

Images of Native People Associated with the Kelsey Event

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Henry Kelsey's tour of the Hudson Bay hinterland under the auspices of Assiniboin mentors in 1690-91 has been celebrated by a number of visual historians. This article examines the patterns of stereotype and historiography reflected in these illustrations over time. Artists and their patrons typically have ignored the advances in academic history dealing with the relations between First Nation peoples and Europeans. Dated and uninformed visual portrayals have continued to downplay seriously the demonstrably crucial role of Native people in the history of this relationship. Visual historians have also neglected the readily available literature which clearly identifies the unjustifiable preponderance of negative images as a major problem associated with the portrayal of First Nation peoples. A case is presented showing that even small, isolated and relatively poor patrons can produce acceptable and accurate images of Native people based on contemporary academic work; while the large, resource-rich, institutions examined continue to rely on less acceptable, less accurate images.

The story of Henry Kelsey's epic guided tour of the western interior of North America in 1690-91 certainly deserves the attention afforded it (Epp, 1993). However, it is also clear that the crucial role of First Nation peoples in this accomplishment has been seriously downplayed in a variety of depictions of this event. This paper examines the visual portrayals of Kelsey and his Assiniboin mentors in relation to the contemporary academic histories available to the artists and the users of these images.

Of course, artists creating images of the Kelsey event work within a cultural, social, economic and, perhaps not so prominently, academic context. Both written and visual histories are products of their time, and it should be recognized that interpretations are open to continual re-evaluation (Carr, 1961, pp. 24, 30). The depictions to be examined here tell us as much—or more—about prevailing attitudes, world views, resistance of images to change, and the penetration of academic history into public consciousness as they do about the event itself.

Artistic interpretations of historic events are not inconsequential. They

reflect and inform the images of Native peoples held not only by the artists themselves, but also by their general public audiences as well as those in positions of power to affect the lives of First Nation peoples. These images, which are often simply stereotypes,¹ have had important consequences for Native peoples (Surtees, 1977, pp. 113, 123; Berkhofer, 1979, p. 113). Stereotypes held by artists and their patrons are very powerful and change-resistant phenomena that have prejudicially affected the cross-cultural relationship. It is apparent that those perceived as "Indians" in the minds of non-Indians have been treated on the basis of these images—in spite of contrary evidence—rather than on the basis of their true individuality or group characteristics and interests (Sheehan, 1980, pp. ix-x; Pakes, 1985, pp. 1, 17). As opposed to the significant developments in academic history that have evidenced an increasing emphasis on the role of Native peoples in our past, the artistic interpretation of First Nation peoples seems to have evolved very little over time (cf. Goldie, 1989, pp. 148, 157).

Although recent Kelsey image makers have tended to ignore it, there is a growing body of literature that examines how Native people have been portrayed. Robert F. Berkhofer (1988) has produced a thorough summary of this scholarship. He has found that the primary model for images of Native peoples is one of "deficiency." That is, from the European ethnocentric viewpoint, Native peoples have been consistently portrayed as deficient in so-called "civilized" traits when measured against non-Native perceptions of themselves. Because of ignorance and/or deliberate misrepresentation of the facts, First Nation peoples have been wrongly portrayed as lacking in letters, laws, government and arts, as well as in the highly symbolic marker of clothing. This fundamentally negative image, which of course is patently false, serves the purpose of defining the Indian as the "other" to the extent of diminishing his humanity, while maintaining non-Indian feelings of superiority and justifying policies of extinction and assimilation (Monkman, 1981, p. 25; Berkhofer, 1988, pp. 538, 544).

