864. “Labor,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 June, 1870.

³⁴⁸ “Labor,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 June, 1870.

³⁴⁹ See “Interracial Interactions in the Hinterland.”

³⁵⁰ “Trans-Continental Railroad” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 9 August 1868. “Profits of Agriculture,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 24 July, 1869.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² “How Provoking,” *Cariboo Sentinel*, 8 June, 1868.

for labour became such that mining companies had to either reduce activity or hire Natives did they finally begin to do so, though only in limited quantities.³⁵³ Thus, the Native absence from the Cariboo Mountain gold mines was as much a result of environmental constraints, in the form of ore deposits that necessitated the formation of mining companies, as it was the result of social and economic factors.

Conclusions

Environmental, economic and social factors shaped interracial interactions in the mines of the Cariboo Mountains. The increased degree of surveillance in the gold mines resulted in less diversity and freedom of action than was evident in the gold field towns or hinterland. The non-White groups' interactions with the "community of miners" shaped their experiences of the gold mines. By defining to what extent someone was or was not a member of this community, and therefore entitled to legal protection, the working class White miners encouraged non-White miners to conform, to differing degrees, to their social norms or risk exclusion from the gold mines.

The Chinese managed, throughout the gold field period, to incorporate themselves somewhat into the community of gold miners by meeting the strict legal requirement for membership, that is, the procurement of a mining licence. However, social and economic differences, both real and perceived, kept non-Chinese miners from fully recognizing Chinese miners and labour as equal in the gold mines. Instead, Chinese miners and labourers found themselves the target of various discriminatory practices that fell outside the purview of the law.

³⁵³ "Labor," *Cariboo Sentinel*, 18 June, 1870.

The Blacks, on the other hand, integrated far more successfully into the community of miners than did the Chinese. Yet even their success was tainted by White beliefs of Black difference that could act to constrain Black actions in the mines. Blacks themselves were divided on how to respond to this. Some Blacks, such as “Colored Miner,” wished to challenge the system of British law to reveal its hypocrisies and force it to live up to its ideals, others, such as D.L., opposed challenges to British law, fearing the repercussions of challenging the main institution of the state that gave Blacks at least theoretical equality.

Finally, Natives also encountered the social meanings of the mines. Whites believed that the Natives were antithetical to the space of the gold mines and therefore excluded Natives on that basis. It was only when economic depression caused the Cariboo Mountain gold mines to lose their significance as a site of the advancement of the frontier and the surplus labour pool disappeared that mining companies hired Native employees.

Social understandings as to what should shape the character of the mines largely determined interracial interactions in the Cariboo Mountain gold fields. Using the apparatus of the state, working class White miners enforced a vision of the mines that was particularly grounded in British notions of equality and sanctity of property. If non-White groups in the region wished to participate in mining and to gain access to legal and social protection while doing so, they had to respond to working class White miners’ standards of “proper behaviour” in the mines. A group like the Blacks were far more capable, if they wished, of integrating into the miners’ community than the Chinese or Natives because working class White miners saw them as racially capable of imitating

White patterns of consumption unlike the Chinese or Natives who Whites understood as “alien” and “savage,” statuses that constrained their ability to integrate in the eyes of White miners. While some of the working class White miners’ criteria could be met relatively easily, such as the purchase of mining licences, other criteria, such as socially acceptable patterns of consumption, were tied to each group’s racial identities.

Conclusions

During the Cariboo gold field period from 1860 to 1871, the nature of interracial interactions between the Blacks, Natives, Whites, and Chinese varied depending on the sub-region of the Cariboo in which they occurred. Economic processes formed the basis of how the various groups understood the hinterland, gold towns, and mines. In the hinterland, three different economies shaped the understanding of that sub-region as an area of Native dominance. In the gold field towns, industries that supported or regulated the gold field economy and society dominated those spaces. This economic base and the presence of the institutions of the colonial state put one group of Whites, the elites, in a position to attempt to enforce their social norms on the other groups. Finally, the environment and the gold extraction industry shaped who could participate in the mines and encouraged the formation of a working class community. Whites, and to a lesser extent, Blacks, Chinese, and Natives, came to see each of these sub-regions as distinct, yet related spaces, in which different social norms governed interracial interactions.

Informed by the presence of alternative Native-dominated economies and a general lack of knowledge of the “wilderness,” Newcomers understood the hinterland as a space of Native dominance and therefore did not attempt to regulate the hinterland to the extent they did the towns or mines. This Newcomer understanding shaped the interracial interactions that occurred in the hinterland. Native interactions with Newcomers in the hinterland took place within the context of multiple livelihoods for Natives that allowed Natives to choose if, and to what extent, they wished to interact with Newcomers. This

dynamic was most apparent in how the price of Native labour in the packing industry varied with the state of the fisheries. Even at roadhouses, where Newcomers attempted to regulate Native-Newcomer interactions, Natives contested the social norms propagated by Newcomers.

Native dominance and the concurrent lack of dominance by the town elites in the hinterland also affected interracial interactions between Newcomers. In many ways, the lack of elite dominance opened up a space in the hinterland for interracial interactions to occur that directly challenged the social norms embedded in the idealized space of the gold field towns. Chinese, Whites, and Blacks all interacted in more fluid and equitable ways than they did in either the towns or mines. While the town elites did not affect control over the interracial interactions of the hinterland, the working class White and Black Newcomers in the hinterland shared many of the basic values of town elites and attempted to regulate limited spaces within the hinterland, such as the roadhouses, to conform to social norms they had in common with the elites. In this way, while some interracial interactions in the roadhouses challenged the elites, such as Chinese-Black-White interracial drinking, other interracial interactions closely conformed to the elites' wishes, as when White and Black roadhouse owners hired Chinese and Natives for the more menial jobs.

