



# *The Davin Report: Shakespeare and Canada's Manifest Destiny* \*

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The first thing is to realize our true position; the next is to look to the future; the third is to draw into our literary, social and political life the power of a noble inspiration.

-- Nicholas Flood Davin [1]

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## Introduction

"History," [2] it has been suggested, "is produced as a way to manage the past, a narrative which tends to yield the present as a happy ending" (8), endings where "amnesia can be seen as an essential part of the culture of conquest: settled territories get described as pristine wilderness" (Kelley 7). This paper sets out to overturn the settled and pristine landscapes managed and organized around Canadian nationalism by revisiting the history of Nicholas Flood Davin (1843-1901) and his literary, social, and political life that used "noble inspirations," such as Shakespeare, to settle territories.

History is a palimpsest. Levels of narration are effaced, over-written by dominant imperial ideologies and cultural authorities; however, the lives, their stories and voices are always present, re-emerging, re-engaging. The concern of this paper is to identify how the Canadian politician and author, Nicholas Flood Davin in his trinity of writings, [Eos – A Prairie Dream](#), [The Fair Grit](#), and the [Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds](#), [3] and their association with Shakespeare, laid the covering groundwork for literary and political territorial expansionism in nineteenth-century Canada. Davin's writings, including his work as founder and editor of *The Regina Leader* newspaper, contributed to a version of Canadian Manifest Destiny, an historic movement that abetted the misappropriation of Indigenous land through residential school policies; collapsed the diversity and power of Indigenous women into an objectified and invisible figure; and replaced the lives of Native women with a republican motherhood ideology that justified the abduction of their children, the assimilation of Native culture, while contributing to the marginalization of Aboriginal women and their contemporary situation in Canadian legal, social, and economic systems.

In October 2005, I read [The Davin Report](#) for a Shakespearean adaptation class I attended at the University of Guelph. What became profoundly evident while studying the 1879 confidential report was not the connection to Shakespeare but that the presence of Aboriginal women was missing from the document. Why were Aboriginal women not represented in a political recommendation, commissioned by [Sir John A. Macdonald](#), and assembled by Davin who would later make a parliamentary motion to enfranchise women in Canada? Why did Davin exclude Native women from a substantive government policy that had massive cultural impact, a policy that would irrevocably and irreparably determine their lives and the lives of their families and communities in decades to come?

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## Nicholas Flood Davin

To explore these questions, it is necessary to understand the historic place of [Nicholas Flood Davin](#). In 1872, Davin arrived in Canada from Ireland and lived in Toronto for a period before settling in Saskatchewan. A London-trained lawyer, Davin turned his professional interests to writing and politics working as a federal politician, playwright, poet and journalist, first for *The Globe* and later *The Mail*. In 1876, Davin wrote [The Fair Grit; or The Advantages of Coalition. A Farce](#), an adaptation of Shakespeare's [Romeo and Juliet](#) (1596). The play politicizes the figure of Juliet, his "fair grit," and chastises, among others, the media for its

influence on political coalitions – a power fully realized by Davin as a journalist and founder of *The Regina Leader* newspaper, located in Canada's North-West. Three years later, he produced *The Davin Report* (1879) in which he advised the Canadian federal government to institute residential schools for Indigenous youth, a recommendation that decimated Canadian Aboriginal families “by virtually kidnapping children to be socialized into so-called civil society” (Fischlin, par. 3). In Ottawa, five years later, Davin wrote *Eos – A Prairie Dream* (1884), a collection of poems that, in his own words, “strike a true and high note in Canadian politics and literature” (5) while he represents, through his poetry, the destruction of Aboriginal culture.

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### Davin's Work and American Progress

Davin's work, in assorted genres, enables an easy dismissal of his writing as disparate parts, unrelated to each other; however, in the opening passage of *Eos – A Prairie Dream*, he sets in motion a mythical goddess found in John Gast's painting "[American Progress](#)" (1872), [\[4\]](#) a cultural coat-of-arms brandishing America's Manifest Destiny, a symbol of expansionism found in Davin's writing. Consider the opening passage from *Eos – A Prairie Dream*:

I had been thinking how the goddess of  
The morning red, at close of every night,  
Announcing coming light of day to gods  
And mortals. (7)



"American Progress," by John Gast, 1872.

[Museum of the American West, Autry National Center, Los Angeles](#)

The passage sketches out Gast's portrait of "America," a figure with the "Star of Empire" on her forehead, a beacon pushing westward to realize America's imperial projects. A similar trope is evident in Davin's Shakespearean adaptation, *The Fair Grit*, in which his Juliet/Angelina "moves like a goddess" (10). Likewise, in *The Davin Report*, he presents the "civilized woman" (12) dispatched to instill the "barbarous tribes" (7) with "superior character" (12). A close reading of Gast's painting, "American Progress," depicts Aboriginal people retreating from the white goddess who carries symbols of progress and civilization, a symbolism appallingly analogous to Davin's agenda to abolish the "tribal relations" of Canada's Indigenous Peoples (*Davin Report* 1). Using American imperial ideologies and Shakespeare's cultural authority, Davin constructs a gendered and racist logic to *other* Canadian Aboriginal women and to situate the "white woman," who stands as a metonym for nation, in a perceived position of power. Davin's three texts, operate in concert as arguments for the model woman or the Anglo-goddess, a racist crusade that played a part in shaping Canadian women's roles in social and economic policy.

Sherene H. Razack is a Professor of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of Toronto); her research and teaching interests lie in the area of race and gender issues in the law. Razack's compilation of essays in *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping White Settler Society* interrogates "how the constitution of spaces reproduces racial hierarchies" and examines "the spatial and legal practices required in the making and maintaining of a white settler society" (1). In the essay "Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice," Sarah Carter explains that traders and Canadian Aboriginals had attained a certain level of co-existence prior to 1885. [The Métis rebellion \(1885\)](#) and the growing dissent among Aboriginals against territorial restrictions, as well as the invading/settling of the Prairies, engendered debased images of Aboriginal Peoples, specifically Indigenous women, as *licentious and bloodthirsty*: "the squalid and immoral 'squaw' helped to deflect criticism away from the brutal behaviour of government officials ... and it enabled ... officials to claim ... the dissolute

character of Aboriginal women" (Razack 130). The Canadian federal government's strategic rhetoric justified restrictions upon Aboriginal women's mobility, as it legislated their confinement to designated places. The regulated and designated spaces were in the reserves (Razack 130), a confinement that further isolated Native women while enabling and directing violence against them. Carter discusses the abusive tactics of government agents when they "sometimes withheld rations to reserve communities unless Aboriginal women were made available to them." The brutality was enacted by "white men in positions of authority [who] often beat Aboriginal women, sometimes fatally" (Razack 131).

Violence against Native women is further inscribed into *The Davin Report* with Davin's recommendation to implement the residential school system, a system based on the American model of institutional schools that dismantled communal lands and familial relations while consolidating Native populations "on few reservations" (1). C.B. Koester, in his book, *Mr. Davin M.P.: A Biography of Nicholas Flood Davin*, describes Davin's request to John A. Macdonald in 1878: "give me some position in the North-West which could enable me to tide over my little financial difficulties, some temporary thing that would put a few hundred dollars in my pocket and enable me to prospect up there" (40). [5] In response to his request for "a few hundred dollars," Davin was commissioned on January 28, 1879, "by the Macdonald government to study and report on the system of industrial schools for the education of Indians and half-breeds in the United States. In the course of his study he traveled to Washington, Minnesota, and Winnipeg and, on March 14, 1879, submitted his report in which he reviewed the American experience and made some thirteen recommendations for the guidance of the Canadian government" (40). Acting upon the recommendations, the Canadian government removed "large numbers of Indigenous children from their families and communities to attend schools in predominately non-Indigenous communities," and as outlined in Amnesty International's Report, [Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada](#), "the explicit purpose of providing education outside of the community was to foster assimilation of Indigenous children into European Canadian culture" (13). Five years after *The Davin Report* was commissioned, on February 7, 1884, *The Regina Leader* published an article that documents Davin's visit to "the American Reserves and [how he] studied the whole system and the result was a report in favour of the plan." [6] *The Leader* article further states that "one thousand, one hundred and eighty children attend Indian schools in Manitoba and the North-West. Cultivation of land is progressing and we can look forward to the future of our Indian population with hope ... [that] the Indian [be] put on the road to the triumphs of the highest civilization" (2). *The Regina Leader* article ties the "cultivation" of land with the control of educational systems in Aboriginal communities – a dual political strategy from which the Canadian government's territorial agenda could be inferred.

At length, *The Davin Report* describes its educational objectives for Aboriginal men and children; yet, Aboriginal women are absent from *The Davin Report's* rhetoric. There is a solitary suggestion of a Native woman, Mo-che-ge-wence's wife: "passing through a kitchen, where stood a good cooking stove, you entered a large room – at once a sitting and sleeping apartment – and you noticed around the walls, little chromos in tasteful frames made by the squaw" (8). [7] Davin objectifies the Aboriginal woman as "wife" and "squaw," she is nameless and represented as physically absent from the space. Literary spaces, in Davin's work, are occupied by women like Angelina, his Juliet, the model political figure in his Shakespearean adaptation, *The Fair Grit*, as well as the mythical Eos, a white Prairie goddess: "the reins // held in both hands" (14).