From the very earliest European portrayals of Native populations in the New World, a key element of the negative images afforded these peoples was nakedness (Honour, 1975, p. 11; Dickason, 1984, p. 21; Berkhofer, 1988, p. 528). This view was linked to the belief among Europeans that Native peoples were more closely related to the animal world than to that of "civilized" Europe (Drinnon, 1980, pp. 53, 99; Goldie, 1989, p. 94). Nudity, especially in a comparative context, became a prime symbolic marker of Native otherness and inferiority in the European mind (Berkhofer, 1988, p. 525; Dickason, 1984, p. 67). The "naked savage" image became and remains ubiquitous (Figure 1).

A high percentage of early and recent illustrations show Native people

only partially clothed in sharp contrast to the non-Natives pictured. An examination of literary, educational, advertising, cartoon, film, museum and popular historical media reveals the clear, pervasive and pernicious nature of this image (Monkman, 1981, pp. 4, 13-14; McDiarmid and Pratt, 1971, pp. 5, 57; Green, 1974, p. 3; Doxtator, 1988, pp. 26-7). Regardless of whether this state of Native undress was part of the highly romanticized "noble (but scantily clad) savage," or the highly coloured "ignoble savage" images that prevailed at various times, it functioned to distinguish Native peoples as being unevolved and therefore inferior—if only not yet corrupted by the forces of development—in contrast to non-Native society.

Illustrations of Henry Kelsey's first European (not first of all) footsteps deep in the western interior of modern-day Canada follow this general pattern

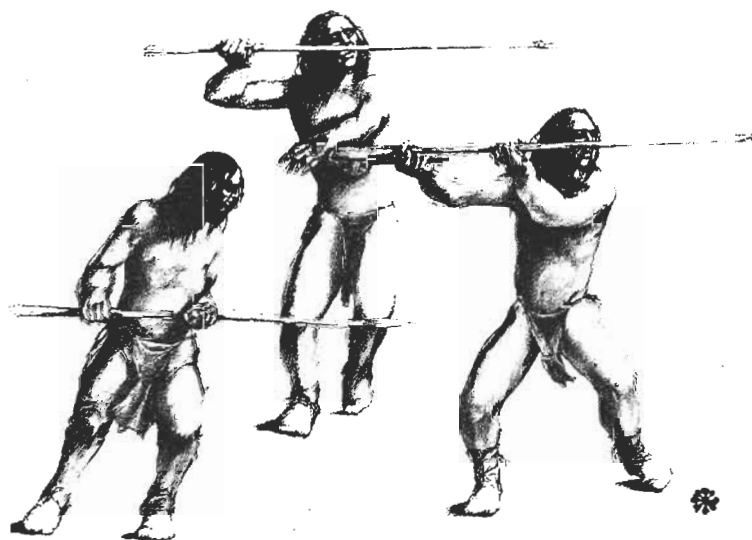


Figure 1. Detail of a 1984 drawing (McLeod 1987:35) by Larry Jamieson, who has been commissioned frequently over the last ten years by the Archaeology Section of the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship to illustrate various aspects of aboriginal life. Similar representations abound, as for example the atlatl wielder in the Grasslands gallery at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg. To be fair, many of Jamieson's other illustrations show clothed Native figures. Courtesy of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch.

very closely. One of the most familiar images of the Kelsey event was created by Charles W. Jefferys (Figure 2). The artist was born in England in 1869 and became a newspaper illustrator in the United States and Canada, developing a strong interest in reconstructing historic events. He became well known as an advocate of "artistic nationalism." That is, he strove to create abiding myths and heroes for Canadians (Lord, 1974, pp. 170-1). As a result, Jefferys has become one of the most often reproduced artists in Canada and has influenced generations of Canadians in their perceptions of history (Gibson, 1990, p. 6).

While Jefferys was working from the 1920s through the 1940s, historians were paying relatively little attention to First Nation peoples. Important sources such as *The Kelsey Papers* (Kelsey, 1929), which Jefferys did consult after the fact, and Harold Innis' (1956, p. 389) classic work *The Fur Trade in Canada*, published in 1930, were not available when he painted this image.