In contrast to the hinterland, a group of Whites, the town elites, were moderately successful in implementing their ideal social norms in the gold field towns. Using the positions of power they occupied in the colonial hierarchy, the town elites sought, through the regulation of social interactions, to create the gold field towns as an idealized space that embodied their ideal social norms that, in turn, would shape the nature of

interracial interactions in the gold field towns. That the town elites occupied positions of power within the gold field towns forced the other occupants to respond to the elites' articulation of idealized space in their interracial interactions.

The elites' idealized space of the gold field towns was predominately aimed at preserving the British-dominated social order against the perceived threats of American republicanism, Native savagery and Chinese "foreign-ness" by encouraging conformity to British-influenced notions of society. However, the elites understood some groups, such as the Natives and Chinese, to be fundamentally incapable of abiding by their social norms. To this end, the idealized space of the gold field towns sought to exclude the Natives and Chinese from these areas and when that could not be accomplished, the elites attempted to exclude these groups from certain social and economic interactions within the towns.

The interracial interactions in the towns took place within the context of this attempted imposition of an idealized space by the elites. Rather than the homogenous idealized space propagated by the elites, a diversity of interracial interactions and meanings characterized the gold towns. At times, the non-elites' interracial interactions opposed the idealized space of the elites, as when W.D. Moses acted as a bank for Annie and Jack, but in some cases these interracial interactions acted to reinforce the town elites' idealized space, as in the exclusion of the Chinese from the gold fields in the early gold field period until 1864. The point of reference for both situations remained the idealized space of the gold town elites, underscoring the importance of this group's view.

Generally, both the Chinese and Natives' interracial interactions conflicted with the social norms articulated by the town elites. However, over the gold field period the

Chinese more successfully integrated within the gold field towns than the Natives who continued to be largely officially excluded from the space of the gold field towns until the end of the study period. Blacks, on the other hand, integrated quickly and successfully into the gold field towns. Despite their success in the gold field towns, Blacks still found some points of contention with the elites, as is evident by Anne Wheeler's defence of her actions in *The Cariboo Sentinel*. The nature of these non-Whites' interracial interactions varied depending on the degree to which they integrated within the gold field towns. Greater degrees of integration meant that groups were less subject to social and economic regulation and could better access the resources of the state.

The last spatial sub-region, the gold mines, often existed within the physical boundaries of the gold towns but was conceptually a very different place. Because working class and elite White society understood the mines as a site of possible social and economic aggrandizement, they both sought to regulate the space of the mines to similar, profitable, ends. The result was an informal "community of miners" that enforced social and legal regulations in the gold mines. The social norms articulated by this community of miners shaped the interracial interactions of the non-White groups in the mines. For example, the community of miners initially excluded and later oppressed Chinese miners because they saw the Chinese did not purchase mining licences and worked for far cheaper wages than White miners. While the Chinese slowly gained limited access to the community of miners and, hence, to the legal and social discourse that underlay it, they could never fully integrate because of their perceived biological difference. Blacks, on the other hand, managed to fairly successfully integrate into the community of miners. However, Blacks experienced the limits of this integration into the

community of miners when the Davis dispute made it clear that the equality of miners would protect them only inasmuch as they were miners, not as Black men. Like the Chinese, Natives were restricted from mining in the Cariboo. Unlike the Chinese, the miners did not have to physically block the Natives from the mines; the economic structure, Native lifestyle choices, and hiring preferences were sufficient to exclude Natives until the end of the gold field period.

The group that dominated the economy(s) of a sub-region could dictate what sort of social norms, and hence, what sort of interracial interactions could occur within its bounds. The sub-region a subject was located in, as well as the larger context of the Cariboo's other sub-regions, shaped the types of interracial interactions that were encouraged or discouraged in a given context. This basic process interacted with the shared histories of the individual groups and their understandings of each other, as well as the physical environment and economy of the gold fields to shape the nature of interracial interactions in the Cariboo.

The wider implications of this beyond the Cariboo are obvious. Different groups understand given spaces in different ways, but some groups are able to articulate their understandings of space more effectively than others and are able to enforce these views through spatial, economic, and social sanctions. This means that in most cases, one particular understanding of space becomes the standard against which alternatives must be posited. An understanding of the spaces in which interracial interactions occur is absolutely necessary for understanding why interracial interactions take on particular characteristics and can help account for apparent contradictions and inconsistencies within a larger region, such as the Cariboo.

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Abbreviations

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 BA. Barkerville Archives, Barkerville, British Columbia.*
 BCARS. British Columbia Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.
 CCA. Cariboo-Chilcotin Archives, Williams Lake, British Columbia.
 CVA. City of Vancouver Archives, Vancouver, British Columbia.
 QA. Quesnel Museum and Archives, Quesnel, British Columbia.
 UBCSC. University of British Columbia Special Collections, Vancouver, British Columbia.

* Note: The Barkerville Archives are divided into physical archives and computerized files.

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