Davin's female archetype is reminiscent of Lady Susan Agnes Macdonald (Bernard), Sir John A. Macdonald's strong-willed, politically Conservative wife, to whom Davin dedicated *Eos – A Prairie Dream*. [Lady Macdonald, Canada's First Lady](#) travelled across western Canada and was an Executive of the Ottawa Orphans' House, demonstrating her care of the nation's parentless children (Canada. *Digital Collections*. "Canadian Women," 1 and Canada. *Library and Archives*. "Bernard." 1). Strategically placed as the antithesis of the named and mobile white female figure, Davin replaces Aboriginal women with a gendered colonial symbol, a monolithic figure of progress moving through the western territories bringing modernity, Christianity, and civilization through the hands of the nation's new mother (*Davin Report* 12). Davin exults in the Euro-Canadian women's mobility, fashioning her as emblematic of nation-building at the same time as the federal government, which employed Davin, prohibited the movement of Aboriginal women: "after 1885, the pass system was introduced and required Aboriginal Peoples to obtain a pass from a government employee before leaving the reserve. One rationale was that the system would limit the numbers of Aboriginal women 'of abandoned character' entering the towns" (Razack 130). The Canadian legislation anticipated the Pass Laws used in South Africa under [apartheid](#). The systematic form of racial discrimination was created by the South African National party, [a practice of separation that based itself on Canada's reservation system](#) (Krebs 1), which Davin played a crucial role in establishing.

In Copenhagen, July 1980, the Secretariat for the [World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women](#) stated that apartheid evolved in order for the white hierarchy to control every facet of the African members of the population (African National Congress 1). The most inhuman expression of the apartheid regime, as in Canada, was the policy of resettlement, "under which over two million people have been removed to remote, underdeveloped areas of the reserves" (3). [Michèle DuCharme](#), a descendant of Louis Riel, asserts that "the Métis in Saskatchewan, the Haida in Vancouver, the Cree at James Bay, like many other Native groups, have all been uprooted and relocated for the sake of white development, resources, and convenience" (3). DuCharme argues that with segregation, Canadian Aboriginals, "like South African Blacks, continue to live under the shadow of apartheidism, born from a fundamental economic motive" (3).

Davin's confinement of Aboriginal women in the restricted space as *other* and *invisible* resonates with the figure of Sycorax from Shakespeare's [The Tempest](#), who was brought by sailors from *Argier* (Africa). Prospero's treatment of Sycorax and her son Caliban

symbolizes the European colonizers' *othering* of non-Europeans to validate Prospero's possession of the island. Sycorax, in a symbolic move that was to take on a neocolonial life of its own, is manufactured as a witch: "Hast thou forgot // The foul witch" (1.2.256-7). She is, unwillingly, physically absent from the play. Sycorax is dispossessed from her land and represented without a voice. Shakespeare, thus emphatically configures Sycorax in a zone outside of that occupied by the civilized woman, Miranda. Davin exercises a similar gendered colonial methodology across the range of his writings that interconnect and make use of this crucial Shakespearean trope in which the lives of Aboriginal women are manipulated and subordinated.

[Kim Anderson](#), a Cree/Métis writer and educator, in her book *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood*, [8] agrees that "since contact with the Europeans, Native women have been trapped within a western dichotomous worldview, where everything is either good or bad; dark or light; pure or corrupt." A gendered and racist project that Anderson suggests was shaped around "the Euro-constructed Indigenous woman with her dark ways, her squalor and corruption makes the construction of whiteness all the more attractive" (105). Davin's precise omission of Aboriginal women, when represented critically, compared with *the civilized white woman*, embeds a "dichotomous worldview" and cements the physical boundaries *within* the women he represents in his writing. For instance, Angelina's "wealth of golden hair shower its largess of glory round" (17), which resembles Shakespeare's "fair maid," Juliet (2.2.61), a figure equivalent to Davin's Eos: "she rose and bared her milk-white arm, and drew // Me near her" (8). The egregious use of *white-ness* in Davin's imagery and its association with nation and wealth sets a racial and social hierarchy within gender, defining Canadian Aboriginal women as foreigners within their own bodies and country. "It is as 'feminine women'," observed Radhika Mohanram, "that white women are co-opted into imperial ventures as keepers of the imperial hearth" (Razack 14). Davin's eager imperialism and its association with motherhood is articulated in his desire to have Canada "tender to the Imperial mother our good offices in every possible way" (Canada. *Library Archives*. "Davin" 5).

The patriarchal composition of the "civilized" woman was key in the development of the Commonwealth and is reflected in the character Angelina, Davin's Juliet or *fair grit* — a title that defines her as both *white* and *political*. When Angelina tells George, her Romeo, "I'll be ready to start with you for that land of correct clergymen and pure politicians" (31), Davin annexes land, religion, and politics in an invader/settler language also found in *The Davin Report*. Angelina and George, in *The Fair Grit*, advance into the footlights (35) followed by Davin's Miltonic and Edenic allusions: "Nay, do not wonder that both hurled us to perdition" (35). Here, Angelina/Juliet assumes the authoritative and chastising role of first republican mother, and Davin, with the iconic collateral of Shakespeare, sets her mission in motion: "may you have every blessing, dear Angelina, and be the mother of a stalwart race" (34).

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### Republican Motherhood: "Civilizing" Canada's North-West

At this stage of the paper, I will examine another American colonial device used by Davin to foster Canadian activities in aggressive expansionism. In the essay "Morals, Manners, and the Republican Mother," Rosemarie Zagari emphasizes that the "republican motherhood affirmed that women had a profound influence on the political values of the American Republic" (192). The republican mother (a designation connecting a woman's body to her relationship to children and to nation) was spawned by the [Scottish Enlightenment](#), and played a prominent role in the promotion of historical and social theories in which the "family represented a primary transmitter of customs, habits, morals, and manners" (193-4). With this in mind, it is not surprising that Davin's Angelina/Juliet is of Scottish descent, "that race so strong ... so thrifty, and yet so generous and tender where they love; so full of purpose and power" (*The Fair Grit* 24). Angelina/Juliet is Davin's republican mother; she is defined within the national and colonial framework of Shakespeare and is groomed as the model maternal figure: she is a civilized Juliet who refuses the baseness of sexual rebellion, an obedient Juliet who is not Capulet's *disobedient wretch* but turns her fidelity instead to husband, father, nation, and purity.

In her essay, "In Between and Out of Place," Renisa Mawani avers that Canadian lawmakers were "deeply preoccupied with racial (im)purity" in the nineteenth-century (57). Mawani argues that "racial purity was often thought to depend on the vigilant policing of women's sexuality ... others preferred a less punitive approach, embracing the idea of importing 'respectable' white women from Britain" (64), an importation that displaced Aboriginal women outside of the space of "purity." Politicizing "purity" is akin to "civilizing" as referred to by Zagari who argues that late nineteenth-century women were "crucial to an understanding of the relationship between virtue and commerce ... [and] writers developed a concept of 'manners' that portrayed women as pivotal to the civilizing process" (195). Likewise, Davin writes a specific woman to play a central role in the civilizing and political schema when George/Romeo states "I take my politics from Angelina's eyes," to which Ronald replies, "better teachers than most men" (*The Fair Grit* 34). In his Shakespearean adaptation, Davin writes of a male hierarchy that envisages white women as civil educators; politics are written on Angelina's body when she is described as "a better teacher" (34). She is objectified, similar to the figure of Eos, as "beacons and transmitters" of national rhetoric (*Eos* 6), a rhetoric written by Davin while he was in Ottawa and subsequently promoted in his newspaper, *The Regina Leader*. [9] The representation of Eos, Davin's goddess figure, is referred to as a "Conservative mouthpiece" (Burns 4) and, I suggest, that Angelina/Juliet assumes the same political role. [10] Consider the passage when Eos is heard telling the poem's narrator that imperial dreams ...

Were wedded with a grasp for state affairs  
Which mates him with those mighty minds whose  
And patient wisdom nations found; great souls  
Whose monuments are continents, from whom  
Whole races drink their inspiration (*Eos* 18-19)

Davin portrays Eos, Angelina/Juliet, and “the civilized woman” as “beacons” transmitting white settler rationale that wed “imperial dreams” to “state affairs,” and “mate” them to “mighty minds.” In this explicit example of elite nationalism, it appears that Davin’s text stridently maps out a colonial campaign for eugenics. Although white women and Aboriginal women are placed in separate zones — one privileged and one not — *both* are manipulated by the embedded patriarchal superstructure, a hegemony that positioned the republican mother to represent nation while Aboriginal women, positioned as *other*, are removed from their children, land, and therefore nation.