Figure 2. "Kelsey Sees the Buffalo, August 1690," from the painting by Charles W. Jefferys. Courtesy of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Innis did conclude that the expansion of the European fur trade via expeditions such as Kelsey's would have been impossible without Indian participation.

In Jefferys' portrayal of Kelsey produced in 1929 on commission for the Hudson's Bay Company's historic calendar series, not surprisingly, we see Kelsey depicted as the central figure in the composition, while the Native participants—who were in fact guiding the young fur trader not into an "unexplored wilderness," as is often maintained, but along well-known Indian trade routes through their own homelands—are presented as junior characters in this event. They are clearly distinguished from our European hero in the composition by their crouching poses and by their comparative lack of clothing. In this illustration, Jefferys has quite deliberately separated Kelsey from his Indian companions—and in the popular viewing public's mind thereby reinforced the conception of him as superior—by showing the latter in subordinate poses. The use of clothing on the European and the lack thereof on Native people function as symbolic markers of "civilization" (cf. Dickason, 1984, p. 50).

Jefferys' other work commonly employed similar theatrical compositions and symbols, showing splendidly dressed Europeans such as Champlain, Frontenac, and St. Luson interacting with consistently semi-naked Indians (Jefferys, 1942, pp. 93, 157, 160). These images have been widely distributed in line drawing form by Ryerson Press in the three-volume *Picture Gallery of Canadian History* that was reprinted eight times between 1942 and 1958. In this form, Jefferys' Kelsey image penetrated to the most remote schools in the country, as indicated by my used copy of volume 1, which is inscribed "Poplar River School" and dated 1960.

Juvenile literature is replete with similar images. The Kelsey story in *Little Giant of the North*, written by Alida Malkus in 1952, was published expressly for the purpose of creating heroes from lesser known historical figures. The author certainly has done her best for Henry Kelsey, but perhaps not for the Native people who were centrally involved in his historic accomplishments. The dust jacket announces "alone except for a few Indian companions courageously he plunged into a trackless forest amid hidden red skinned tribes," placing all of its emphasis on the European while using "negative evaluative assertions" when dealing with Native people (cf. McDiarmid and Pratt, 1971, p. 90).

Illustrating this account was Jay Hyde Barnum, a magazine artist who had published his work in a variety of mainstream periodicals such as *Colliers* and *Cosmopolitan*. Barnum presents an interpretation of events that is repeated consistently in all media. In truly heroic fashion, Kelsey is shown out in front, leading his party of semi-naked Aborigines. There is no hint here of the latter's central importance to the success of the venture. Although by this time

some additional primary documents on the fur trade had been published that revealed the crucial importance of Native people to the inland travel of European fur traders (e.g., Tyrrell, 1934, p. 106), Barnum did not reflect this idea in the imagery he selected.

Similar portrayals of Kelsey's assumed single-handed heroism abound. For example, the Manitoba Department of Highways designated Highway No. 10 from Swan River to Flin Flon as the "Kelsey Trail" and chose a logo (Figure 3) to represent a solitary Kelsey in a canoe with no hint whatsoever of the critical leadership and labour provided by his Assiniboin mentors.

In parallel fashion, a commemorative stamp issued by Canada Post in April 1970 to mark the 300th anniversary of Kelsey's birth (which actually occurred in 1667 according to Davies, 1969, p. 307) shows a lone explorer pictured heroically against the broad prairie sky and captioned "First Explorer on the Plains" (Figure 4). The artist who designed this likeness was



Figure 3. Manitoba Department of Highways and Transportation logo for the "Kelsey Trail" signage on Highway No. 10 between Swan River and Flin Flon. No information is available on the artist or the commission. Courtesy of Manitoba Highways and Transportation.