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### Colonial Realities and Cultural Amnesia

Davin’s colonial realities ensured that Aboriginal women were without political agency and therefore lost to a cultural amnesia that characterizes transactions of power. Writ large in *The Davin Report* is the federal government’s “sacred duty” (11) to educate and civilize Indigenous Peoples; the reality outside of the colonial bracket, however, is the destruction of their culture through the excising of Aboriginal women’s identity, power, and their connection to the land while white mythologies of superiority and entitlement are imposed over the right to property and territory.

The goddess trope further demoralizes Aboriginal women by disengaging their presence in order to recommend the removal of Native children from the fraudulently represented “absent” indigenous mothers, to be adopted by white surrogates: “the plan now is to take young children, give them the care of a mother, and have them constantly in hand” (*Davin Report* 12). “The plan” or the eradication of Aboriginal motherhood and the [displacement](#) of Native children led to a cultural genocide of indigenous culture as part of the larger layer of Canada’s aggressive territorial expansionism in the name of Empire. The [Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#), [11] [“Looking Forward Looking Back,” Chapter 11](#), [12] verifies that in Canada “the practice of relocation was widespread” (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Relocation,” par. 11) and “in many cases, relocation separated Aboriginal people from their homelands and destroyed their ability to be economically self-sufficient. This loss of economic livelihood contributed to a decline in living standards, social and health problems, and a breakdown of political leadership” (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Relocation,” par. 9). It is evident, when *The Commission Report* under Table 11.1 [“Relocation Types: Reasons and Examples”](#) is reviewed, that each “reason and example” for relocation was for the government to acquire, and subsequently control the land (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Relocation.” par. 24):

Type of Relocation	Reasons	Examples from Chapter
Administrative	Carried out for the convenience of government and to make administration of services easier through centralization and/or amalgamation	- Mi'kmaq (Nova Scotia) - Hebronimiut (Labrador) - Sayisi Dene (Manitoba) - Yukon First Nations - Gwa'Sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw (British Columbia) - Mushuau Innu (Labrador)
	Addressing the perceived needs of Aboriginal people by moving them back to the land to encourage self-sufficiency or moving them away from negative influences of non-Aboriginal settlements	- Baffin Island Inuit to Devon Island - Keewatin Inuit: series of moves
Development	Land needed for agriculture	- Ojibwa (Ontario) - Métis of Ste. Madeleine (Manitoba)
	Land needed for urban growth	- Songhees (British Columbia)
	Land needed for hydro dam	- Cheslatta T'en construction (British Columbia) - Chemawawin Cree (Manitoba)

Métis activist and author Maria Campbell explains in *The Book of Jessica*: “I feel him [invader/settler] down deep inside, taking

things from women, from our people, taking things that we are supposed to give our babies. His way is 'power over' [and] it's like the matriarchies – what happened? They came into the matriarchies and took it all away, and suddenly we had nothing" (73). A government controlled method of "taking away" was embedded throughout the residential school systems that derived from *The Davin Report*. [Amnesty International](#) names Davin as "the architect" of a system that removed "Indigenous children from 'the influence of the wigwam' and [kept] them instead 'constantly within the circle of civilized conditions' ... eroding their sense of identity and driving a wedge between the children and their parents" ("Stolen" 13). In the article, "Prodigal Sons," [13](#) published in *The Regina Leader*, the voice of the mother, in her absence, is deafening:

On Sunday of last week three of the Indian boys, at the foolish, but, perhaps, natural instigation of their mothers, left the comforts of the Industrial School and returned to the semi starvation and rags of the ancestral tepee. But a very short experience of the husks of Indian life was more than sufficient, and they have since returned, humble and repentant .... There is little doubt that at first such occasional relapses may be looked for. But there is good hope that under the able direction of the experienced principal they will gradually cease and that the institution will accomplish all the good its establishment has in view. (4)

Prior to European contact, many Indigenous societies were matriarchal; women in the [Mohawk Nation](#), for example, were leaders in their homes and communities (Canada, *Historical Context* 1). Ruby Slipperjack (Ojibway) remembers her mother in the novel, *Honour the Sun*, as a centrifugal force in her family: "We tell old Indian legends with some hilarious mistakes. When we know them well enough, Mom tells us another and we keep repeating it again till we can tell it correctly. I like story time" (15).

The understanding is also spoken by Linda Hogan (Chickasaw):

This land is the house we have  
always lived in.  
The women,  
their bones are holding up the earth. (12)

The Canadian government, through the elimination of Aboriginal women from political and familial discourse, systematically dismantled women's role in the domestic space of the Nations – physically, legislatively, and culturally. Indigenous Peoples were "torn from our spiritual places of home," as [Beth Brant](#) (Degonwadonti) asserts in her book of essays, *Writing As Witness*: "having our ancestors names stolen and used to sell sports teams, automobiles, or articles of clothing; having our languages beaten out of us through residential school systems even while having our spirits defiled and blasphemed, our families torn apart by institutionalized violence and genocide; even after this long war, we still remain connected to our own" (19). In *The Davin Report*, Davin classifies Indigenous Peoples as being "without the higher functions of empire" (5); consequently, both his racist governmental policy recommendations and inaccurate literary and media portraits marginalized Aboriginal culture from the scene of the nation. [Kim Anderson](#) explains that "Indigenous systems that allocated power to women were incompatible with the kind of colonial power dynamics that would be necessary to maintain colonial power" (58).

Davin's literary and political work demonstrates how colonial language becomes, over time, hegemonic – the invaders believe they are the owners. Davin "argued that Canadians, speaking the tongue of Shakespeare, have inherited a whole wealth of English literature" (Koester 185). The language of possession is explicit in Davin's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, as George/Romeo states: "I suppose mine is the oldest family in the country" (7). The rhetorical question stakes a claim to consolidate family and nation bound within the body of Shakespeare. The ideological claim of "oldest family" instills a class-based hierarchy perpetuating the cultural amnesia that overlays original Aboriginal land ownership (7) and is represented in Tom Flanagan's book [First Nations? Second Thoughts](#), published in 2000. [14](#) The colonial-power language of "civilization," "terra nullius" (56), and "savagery" (113) is part of Flanagan's piecing together (4) of his historical account of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. He states that the resulting synthesis "captures the dominant trends of thought among those who now make and influence aboriginal policy" (4). Would that include Canada's current [Prime Minister, Stephen Harper](#)? Has Tom Flanagan spoken with Native women about Aboriginal Peoples' histories in Canada? Flanagan, like Davin, uses Shakespeare to couch the colonial rhetoric of "civilization" in an imperial language that is robust and active in the twenty-first-century as presented in the following passage:

In portraying the meeting of equals [Indigenous peoples and European invaders/settlers], the RCAP's [Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [15](#)] version of history implies that the eventual predominance of the European newcomers was due to evil intent and bad faith. But telling the story like this is like trying to stage *Romeo and Juliet* without the romance of the two star-crossed lovers, or *Hamlet* without the death of his father. It leaves out the main thing, namely the civilization gap between the Indians and Inuit, on the one hand, and the Europeans, on the other.

None of the aboriginal societies of Canada were civilized in the sense in which the term is used here (36). [16](#)

Here, Shakespeare is coded as "civilized" and Flanagan, like Davin, uses the colonial/state device of *othering* – in this case through reference to Shakespeare – to establish a racial supremacy (European) as "civilized" over nations in order to acquire territory. Flanagan does not represent Aboriginal women in his "historical" account of Native Peoples in Canada nor the impact of how the "head of state" (34) [Sir John A. Macdonald] called upon Davin to recommend an American residential school policy. In Flanagan's book, the enormity and brutal complexity of Canada's residential school system is reduced to one sentence (4).

In Davin's Shakespearean adaptation *The Fair Grit*, his characterization of a white male (George/Romeo) is in a position of authority and signals Davin's possession of the language, sanctioning him to create, through prose and Shakespeare, racist mythologies as legislated policy. The power structure is enacted in Canadian laws and policies (as with *The Davin Report*) when

Aboriginal women, as “abstractions from history” (Razack 126), are not visible in colonial logic. Aboriginal women are transposed into the racial *other*; a move that simultaneously affirms Euro-Canadian whiteness, legislated policy, and its association with the possession of indigenous territories.

The language of possession is also one of violence. Razack remembers Pamela George, a woman of the Saulteaux (Ojibway) Nation and a mother of two young children. George was brutally murdered by two white men on April 17, 1995; her murder and “the enormity of what was done to her remained largely unacknowledged in the law” (18). How can a woman’s murder be unacknowledged in the law? Razack argues that Steven Kummerfield and Alex Ternowetsky (126) “two white men ... [were] enacting a quite specific violence perpetrated on Aboriginal bodies throughout Canada’s history, a colonial violence that has not only enabled white settlers to secure the land *but to come to know themselves as entitled to it*” (129). Tragically, in *The Davin Report*, “the fruit” that Davin suggests the Empire should wait upon (10), in the twenty-first-century, turns out to be Aboriginal women, whom Amnesty International confirms to be the most at risk of violence, poverty, and the most marginalized of all Canadians (“Stolen” 19-21).

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### Canada’s Manifest Destiny and Shakespeare

In 1876, the same year Davin wrote *The Fair Grit*, the Canadian federal government “tackled the definition of ‘Indian-ness’” (Razack 55). The Euro-Canadian hierarchy consolidated all existing “Indian” legislation into The Indian Act; the objective of the Act was to assimilate and civilize the Indigenous people of Canada (Razack 55-6). Aboriginal Peoples categorized as “Indians,” since European contact, are actually members of multiple Aboriginal Nations, such as [Cree](#), [Mi’kmaq](#), [Ojibway](#), and [Gitksan](#) Nations. Canadian Aboriginal peoples include First Nations (Status and Non Status), Métis, and Inuit peoples (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Introduction,” par. 11).

Razack explains that when all federal Indian laws and treaties were merged into one statute under The Indian Act, “blood quantum remained central to the definition of Indian-ness ... [and] tellingly, the new legislation linked blood with real property and citizenship” (55-56). Blood quantum is terminology used to identify the total percentage of blood that is Indigenous due to bloodline and is used by governments to divide and conquer Aboriginal Peoples by instilling competing concepts of authentic aboriginality. The colonial terminology serves to justify the federal government’s possession of Canadian Aboriginal land (Lawrence 56). [The Indian Act \[17\]](#) “sets out a complex system for registering Indians ... including [blood quantum](#) requirements, kinship, style of life, and membership in a charter group” [\[18\]](#) (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Introduction,” par. 11).

Blood was/is used by the State to define race; however, blood is also gendered in law. Razack maintains that “male blood became necessary for one to be an ‘Indian’ in law” (56); subsequently, the legislation positioned the Indigenous female body outside her land and her identity. The Government of Canada continues to wield its power through bureaucracies that control an Aboriginal person’s identity and land, and consequently “precludes any Indian control over the decision-making process” [\[19\]](#) (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Introduction,” par. 11). This agenda follows Davin’s recommendation in his Report “that it [land] be absolutely under the immediate direction and control of the Government” (17).

The white invader/settler imported a patrilineal system, a doctrine that effectively overwrote traditional matriarchies and determined Indigenous kinship and relations in Canada. For example, to be defined and decided “Indian,” Mawani imparts “was ... through a person’s relationship with a Native man ... [and] any woman who is married to such a person.” Mawani argues that the “inclusion of non-Native women and the exclusion of Native women points to the connections between racism and patriarchy, which underpinned the state’s racial distinctions” (56), a coupling that secures the federal government’s efforts to diminish Aboriginal women’s power and control of property. Pushing back at the federal government’s objective to disempower Indigenous women, Ojibway writer Lenore Keeshig-Tobias’s *found poem* in *A Gathering of Spirit* turns parts of The Indian Act into a feminist challenge:

Fathers brothers uncles  
Chiefs warriors politicians  
Where are the Women

“out there” you point  
“somewhere” (124)

The importance of property and its relationship to Canadian Aboriginals is evident in *The Davin Report*. Davin acknowledges that he was “indebted” to the Honourable James McKay, Indian Commissioner (*Davin Report* 9), a key figure who also negotiated, translated, and signed Treaty No. 6 in 1876 (the same year *The Fair Grit* was published). [Treaty No. 6](#) states that the territory “opens up for settlement, immigration and such other purposes as to Her Majesty may seem meet, a tract of country bounded and described as hereinafter mentioned, and to obtain the consent thereto of Her Indian subjects inhabiting the said tract” (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. “Treaty No. 6,” par. 3). Comparably, in his Report, Davin eagerly points out that the land “would be a great source of economy to the Government in its maintenance” (16) while “barring the Indians,” as his character George/Romeo states in *The Fair Grit* (7). It is not incongruous then, that Davin’s Shakespearean adaptation was entered as a publication according to the Act of parliament of Canada, through the office of the Minister of Agriculture – a political network connecting Shakespearean adaptation, territory in Canada, and women. This connection is extended by Anderson who explains that Native women “have historically been equated with the land. The Euro-constructed image of Native women, therefore, mirrors western

attitudes towards the earth. Sadly, this relationship has typically developed within the context of control, conquest, possession and exploitation" (100).

*The Davin Report* is laden with the rhetoric of the benefits of the land: "the soil is rich;" "the land is wonderfully fertile;" "[the] finest grazing soil in the world;" and "it leaves a good deal of fair land." These are just a few of the recurrent images of territory used by Davin in his recommendation to partition Aboriginal families from it: "the advantages of Qu'Appelle [Saskatchewan] should, however, be utilized ... either on the contract system, or by means of a boarding school, immediately controlled by the Government" (13-14). *The Davin Report* systematically advocated a policy in which the government not only gains control over Aboriginal Peoples in the institutions that "educate" them, but also the land upon which they live.

Why does Davin reference [Qu'Appelle](#) in his Report, as well as in *Eos – A Prairie Dream*? The location is central to Canadian history with its association to the Aboriginal leaders Louis Riel and [Mistahimaskwa \(Big Bear\)](#) whom Davin, in *The Report*, calls a "malcontent" remarking that "we have warlike and excited refugees in our territory. A large statesmanlike policy, with bearings on immediate and remote issues, cannot be entered on too earnestly or too soon" (10). [20] Davin's expression "our territory" is a rhetorical tactic of acquisition and possession. Another candid articulation of colonial ownership, at a legislative level, is sounded at the trial of Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear), as recorded in the October 1, 1885 issue of *The Regina Leader*. [21] The article relates that during his trial Big Bear "used such language as, 'when we owned the country' and ... 'who was to protect his people' ... Judge Richardson in sentencing him told him that they never owned the land that it belonged to the Queen, who allowed them to use it, that when she wanted to make other use of it She called them to-gether through her officers" (4).

The ownership of [Qu'Appelle](#), located in Canada's North-West, was of particular interest to Sir John A. Macdonald for its strategic western location and its accessibility via the Canadian Pacific Railway, as outlined in John G. Bourinot's [Canada Under British Rule 1790-1900](#):

Happily for the rapid transport of the troops the Canadian Pacific Railway was so far advanced that ... it afforded a continuous line of communication from Montreal to Qu'Appelle. The railway formed the base from which three military expeditions could be dispatched to the most important points of the Saskatchewan country ... for the purpose of recapturing Fort Pitt and attacking the rebellious Indians under Big Bear. (135)

The railway was foundational to Canadian territorial and military expansionism and from 1881 to 1882, Davin served as the secretary to the Royal Commission on the Pacific Railway. In the inaugural 1883 issue of *The Regina Leader*, [22] Davin launched the "principles on which the paper will be conducted," in which he supports openly "the government of Sir John Macdonald." In his "Introductory," Davin champions the government and the railway remarking that "it would deserve the gratitude of all if for no other reason than giving us the C.P.R. which has called the North-West ... a civilized region into being" (2). Evidence of Macdonald's support of *The Regina Leader* is identified in the introduction to Ken Mitchell's play *Davin: the Politician*. C.B. Koester [23] relates that Davin "chose Regina, the capital of the North-West Territories, and with financial assistance from the CPR, the Conservative party and the townsite commissioners he began publishing *The Regina* on 1 March 1883" and "Macdonald helped keep *The Leader* alive, in the interests of the Conservative party" (6-7). Macdonald's support and the country's consequential economic interest in the North-West, fuelled *The Regina Leader's* propagandistic coverage of "progress," "civilization," and "settlement," a relationship between government and media that prompts immediate questioning of the political objectives that surround the coverage of Louis Riel's trial and Davin's racist representation of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada.

Davin's praise for Washington's ironically titled "Peace Commission" in his Report (1) neglects to include America's violent removal of the [Cherokee Nation's People](#) from their fertile and productive Georgian land. The [Indian Removal Act](#) (1814-1824) led to the *Trail of Tears*, upon which over 4,000 Cherokee people perished and more than 46,000 Native Americans were displaced: "most members of the five southeastern Nations had been relocated west, opening 25 million acres of land to white settlement and to slavery" (PBS 5). In his Report, Davin relates that "the experience of the United States is the same as our own as far as the adult Indian is concerned" (2). *The Davin Report's* marginalization of Indigenous Peoples for the acquisition of land parallels the American ideology of Manifest Destiny that was a major cause of the poverty, sickness, displacement, and starvation they suffered. The actions were controlled by the Canadian government through policy and strategically disguised in the hyperbole of a newspaper's theatrical sensationalism, as well as romanticized in play and poetry, as evident in *Eos – A Prairie Dream*:

The beautiful wooded vales of the Qu'Appelle,  
Saskatchewan, and streams subsidiary.  
The Indian's doom should touch your heart. I've seen  
Types disappear before. But kindness  
On dying races, as on dying men  
Should wait, and Canada may well be proud  
And England, too, of that just spirit which  
Has rule her councils; these are things the gods  
Do not forget (27).