Dennis Burton, a widely exhibited teaching professional born in 1933 at Lethbridge, Alberta, and trained at the Ontario College of Art. Of course, the version of the event promoted by the image and the caption printed on this stamp completely denies the well known fact of prior Native explorations of the region dating back thousands of years before Kelsey (e.g., Porhorecky, 1970). The commentary accompanying the presentation of this product in Seary's (1972, p. 25) *A Postage Stamp History of Canada* typically attempts to aggrandize Kelsey at the expense of his Native mentors by claiming that he endured the hardships imposed by travel along wilderness trails "better than the Indian youths who were his companions" (cf. Monkman, 1981, pp. 19-20).

Of course, ever since the publication of *The Kelsey Papers* in 1929, it should have been clear to all that Kelsey was not "alone," but that he was in fact sent inland to the country of the "Assinaepoets" (Assiniboin) under the guidance of "the Captain of this Nation" (Kelsey, 1929, p. xxiv). Even the scant details of his sojourn left to us by Kelsey make it abundantly clear that, far from being the solitary fearless hero as represented, he was terrified at being left alone and he lacked the persuasiveness of a true leader when, for example, it came to convincing his Native companions to give up traditional

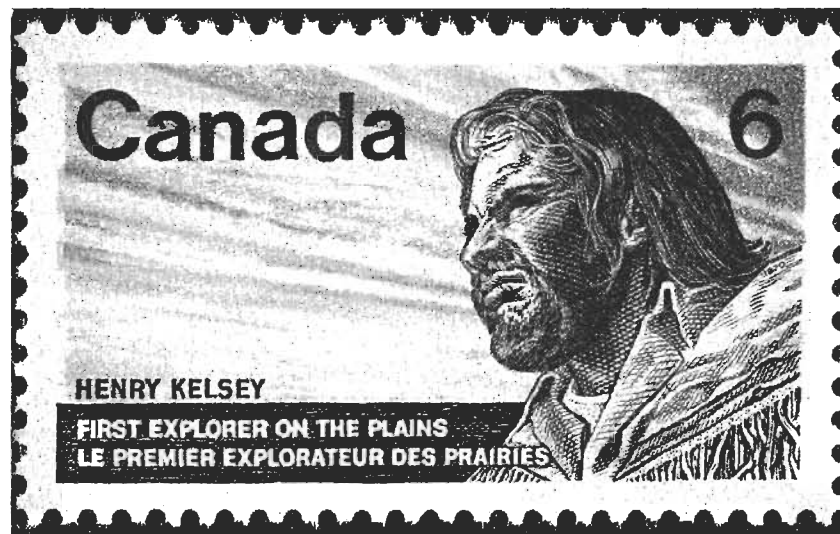


Figure 4. The Kelsey commemorative stamp designed by Dennis Burton. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada/Canadian Postal Archives/POS-573.

patterns of warfare in favour of fur trapping (Kelsey, 1929, pp. 14-16). It seems as if Kelsey's image has been created for purposes that emphasize a constructed myth over information available in the historical documents. A justifiable emphasis on the role of his Assiniboin mentors in the Kelsey event has thereby suffered unfortunate neglect.

Apart from serious-minded historical representations of Kelsey, there is another telling humorous image found in *The Great Fur Opera* written by Kildare Dobbs (1970, p. 71) and illustrated by Ronald Searle. This irreverent book was published as a "comic opera in prose" in celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Hudson's Bay Company. Again, it is to be noted that Searle draws Kelsey as being fully dressed in clear counterdistinction to the Native people represented. This is perhaps not all that surprising given that comedy often depends on conventional stereotypic images for its effect. However, one study (Green, 1974, p. 3) on Indians illustrated in western comics found that Aboriginal peoples have been depicted as being naked above the waist in 80 percent of these images. This portrayal has served to compound the general reinforcement of negative stereotypes and the other derogatory references to Native peoples found throughout this type of literature.

The fact that the intention of Searle was clearly comedic does not alter its effect of bolstering the "naked savage" stereotype that sets Europeans apart as being hierarchically superior to Natives. Would it not have been just as comical—if not more so—to finally show a European with *his* shirt off? We must ask why we never see a semi-naked Kelsey in such representations. Did Kelsey have some metabolic anomaly that forced him to wear heavy clothing when his companions were warm enough to have their shirts off?