Here, Davin works on multiple levels. His portrait of Aboriginal Peoples is past tense, signifying that "the Indian's doom" is assured. His tone is paternalistic and patronizing (similar to Riel's interview): "I've seen // types disappear before," and in a single stanza he partners Canada, England, and God, positioning a trinity that "rules." Similarly, in *The Report*, Davin incorporates providential

tropes. For instance, the quote from Isaiah 51:1 evokes the imperialist machinery operating in the book of Isaiah and the nation-building rhetoric that was/is common in Britain, the United States, and Canada: "we have only to look to the rock whence we were hewn" (11). The rock, here, alludes to Britain and links the phrase from the preceding quote "gods do not forget" to elite cultural markers, imperial ideologies, and institutionalized memory.

Davin also relied on the cultural markers of romanticism that encompassed the nostalgia of Shakespeare, Providence, and Britain [24] as documented in *The Leader* article, "The Bible and Shakespeare." [25] Davin relates that "a saluted woman, now in Heaven, often said to the writer, 'There is a beautiful Gospel in Shakespeare,' and the number of parallels in the Great National Dramatists with Bible truths is striking" (4). The article compares *King Richard III* (3.4.320) and *All's Well That Ends Well* (4.3) to the Books of Isaiah (61:3) and John (16:20). A distillation of Davin's imperial rhetoric is neatly bound in this article and delivered by "a saluted woman" (read "civilized") as a purveyor of the gospel of Shakespeare and how it strikes national "truths" (4).

I am reminded of another cultural marker, another landscape of nineteenth-century romanticism; in this instance, the work is by the Canadian painter [Frederick Arthur Verner](#), who made Canada's west his primary study. Verner, who resided in Guelph, Ontario, made several trips to the North-West between 1870 and 1892; the same period Davin would have been in Saskatchewan. During his 1873 excursion, Verner documented, with a painting, the signing of the North-West Angle Treaty No. 3 "which determined for Canada the disposition of 55,000 critical square miles and structured the settlement of the Canadian West" (Murray 22). Verner was also commissioned to paint Sir John A. Macdonald's portrait (c. 1890), purchased by the [National Gallery of Canada](#) in 1907 (Murray 98). Art, like literature, is a cultural medium through which power is transacted. The painting, *Ojibway Indian Encampment*, [26] is from a series of sketches Verner produced during the same period. The work depicts four Native men at a camp leisurely partaking in a hand game. Verner originally painted five figures in the work and upon a closer reading of the painting, the individual, who was painted over, still stands to the left of the "visible" group. Verner attempted to erase the figure "having been more satisfied with the four figure composition." [27] The figure, the palimpsest, to the left and beneath the foliage is described as "a ghostly outline." [28] With the stroke of his brush, Verner emblemizes a male authority that privileges him to "authenticate" *who* is present and *who* is absent from the historical record, an action allegorical to this paper. However, the historical record is organic; the canvas, like history retains the change. The figure is present, re-emerging, re-engaging and I ask the question: Is the figure a woman?



"Ojibway Indian Encampment," by Frederick Arthur Verner, 1873.  
[Macdonald Stewart Art Centre](#), Guelph, Ontario

My intention with this paper is to interrogate the agendas *painted* over by cultural production, like art, like poetry, like Davin, like Shakespeare. History is overlaid in transactions of power; cultural ideologies reproduced through, in the case of this essay, Davin's nineteenth-century compositions, a power exercised by Verner who, it is suggested, may have used "white women" to represent Native women as "models" for his landscaped-narratives (Murray 73). [29] Davin's compositional control is comparable to Verner's colonial male gaze inscribing a national narrative, a campaign that reads: *Canada's North-West as Picturesque, Ready for Settlement*, and, as a description of the painting relates "tranquil depictions of humankind in noble harmony with nature." [30] In his critical essay, Canadian poet Robert Kroetsch reviews *The Last Buffalo: The Story of Frederick Arthur Verner, Painter of the Canadian West*, and suggests that for Verner, "there was no violence in the destruction of the buffalo ... he pictures the Indians as domesticated people, and in his pictures they are strangely without horses. It is not his concern to recognize the Prairie Indians'

traditions of religion and art and warfare and the hunt" (38). The "tranquil depiction" is politically charged and must be studied as constructed imagery loaded with agendas that manipulate the perception of the North-West, imagery managed to control and facilitate the purchasing power of European emigrants to buy land and invade western Canada, while Aboriginal Peoples' resistance to their culture's destruction, and women's roles in that resistance, was underway.

Davin's propaganda, therefore, worked to direct public perception away from any information surrounding Indigenous Peoples' resistance to colonization – resorting, at times, to bullying other newspapers that reported "trouble" in the North-West. [31] Take into account the August 23rd, 1883 article that berates *The Globe* reporting on *The Edmonton Bulletin's* article:

The writer in the *Bulletin* says there is trouble ... and proceeds by giving fictitious causes... [that] distrust ... has kept Big Bear's band out of the treaty ... he wanted better terms ... and he said, 'you are taking my land. This land will be of great value to the whites. You are not giving me nearly enough for it.' *The Bulletin* is evidently a consistent journal. Having made a tissue (sic) of unfounded statements with the view of creating alarm, it says: 'These troubles are not likely to reach very serious dimensions.' Indeed they are not, because they are the creation of *The Bulletin's* imagination. (*The Regina Leader*. "[The Globe on the Indian Department](#)" 2).

Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear's) resistance to invaders/settlers through his declaration that "you are taking my land," once again, resonates in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* and Caliban's claim against Prospero: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother // Which thou tak'st from me" (1.2.333). Here, Prospero, a European colonist, takes both island and mother. In a similar gesture, *The Regina Leader's* editorial coverage of the Aboriginal leader's words are usurped and turned to read as "unfounded." [32]

Louis Owens (Choctaw/Cherokee/Irish), in his essay "Other Destinies, Other Plots: An Introduction to Indian Novels," suggests that "privileging supports the contention that language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conception of 'truth,' 'order,' and 'reality' become established" (8). The conception of "order" is explicated in Davin's *Regina Leader* article on September 6, 1883, "[Prospect of the North-West and CPR Projections.](#)" where a quote from Shakespeare is applied to draw an imperial allusion to the taking of land as the government's "pound of flesh." [33]

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### Riel, Shakespeare, and *The Regina Leader*

Another "reality" was the pouring in: settlers were arriving into the Canadian prairies in the early 1800s. English women were arriving with the establishment of the [Red River Settlement](#). Christine Welsh's personal essay documents her journey to reclaim her aboriginal heritage, and relates how her "great-grandparents were among those first Métis families from Red River who set up camp down on the flats beside Mission Lake" (56). In "Women in the Shadows: Reclaiming a Métis Heritage," Welsh explains that "white women began to go west, and it soon became fashionable for the traders to legally marry white women and to try to sever their ties with their Native country wives. In the forefront of this trend was [Sir George Simpson](#), Governor of Rupert's Land" (59-60). Welsh recounts her memory of finding the history of Margaret Taylor, a mixed blood woman who bore Simpson two children and when he married his English cousin, Taylor was abandoned, "her voice is not heard in the historical record" (60). Simpson's betrayal, Welsh asserts, "signalled the widespread rejection of Native women as marriage partners by 'men of station' ... and reflected the increasing racial and social prejudice against Native women" (60). Welsh's great-great-great grandmother, Margaret Taylor, died in December 1885, "a few weeks after the hanging of Louis Riel, [when] the world that she and other Métis women had known had changed irrevocably. Rupert's Land had become part of the emerging Canadian nation and immigrants from eastern Canada and Europe were pouring into the old North-West to lay claim to homestead on land that had been the home of the Indian and Métis people for generations" (64).

Davin's explicit inclusion of the "civilized woman" (12), which perpetuates the racial and social prejudice against Native women in his residential school report, is noted as being "much indebted" (9) to the [Archbishop Alexandre Antonin Taché](#). In the *Sketch of the North-West of America*, Taché, who came to the North-West "in the hope of Christianizing and civilizing the Indians" (Dorge 1), points out that the "influence of civilized women has issued in superior characteristics in one portion of the native population" and "we must catch him very young" (*Davin Report* 12). Davin, supported by the religious influences of Taché, perpetuated the racial and social prejudice against Native women by politically animating the "civilized women" as having "superior" characteristics.

At the time, Davin and Taché were also associated with the leader of the Métis Rebellion, [Louis Riel](#). Taché's connection to Riel is complicated by a reference that transforms their historical bond into a microcosm of the tenuous relationship between the federal government and Canada's Indigenous Peoples. Riel referred to Taché as both a "father" and a thief at his trial:

I have seen him surrounded by his great property, the property of a widow, whose road was passing near. He bought the land around, and took that way to try and get her property at a cheap price .... When you speak of such persons as Archbishop Taché, you ought to say that he made a mistake, not that he committed robbery. I say that we have been patient a long time, and when we see that mild words only serve as covers for great ones to do wrong, it is time when we are justified in saying that robbery is robbery everywhere, and the guilty ones are bound by the force of public opinion to take notice of it. ([Riel](#) 5)

It is my objective, with this paper, to take notice of the "mild words [that] serve as covers for great ones to do wrong" (Riel 5). Consequently, it is necessary to evaluate critically Davin's interview with Riel in context of his *Regina Leader* editorials, his use of Shakespeare, and his theatrical rhetorical devices that mediate the historical documentation, as he declares in his July 9, 1885

introduction to *The Regina Leader's* coverage of Riel's trial: "Regina is about to be the theatre of one of the most interesting events which have ever taken place in Canada – a state trial" (2). [34] Davin interviewed Riel the night before his execution on November 19, 1885, one year after he wrote *Eos – A Prairie Dream*, a book of poetry that rhetorically foresees the decimation of Indigenous Peoples in Canada: "even races pass away // new types appear" (21).