Perhaps, but more seriously, if as one might intuit, it seems undignified, improper or *déclassé* for a European to be shown with his shirt off, then why is this not so for an Indian as well? A clear double standard is being applied here, using a visual convention that symbolizes an implied inferiority or lack of "civilization" on the part of the Native figures. Artists are evidently at pains to distinguish the European from a presumably primitive inferior who is marked by symbolically loaded skin colour (Drinnon, 1980, p. xvii) and who lacks the attribute of "civilized" body coverings. Quite apart from the real differences existing between the contemporary attitudes of Europeans and Native peoples to the idea of nudity itself, we need to reflect on the reasons why Natives and non-Natives have been distinguished in this manner so consistently.

Another widely reproduced representation of the Native people guiding Kelsey is by Rex Woods (Figure 5). Born in England in 1902, Woods emigrated to Toronto in 1920, where he worked for various commercial art studios and took classes at the Ontario College of Art. Having published

Maclean's magazine covers and designed images such as the Macdonald Tobacco "Lassie," he was commissioned to create fifteen paintings for the Confederation Life Insurance Company, among which was the Kelsey image created in 1957. It was later included in the set of prints distributed by the company to commemorate the Canadian centennial in 1967. Given the explicit celebratory purpose of this endeavour, it is understandable that the influence of the Canadian artistic nationalism school was chosen to predominate here.

In Woods' work, Kelsey retains his central heroic position, while the role of his Native guides is downplayed by means of their comparatively retiring postures. Again we note an obvious attempt to distinguish Native participants by means of their relative lack of clothing. The obvious nationalistic purpose to which this representation has been put was to create a hero of mythic proportions to celebrate during the proud commemoration of one hundred years as a nation. Unfortunately, by the time of the 1967 centennial, First Nation peoples were still not perceived as appropriate figures to be afforded hero status in Canada (cf. Walker, 1971, p. 36).

Admittedly, part of this failure to focus on Native heroes may be due to the lack of information on specific individuals, much less a leader's name, among Kelsey's guides. When names and identities of Native participants



Figure 5. "Kelsey on the Plains" by Reginald (Rex) Woods. Courtesy of The Confederation Life Gallery of Canadian History.

emerge from anonymity, such as in the case of Peguis or Joseph Brant for instance, more sympathetic and balanced portrayals have tended to be produced (e.g., Lord, 1974, p. 83).

Nevertheless, we might have expected Kelsey image makers and users to have exhibited a deeper understanding of the true role of leadership provided by Kelsey's Assiniboin mentors by this time, since we have the memorable statement left to us by the dean of fur trade historians, E.E. Rich (1960, pp. 42-43), acknowledging that, as late as the 1830s, Indians "held the whip hand" in fur trade relationships (cf. Rich and Johnson, 1957, p. 12). Such a powerful image, had it been consulted, could have served to challenge the repeated use of the tired conventions of an earlier era, but it seems to have penetrated neither the artistic nor the popular view of this history.