Initially, Davin was unable to gain access to Riel but, as he reflects in his *Regina Leader* article, he "revolved various schemes" and "enlisted on my side fair Saphronica" whom Davin describes as a "young lady of undoubted charms and resolute will" (Saphronica could be a sub-anagram for Katherine Simpson Hayes, a journalist working at Davin's newspaper who became his lover). Davin's remark that "great things had been done by means of the fair sex" and his decision to "let her represent *The Leader*" discloses his manipulation and contracting of women as a *means* to access Aboriginal culture (4). Even though Davin described Saphronica as "willing," she "utterly failed" and Davin resorted to religion by impersonating a priest (4). The guise gains Davin power over the Aboriginal leader's last words. Symbolically, the fraudulent means-to-an-end disguise used by Davin to get the Riel interview represents the covert tactics used to mediate the voices of Native culture. Davin's self-serving prose and rhetorical stylistic devices marginalize Riel; as well, the article's narrative-frame leans toward parody, raising the question of Davin's political objectives in his representation of Riel's character (see *The Regina Leader* article November 19, 1885, "[Interview with Riel: His parting Message](#)"). [35] What Davin omits from the Métis leader's "parting message to mankind" are Riel's remarks to the Crown that "Yes, you are the pioneers of civilization, the whites are pioneers of civilization, but they bring among the Indians demoralization" (Riel 4).

Violent acts of "civilization" perpetrated against Native women are represented in the October 29, 1885 issue of *The Regina Leader* newspaper. [36] Days before his execution, Riel wrote a letter describing his hopes for the future of Métis women. In response to Riel's positive prophesy for the Métis people, *The Regina Leader* reported that the gaoler "approached his [Riel's] cell and ... told the rebel chief that his glory and renown had 'melted into thin air,' and that his ideas [were] but... the baseless fabric of a dream" (4). *The Leader's* direct reference to *The Tempest*, openly positions Riel as the figure of Caliban, and reconstructs, in a Regina prison, the Shakespearean scene of Prospero speaking of "that foul conspiracy" by "Caliban and his confederates" (4.1.139-152). Davin's newspaper coverage then moves into a Shakespearean allusion to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in connection with Aboriginal women:

The latter would be surprised as Titania, when she found she had been kissing an ass. In fact, for the half-breeds, things would go on like sixty – three times better than ever. The fair offspring of Union Jack with Indian women would be the first to experience the change. (4)

*The Leader's* violent response to Riel's promise for change is a brutal transaction of power. The horrific passage objectifies and advocates the sexual exploitation of Native women. The Union Jack figure stands in as male domination over women's bodies and represents a national symbol (Britain and Canada) that steals children, land, culture, dignity, and power. The column continues and fortifies the racist objective to take children away from Aboriginal women and to "settle down" to "civilized life," not as Métis but as "fair" children.

The progress of the half-breed women would work an epoch in this era of reformation. Not an accidental iota would thwart the royal march of the ladies. But also as the vanquished there would be no more skedaddling over the prairies for the wild children of the buffalo hunters. They should settle down to civilized life ... good loyal citizens. So much for Riel's wonderful prophesy. (4)

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### Nicholas Flood Davin and Aboriginal Women in Canada

In the final section of my paper, I will examine a key issue: What was Davin's motivation with his 1895 motion in the Canadian House of Commons to enfranchise women? Where do Aboriginal women fit into Davin's "ideal" as political agents? At the time *The Davin Report* was submitted (1879), Aboriginal women were already subjugated by the 1857 legislation that "women's status would be determined by the choices made by her husband and father. A second law passed in 1869, stripped women of their Indigenous status and their place in their community if they married a man from another community, even if he was also Indigenous. In addition, children born to an Indigenous woman who married a non-Indigenous man would also be denied status" ("Stolen" 12-13), Canadian legislation that once again preceded South African [apartheid policies](#) (African National Congress 4).

Davin's declaration that Aboriginal men are "incapable of embracing the ideas of a nation – of a national type of man – in which it should be their ambition to be merged and lost" (*Davin Report* 11), not only situates Canadian politics out of reach to Aboriginal men, but renders it absolutely unattainable to Aboriginal women by effacing their political voice. In Native cultures "every individual filled a particular role and had a specific purpose within the community," explains Joyce Courchene while representing the Indigenous Women's Collective of Manitoba before the [Royal Commission](#). Courchene describes that "life [prior to first contact] unfolded with much harmony. Since European contact, our traditions, dignity and self-respect have been systematically taken away from us" (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. "RCAP: Women's Perspective," par. 9).

Davin was not interested in helping Aboriginal women regain their place as citizens or in allowing them to participate in Canadian politics. Sarah Carter documents "the important role that stereotypical representations of Aboriginal women played in maintaining the spatial and symbolic boundaries between settlers and Natives" (Razack 130). A critical path of this essay is to follow how Davin interwove British institutions/ideologies, such as Shakespeare, into a Canadian nationalist structure to create literary, social, and political models of power. In *The Fair Grit*, Davin fortifies the spatial and symbolic boundaries as he models the type of woman he

wants involved in the nation's political arena: Angelina, portrayed as a *wiser* Juliet, is a female prototype through Shakespeare's ideological affiliation with Empire. The association with the British Empire is represented in Angelina/Juliet's alliance with [The Family Compact](#) when she marries George/Romeo, the Conservative (Davin was also a Conservative MP for Assiniboia West, 1887-1900). The Family Compact was a ruling oligarchy that dominated Upper Canada's decision-making process, part of an elite Canadian social and political hierarchy on a national level. The group welcomed British immigration and idealized British institutions (Mills 1). It is likely that [Katherine Simpson Hayes](#)'s feminism played a role in influencing Davin's motion to enfranchise women. However, unlike Davin's Juliet, "Kate" never did submit, nor did she marry him.

An excerpt from the essay, "First Women" from editor Alison Prentice's book *Canadian Women: A History*, is found in *The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* and delineates that "what was observed by European settlers was the power Aboriginal women enjoyed in the areas of family life and marriage, politics and decision making, and the ceremonial life of their people" (Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. "Women's Perspective," par. 22). However, "it has been noted that the Jesuits, steeped in a culture of patriarchy, complained about the lack of male control over Aboriginal women and set out to change that relationship" (See Canada. *Indian and Northern Affairs*. "[Women's Perspective: Historical Position and Role of Aboriginal Women](#)").

*The Davin Report*, as well as Davin's other works, actively "set out to change that relationship." Government policies and national propaganda led to the systemic dismantling of women's central role in social, economic, and political structures, a tearing apart of familial relationships in order to capitalize on, and seize control of, Indigenous peoples' land. Aboriginal women in Canada, therefore, were represented as invisible from land, family, nation, and ultimately from Canadian history. Invisible is a dangerous location for Aboriginal women, as tragically evidenced in such locations as Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, where an appalling number of Aboriginal women have disappeared. As Maggie de Vries relates in *Missing Sarah*, a memoir of her sister who disappeared on April 14, 1998 and whose DNA was found, along with the DNA of other missing women, on a Port Coquitlam property: "Women were dying. We knew it. We cried out for help" (227). Kukdoorka Terri Brown, the President of the [Native Women's Association of Canada](#) (an organization that represents First Nations and Métis women) indicated that over fifty percent of the women missing were from Aboriginal ancestry (Brown 2). Another report indicates "that as many as 60% of the missing women involved in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside investigation may be Aboriginal" (Cultural Memory Group, 207). As of May 25, 2005, [Robert William Pickton](#), the owner of the property, faced 27 charges of first-degree murder (CBC 1).

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) reported that "a significant number" of women had been missing from the same area since 1978. Two decades later, with 31 women reported missing, detectives reviewed the file when a woman "who was not a prostitute" was attacked but managed to escape. Kim Rossmo, a former detective and geographic profiler, claimed that disappearances from the neighborhood were normal (CBC 2), a "normal" that represents the racism built into the civil structures, ideologies, and institutions of "protection." The Cultural Memory Group, [37] in their work to document over 30 memorials in Canada dedicated to women murdered by men, explains that "Aboriginal women have undoubtedly been murdered in disproportionate numbers throughout the violent history of colonization in Canada [but] it is a subject that has received little attention for most of that history" (205).