The nearly identical views of Jefferys and Woods have become pervasive in educational materials as well as in the popular media. Elementary classroom resources such as *Fur Trade* by Rosemary Nearing (1974, p. 15), published by Fitzhenry and Whiteside, employ the Jefferys image, while *The Fur Trade* by James H. Marsh, published by Collier and Macmillan, uses the Woods illustration. Marsh (1971, p. 15) accompanies this image with the caption, "Always in the forefront of the fur trade were the colourful explorers. They searched out new tribes and new species of fur. Kelsey's journey was a triumph of nerve, courage, and diplomacy." In reinforcing the imagery found in the illustration, this view totally ignores the indispensable role of Native people as guides, interpreters, diplomats, provisioners, female companionship, transportation labourers and middlemen, without even considering the role of primary fur producers for the European traders (Thistle, 1986, pp. 45 ff.). Educational materials used at all levels have received well-deserved condemnation for their totally inadequate treatment of Native peoples, who have received by far the most negative treatment of any target group identified in this literature, even that afforded to Black people (McDiarmid and Pratt, 1975, pp. 5, 51; Henry, 1971, p. 7; Walker, 1971, pp. 22, 32). Educationists such as D. Bruce Sealey (1973, pp. 199, 204) suggest that the negative attitudes of many Canadians toward Native peoples can be traced back to learning in their school years, not to mention the disastrous effects of such images on the self-respect of Native students who encounter these consistently negative portrayals (Henry, 1971, p. 36).

In the popular literature, the Jefferys and Woods images also remain in wide circulation. The Hudson's Bay Company owns the copyright to the Jefferys image and, understandably, has reused and marketed it regularly in its respected *The Beaver* magazine, which is aimed at the furtherance of popular interest in Canadian history (e.g., Autumn 1970, p. 21; August/September 1993, p. 49). Although academically panned (Stevenson, 1986;

Brown, 1987), Peter C. Newman's popular books on the history of the Hudson's Bay Company *Company of Adventurers* (1985, p. 283) and *Empire of The Bay* (1989, p. 65) both employ the Jefferys version of the Kelsey event. This dated image of Native people and their true relationship to the European tourist under their guidance is employed despite the flood of excellent academic work on the fur trade published since the mid-1970s and Newman's claims of consultation with these scholars.

In one way or another, many modern interpretations of fur trade relationships point out that First Nation peoples were by no means in a subordinate role vis-à-vis Europeans, which is the clear implication of all the early images. Rather, they exerted their control over the situation in a variety of ways (Ray, 1974, pp. 65, 144; Bishop, 1974, pp. 230, 291; Van Kirk, 1980, p. 9). The use of the visual images in question is undoubtedly much more resistant to change than the interpretations of historians (cf. Goldie, 1989, pp. 148, 157).

As a further demonstration of this resistance, a commemorative silver dollar coin was released by the Royal Canadian Mint in the year of the 300th anniversary of the Kelsey event (Figure 6). On the reverse of this coin we see a representation of Kelsey being shown his first buffalo in a portrayal still quite reminiscent of the Jefferys and Woods images. Designed by David Craig, an Ontario college teacher and freelance artist, the 1990 coin pictures a fully clothed Kelsey who continues to be surrounded by semi-naked



Figure 6. Silver dollar commemorating the 300th anniversary of Henry Kelsey's exploration of the Canadian Prairies designed by David Craig. Courtesy of the Royal Canadian Mint.

Aboriginal people arranged in poses that symbolize their secondary importance. Although enlightened to the extent that it shows a Native guide pointing the way, the demonstrating arm does not seem to fit the latter individual and, upon casual inspection, might just as well be interpreted as Kelsey's own gesture.

Whether in the interest of good composition or artistic nationalism, Native subjects continue to be depicted as relatively minor characters in symbolically subservient poses and they are deliberately distinguished from the central non-Native figure by a comparative lack of clothing. Upon being questioned by a reporter from the *Opasquia Times*, the community newspaper in The Pas, for a response to some local negative reaction regarding the design, a Mint spokesman claimed to have thoroughly consulted with historians (Ko, 1990, p. 1). Although the coin's designers did pick up on the advances in the fur trade literature since Jefferys' time and attempted to show the indispensable role of Native guides to the success of Kelsey's endeavour, there remains the major failing here to pay sufficient attention to the extensive and widely available literature dealing with the prominence of the "naked savage" stereotype in the portrayal of Native peoples (Honour, 1975; Berkhofer, 1979; Monkman, 1981; Dickason, 1984). Any casual perusal of this literature should have apprised the coin designers that the lack of clothing on Native figures is one of the foremost aspects of the overwhelmingly negative imagery associated with First Nation peoples that could just as easily have been avoided.