The naturalization of women disappearing from Canadian urban landscapes is pondered by de Vries: "it seems to me impossible that more than sixty women could vanish from a small area of Vancouver without anyone seeing or knowing anything" (219). The Native Women's Association of Canada estimates that over the past 30 years, 500 Aboriginal women have gone missing in Canada: "most are still unaccounted for" (D'Entremont 1). The historical roots of this reality can be traced to Davin's imposition of a social hierarchy based on class and race within gender that makes it possible, when a marginalized group is pressed so far into a liminal region, that their *invisibleness* is naturalized whether in Vancouver's toughest neighbourhood or in Canadian public policy.

The ramifications of the massive discrimination against Aboriginal Peoples in Canada that was written in Nicholas Flood Davin's paper *The Regina Leader*, *The Davin Report*, and the literature he produced during an eight-year period (1876-1884) contributed to the systemic racism that Canadian Aboriginal women continue to endure. As shown by Amnesty International, "fundamental measures that could help reduce the risk of violence to Indigenous women remain unimplemented. This is only one example of the way Canadian authorities have failed in their responsibility to protect the rights of Indigenous women in Canada" ("Stolen" 3). The writers of [Remembering Women Murdered by Men: Memorials across Canada](#) suggest that "two themes emerge in the literature on murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. The first is the impact on Aboriginal women of the social disruption in Aboriginal communities and the second is the invisibility and marginalization of Aboriginal women in this country – a tribute to the racism and classism that too often continues to define who is important in Canadian society" (Cultural Memory Group 205). Ongoing racism manifests in the lack of federal sponsorship to help support communities to manage the damage the government instigated and perpetuated. Challenging the lack of support, on March 22, 2004, the Native Women's Association of Canada [NWAC] made an effort to raise awareness, funding, and education to "end the silence surrounding Aboriginal women and violence" (208) by forming The Sister Spirit Campaign. The campaign called upon the Canadian "federal government to establish a \$10 million fund to support research and education related to violence against Aboriginal women" (208-9). The campaign generated interest and a number of reports such as one by Amnesty International; however, "the federal government ... rejected NWAC's request for funding for research and education around the issue of violence against Aboriginal women" (Cultural Memory Group 209).

How then are women who are placed in the liminal regions of policy and society made visible? Razack suggests that “to denaturalize or unmap spaces ... we begin by exploring space as a social product, uncovering how bodies are produced in spaces and how spaces produce bodies. This, in turn, entails an interrogation of how subjects come to know themselves in and through space and within multiple systems of domination” (17). We must begin by denaturalizing assumptions of equality and progress within gender by (re)considering the embedded hierarchies and the constructed stories and agendas that make the assumptions believable. Anderson emphasizes the importance of contributing to the dialogue that will “add to an evolving scholarly and popular body of work that is naming the poisons that have infiltrated Native womanhood, documenting Native female paths of resistance and defining a positive Native female identity” (17).

Fundamental in Native playwright/director [Yvette Nolan](#)'s work is to document paths of resistance and to define positive Native identity. Nolan also acknowledges the deep cultural influence of Shakespeare in her work and how she uses sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century plays to open present day spaces for Aboriginal voices and stories to be seen and heard. Shakespeare is “another tool to use in terms of looking at the world,” Nolan remarked in her interview for the Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP). [38] In contrast, Davin used Shakespeare as an ideology that concealed “the real nature of social relations to justify and perpetuate social dominance” (Ermine 102), a “social dominance” that Davin used in an attempt to mute the voices of Aboriginal peoples, specifically targeting Native women and relegating their lives to the margins. [39] Alternatively, as an example, Nolan, with co-director and co-adaptor Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon, through the process of the adaptation of *Julius Caesar*, in *The Death of a Chief*, writes back against the ideologies Davin used to disempower Native peoples. Working with her theatre company [Native Earth Performing Arts Inc.](#) (NEPA) in Toronto, Canada, she questions leadership and community and uses Shakespeare to scrutinize stories, to address Canadian history that resides below the surface, and while fiercely political, she strives to (re)empower the lives and voices of Aboriginal Peoples.



Monique Mojica as Julius Caesar in Native Earth's production of Yvette Nolan and Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon's adaptation [The Death of a Chief](#).

Davin also adapted text from *Julius Caesar* (3.2) in his *Regina Leader* editorial when commenting on a statue unveiling of his political rival, George Brown, leader of The Grits (later the Liberal party). [40] Brown, was one of the three who formed [The Great Coalition](#) in 1864 which could have inspired Davin to write, a decade later, *The Fair Grit*. Ironically, both Davin and Nolan utilize the same passage [41] from the Shakespearean tragedy *Julius Caesar* to evaluate critically their Nations' government and leadership: “the evil that men do lives after them // the good is oft interred with the bones” (JC 3.2). Both texts are available on-line, via the Canadian Adaptation of Shakespeare Project (CASP) site, to allow a comparative study.

Davin's work with Shakespeare drew upon its associative nostalgic, elitist, and empire-building ideologies to claim and settle Canada's North-West in the name of progress, civilization, and capitalism – a literary association that builds walls. Nolan's work, on the other hand, deconstructs the walls built by the same ideologies and opens their potential to better understand how lives can be improved. Nicholas Flood Davin loved Shakespeare, so too, does Yvette Nolan and between them pulls the palpable elasticity of adaptation, from injustice to the promise of a more equitable world.

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## Conclusion

Shakespeare's constructions of women transmit gendered ideologies of the shrew, wretch, witch, whore, goddess, fair maid, mother, and subsequently entrench them into cultural nomenclatures that, through adaptation, can be used to promote or disrupt

political agendas.

Davin's Shakespearean adaptation, *The Fair Grit* (which was produced as a musical adaptation in 1978 by [Dora Mavor Moore](#) – see the [CASP database](#) for production records), presents a model woman under the guise of territorial expansionism: a white goddess whose smile “wreathes her snowy chin with subtle charms” (7). Angelina, as Juliet tells her Romeo, “may the union between your honest father and the party of purity be symbolical of ours” (35), a statement that conflates Canadian politics with Shakespearean drama. Thus, Davin's Juliet represents the marriage between Shakespeare and government policy; she does not perish but carries forward the function of Canadian nation-building as the civilized woman, a function of empire that also carries forward “the history of dispossession and marginalization of Indigenous peoples and the present reality of racism in Canadian society” (“Stolen” 67).

Davin's “view that politics pervades all aspects of life and that literature and politics could not be disassociated” ([Fischlin](#), par. 2) reinforces how government policy is coupled with literary transactions of power, including Shakespeare's ideological authority. However, as author [Thomas King](#) (Cherokee/Greek) suggests in *The Truth about Stories*, “if we change the stories we live by, quite possibly we change our lives” (153). But to change the stories, we must first come to know them. Therefore, by interrogating Shakespeare and adaptations as literary and political vehicles that promulgate nationalist agendas, it is possible to uncover how and why Canadian women have been deeply marginalized by, and co-opted into, racist policies. Caffyn Kelley in her powerful essay “Creating Memory, Contesting History” documents the murder of Helen Betty Osborne, a nineteen-year-old Cree woman. Kelley questions her role as a white woman, an activist, and a feminist, by asking “who established this distance” between myself and Helen Betty Osborne? (9). In the journey to answer the question, Kelley relates that “I have had to confront the issue of white racial identity. I have had to acknowledge the way it runs through the structures of culture and memory, nature and history, with which I have to work. ‘How does a system bent upon our ultimate destruction make the unacceptable gradually tolerable?’” (11). [\[42\]](#) I, like Kelley, am sick of forgetting (7). And so, I question the silences and the absences present in how culture, memory, nature, and history are built, questioning as a form of social resistance, a re-emergence, a re-engagement found in Connie Fife's poem:

resistance is every woman who  
has ever considered taking up  
arms writing a story leaving the abuse  
saving her children or saving herself  
she is everyone who dares  
to stage a revolution complete a novel  
be loved or change the world  
resistance walks across a landscape  
of fire accompanied by her daughters  
perseverance and determination. (218)

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## Notes

\* I am indebted to my Faculty Advisor, Dr. Daniel Fischlin, at the University of Guelph, for his encouragement, guidance, and “maniacal” and meaningful editing; thank you for providing the space and the patience for my endless questioning. I am grateful to the many individuals who have shared their knowledge and who have given their time and care in supporting me with this project: Kim Anderson, Nina Lee Aquino, Dr. Christine Bold, Mat Buntin, Deborah Davis, Tasha Ethelston, Dr. Helen Hoy, Debbie Kortleve, Dr. Ric Knowles, Deanna Kruger, Shelley Langton, Gordon Lester, Michelle Lobkowitz, Monique Mojica, Yvette Nolan, Dawn Owen, Dr. Pablo Ramirez, Dr. J.R. (Tim) Struthers, Helen Thundercloud, Benjamin Walsh, Baritte Williamson, Neil Williamson, and Jimmy Kommer. Thank you to the Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP), the [Museum of the American West, Autry National Center, Los Angeles](#), the [Macdonald Stewart Art Centre](#), [Native Earth Performing Arts](#), and [The School of English and Theatre Studies](#) at the [University of Guelph](#).