In reviewing all this, clearly there is nothing necessarily inaccurate or dishonest in a portrayal of a Native person with his shirt off. Various states of undress including nudity certainly had their places among Native societies in ceremonial and other contexts such as, one intuit, hot weather. Resting on their haunches in the presence of a standing European, or crouching to make use of cover while hunting would certainly not have been unknown. Indeed, stereotypes often have an element of truth, however minuscule. What is reason for serious concern, however, is the pervasiveness of this extremely one-sided image and the pernicious effect of its use in comparative contexts to the near exclusion of any other. Constant repetition of illustrations showing clothed Europeans in situations where only semi-naked Natives are seen grouped in subservient postures serves to discriminate hierarchically implicitly superior non-Natives from their Native counterparts. As argued at the outset, this is not purely a matter of artistic licence having no real, significant consequences. Attitudes informed, demonstrated and continually reinforced by these stereotypic images are present among the forces behind the policies that have been implemented to deal with Native peoples in this country and

that have seen them relegated to subordinate positions in Canadian society (D. Francis, 1992, pp. 194 ff.; cf. R. Francis, 1989, p. 232).

To demonstrate how simple it is to provide an alternative and patently more balanced portrayal of the Kelsey event, one final image will be examined here (Figure 7). Commissioned by The Pas History and Heritage Society as the logo for the events sponsored to mark the 300th anniversary of Kelsey's arrival in the area on 10 July 1690, this is a strikingly different interpretation from those seen in the past. The designer is Dean B. Head—to my knowledge the first Native artist to formally take up this subject. He was born in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan, and graduated from the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College where he studied Indian art and later lectured. Currently living and working in The Pas, Manitoba, he is engaged in several artistic endeavours and, like Jefferys before him, sometimes contributes drawings to the local newspaper as an editorial cartoonist.



Figure 7. Kelsey 300 logo commissioned by The Pas History and Heritage Society and designed by Dean B. Head. Courtesy of The Sam Waller Museum.

Although open to criticism as a result of its missing detail (Pasquia Hills), and anachronism (form of Kelsey's paddle), the logo does present a long overdue alternative view of the Kelsey event. In stark contrast to the traditional emphasis on the Kelsey figure alone, a reinterpretation of the relationship has given equal prominence to both Native and non-Native figures. In this version of the event, which was released prior to the Canadian Mint's, the captain of the Assiniboin nation who guided Kelsey is shown in a fatherly pose, with his hand on Kelsey's shoulder, pointing the way west toward the long established homeland of his people. The stylized setting represents the height of land at Big Eddy, just up the Saskatchewan River from The Pas, where some believe "this neck of land" that Kelsey named Deering's Point is located (Reader, 1990). The use of the Cree word Opasquiak, for The Pas provides added emphasis on the Native view of the event. At a bare minimum, both figures represented here have their clothes on. Is this too much to ask after 300 years?

This design was deliberately created to further the goals for the tricentennial celebrations in The Pas: it not only marked the importance of Kelsey's guided tour through the region, but also emphasized the crucial role of Native people in the event. It indicated that there exists a mutual heritage for Natives and non-Natives to celebrate, as well as raised public awareness of the role of interpretation in history. A not-so-subtle rejigging of the traditional composition in this logo results in a much different interpretation than those seen previously. Prominence is given to a Native person in a leadership role, without using invidious comparison based on the "deficiency" model. The Heritage Society attempted to employ this logo as widely as possible on letterhead, promotional materials, lapel buttons and in permanent form on a bronze plaque adorning the commemorative time capsule cairn erected in Devon Park, The Pas.

This example demonstrates that even a small organization with a comparatively minuscule budget of \$150 for artwork can create more balanced images of relations between First Nation peoples and Europeans. This is accomplished by consulting and building on the modern academic interpretations that have explained the significance of the Native contributions to our history as well as by referring to the literature identifying the stereotypic images commonly used to portray First Nation peoples. Clearly, there is little or no defence for large, resource-rich institutions such as the public and corporate examples discussed above to continue to employ exclusively the traditional undressed and ancillary portrayals of Aboriginal peoples, which consistently downplay or ignore the documented importance of Native people to the history of this country.

One wonders, in the face of all the new history available, why Native

peoples have continually received such depreciation. It is tempting to ascribe this to uncaring ignorance if not deliberate racism that extends throughout modern society. It is clear, however, that, given the overwhelming preponderance of negative imagery associated with Native peoples, this has not happened by chance alone. The mechanism at work here may be the failure of academic historians to make their work accessible to the public, as those such as Newman claim, but it is also driven by the forces of ignorance, historical naivety, anti-academic sentiment, self-interest, ethnocentrism and artistic or other forms of nationalism guiding the hands that hold the paint brushes as well as the purses that serve as patrons. When patrons and artists have made serious efforts to carry out adequate research, for example in the case of those who carried out actual field work (such as Paul Kane, 1968, or Karl Bodmer) (Thomas and Ronnefeldt, 1982), markedly different, more balanced and positive images have been created.

In closing, it remains only to reiterate that First Nation peoples deserve a much more prominent place in the visual interpretations of all Canadian history, not merely with regard to the Kelsey event. As demonstrated in The Pas, it is not at all difficult to reverse timeworn trends in this domain. If the will exists, a more balanced portrayal of cross-cultural relations based on modern academic work can be created by the smallest, most isolated organizations that can serve as exemplars to the powerful institutions that control the mass production and distribution of the images of historic events. Fairness, accuracy, and scholarship demand this from all concerned.

Notes

This paper is a revised and expanded version of a presentation originally made at the Kelsey Tricentennial Conference, sponsored by The Pas History and Heritage Society in The Pas, Manitoba, on 6 July 1990. An expanded version was also presented at a conference of the same name sponsored by the Saskatchewan Archaeological Society in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on 21 November 1991.

- 1 Stereotype is defined by Gordon Allport (1979, p. 191) as an exaggerated belief based on selective perception and selective forgetting associated with a category (ethnic, gender, etc.). Its function is to justify or rationalise conduct in relation to that category.

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Treaty 8 and Traditional Livelihoods: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

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Conflicting governmental and Indian perceptions of the traditional livelihood promises of Treaty 8 persist to this day, and have been the subject of court cases and other attempts at resolution. Thus, a review of the historical basis of the differing views is undertaken. In order to explore future-oriented solutions, the authors canvass potential remedies, including attitudinal and policy changes. The article is placed within the context of the broader changes nationally and internationally, such as the Waitangi Tribunal in New Zealand.

Introduction

Over the past two decades in Canada, treaty and Aboriginal issues have assumed increasing importance and attention. A great number of Native issues have been brought forcefully to public attention.¹ These range from Native claims and court cases to protests over land and resource rights, such as at Oka in Quebec, Meares Island in British Columbia, the Temagami Wilderness in Ontario, the Innu in Labrador and the Lubicon in Alberta. These conflicts often have deep historic roots and are representative of the grievances and unresolved relationships between Canada and Aboriginal Canadians. Mirroring the continuing importance of treaties as an area of conflict, for example, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People identified "the legal status, implementation and future evolution of aboriginal treaties, including modern-day agreements" as part of its research mandate (Canada, 1991, p. 13).

In Canada, treaties are the most visible and long-term manifestation of the relationship between the Canadian Crown (or the British, prior to Confederation) and Aboriginal peoples. From the government's perspective, the treaties were fairly straightforward agreements to secure title to traditional Native land and resources so that they could be used for settlement and resource development. Military alliances and peaceful relations between European settlers and Aboriginal nations were also considerations, particularly