[\[1\]](#) *Eos – A Prairie Dream*, 1884. 6.

[\[2\]](#) Caffyn Kelley, “Creating Memory, Contesting History.” *Matriart*. 5 (1995): 6-11.

[\[3\]](#) *The Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* is referred to as *The Davin Report*.

[\[4\]](#) John Gast. “American Progress,” oil on canvas, 1872 ([Museum of the American West, Autry National Center, Los Angeles](#)).

[\[5\]](#) C.B. Koester's *Mr. Davin M.P.: A Biography of Nicholas Flood Davin*. 40.

[\[6\]](#) “[Indian Affairs](#).” *The Regina Leader*. Morning. 7 February 1884. 1.50:2.

[\[7\]](#) “Chromos” could refer to chromolithography. During the nineteenth century, lithographers developed the art of printing in color,

using multiple stones, to achieve very complex and mass produced copies of colored images.

[8] All royalties from the sale of Kim Anderson's book, *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood*, will be donated to the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto.

[9] See *The Regina Leader*. 2.17. 19 June 1884. A "[Review of Eos – A Prairie Dream](#)" in which it states that the main idea of Davin's book of poetry is "from East to West show the series of successful civilizations." Note the volume of advertisements for land sales. See also to the article, "The Lieut-Governor's (sic) Visit – Among the Reserves," (column 3) which repeats the rhetoric of "progress" as it also dissuades "rumours" of uprisings: "the exciting rumours of Indian troubles, in your district, and for which there was no foundation, must have been annoying to you, and is to be regretted, especially at a time when so many new settlers are coming into the country" (1). See also *The Regina Leader*. 10 July 1884. 2.20:1 (column 4). [Review of Eos – A Prairie Dream](#); and 24 July 1884. 2.22:4. [Advertisement of Eos – A Prairie Dream](#).

[10] Isabella Valancy Crawford (1850-1887), a Canadian poet, who was not a member of the group known as the "Confederation Poets" because she was a woman, is the subject of Robert Alan Burns's essay "Crawford, Davin, and Riel: Text and Intertext in Hugh and Ion" in which Crawford's unpublished parody of Davin's *Eos – the Prairie Dream* appears: "Eos, who speaks to Davin in an Irish brogue, notices 'the bald bard' snoozing again in the buffalo grass." See "[Crawford, Davin, and Riel: Text and Intertext in Hugh and Ion](#)."

[11] See the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RCAP): "THIS REPORT of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concerns government policy with respect to the original historical nations of this country. Those nations are important to Canada, and how Canada relates to them defines in large measure its sense of justice and its image in its own eyes and before the world. We urge governments at all levels to open the door to Aboriginal participation in the life and governance of Canada. The approach proposed in this report offers the prospect of change in both the short and the long term. Broad support can be expected in Canada for policy changes that better the life conditions of Aboriginal people, that lead to the enhancement of educational and economic opportunities, and that help to establish healthier and happier neighbourhoods. Aboriginal people can be expected to welcome changes that assist individuals and communities to gather strength and renew themselves. But our approach extends beyond these changes" ("Opening the Door" 1).

[12] *Indian and Northern Affairs*, "[Relocation of Aboriginal Communities](#)." Additional information can be found here.

[13] "[Prodigal Sons](#)." *The Regina Leader*. Morning. 04 December 1884. 2.41:4.

[14] Tom Flanagan is professor of political science at the University of Calgary. He also writes for *The Globe and Mail*. Flanagan is a key political advisor to current Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper.

[15] *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RCAP): "THIS REPORT of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concerns government policy with respect to the original historical nations of this country. Those nations are important to Canada, and how Canada relates to them defines in large measure its sense of justice and its image in its own eyes and before the world. We urge governments at all levels to open the door to Aboriginal participation in the life and governance of Canada. The approach proposed in this report offers the prospect of change in both the short and the long term. Broad support can be expected in Canada for policy changes that better the life conditions of Aboriginal people, that lead to the enhancement of educational and economic opportunities, and that help to establish healthier and happier neighbourhoods. Aboriginal people can be expected to welcome changes that assist individuals and communities to gather strength and renew themselves. But our approach extends beyond these changes" ("Opening the Door" 1).

[16] In an excerpt from *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, Tom Flanagan defines "civilization": "Civilization is a process of collective advance. Individual human beings who live in an uncivilized society – the 'savages' or 'barbarians' – are not necessarily any less intelligent, wise, kind courageous, or trustworthy than their counterparts in a civilized society; indeed, they may possess more of all these virtues. But the collective advance of civilization places superior resources in the hands of the individual. The bard may have a better memory, but the scholar can resort to a library of books. The warrior may be braver, but the soldier has deadlier weapons as well as the advantage of belonging to a larger, more disciplined fighting forces. The chief may be wiser, but the head of state can call upon an entire bureaucracy for advice" (34).

[17] Refer to [The Indian Act](#), *Distribution of Property on Intestacy*, section 48.9 (26).

[18] Excerpt from the abridged and revised text of J. Wherrett and D. Brown's *Self-Government for Aboriginal Peoples Living in Urban Areas*, prepared by the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations for the Native Council of Canada, April 1992.

[19] *Ibid*.

[20] Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear) was the first major chief on the prairies to refuse to sign Treaty No. 6.

[21] "[Sentence of Big Bear et al.](#)" *The Regina Leader*. 1 October 1885. 3.31:4. (column 2).

[22] "[Introductory.](#)" *The Regina Leader*. Morning. 1 March 1883. 1.1:2.

[23] Dr. C.B. Koester, Clerk Assistant of the House of Commons, Canada, authored the book *Mr. Davin, M.P.: A Biography of Nicholas Flood Davin*. A critical response to Koester's work is presented in John Sheridan Milloy's *A national crime: The Canadian government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* citing the "grave consequences" of Koester minimizing Davin's proposal for residential schools as a minor part of his contribution to Canada. In contrast, Koester's book was reviewed by [The Manitoba Historical Society](#). Walter Hildebrant's far less critical review states that "it is ... a curious omission in an otherwise detailed study that his findings while secretary on the *Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration* and as Commissioner for the inquiry into Industrial Schools are not included. One is left wondering whether the contents of these reports might have sullied the image we are left with of a compassionate and tolerant champion of the rights of the less fortunate citizens of his day" (3).

[24] Davin's career as a writer and politician was followed by another poet and political bureaucrat, Duncan Campbell Scott (1862-1947). Margaret Atwood, in her anthology of Canadian poetry, *The New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English* (1982), states that Scott's works, *On The Way to the Mission* (52-3) and *The Forsaken* (49-51) are "condensed tragedies" (xxxiii). Scott's "Period Romance" (Cook-Lynn 61) represents the colonial gaze of Native peoples. As a member of the Confederation poets, Scott's work writes and upholds the institution of "the vanishing Indian" (Owens "Other Destinies" 4), an image that Scott naturalized and embedded into a dominant cultural discourse. Through his work in the Department of Indian Affairs (1879-1932), Scott's assimilation of Native peoples shifted from Canadian poetry to the development of Canadian policy in which "he actively suppressed Native languages, culture and traditions, as well as Dr. Bryce's report showing that 'Indian' children were dying at alarming rates in residential schools" (Wikipedia, 17 February 2006. "Duncan Campbell Scott." 21 February 2006 <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duncan\\_Campbell\\_Scott](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duncan_Campbell_Scott)>). Refer to Dr. P.H. Bryce, *The Story of a National Crime, Being a Record of the Health Conditions of the Indians of Canada from 1904 to 1921* (Ottawa, 1922).

Thomas King's novel *Green Grass, Running Water*, through parody, makes Duncan Campbell Scott accountable. In King's novel, Scott's character works at Indian Affairs and "appears" sympathetic to Aboriginal peoples. However, as Scott tells an abandoned Lionel not to worry about anything, Scott turns his back on him, and doesn't return telephone calls (60).

[25] "[The Bible and Shakespeare.](#)" *The Regina Leader*. Evening. 3 September 1885. 3.27:2.  
Davin draws comparisons between the Bible and Shakespeare.

[26] Frederick Arthur Verner. "[Ojibway Indian Encampment.](#)" c.1873. oil on canvas. (Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection, Guelph, Ontario, Canada).

[27] Quoted from Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, 2004. "Frederick Arthur Verner: Ojibway Indian Camp." Past Exhibition at MSAC. 15 May 2006 <<http://www.msac.uoguelph.ca/verner.htm>>.

[28] Ibid.

[29] See Frederick Verner's painting, "Indians Playing Cards." 1879. Watercolour on paper, 32.7 x 54 cm. Murray, Joan. *The Last Buffalo: The Story of Frederick Arthur Verner, Painter of the Canadian West*. Toronto, ON: Pagurian Press, 1984. The following excerpt describes Verner's watercolour, "Indians Playing Cards," 1879: "Verner had first painted Indians gambling ... in 1873. In 1879, when he returned to the subject, he made the Indians more attractive. Here, one of them looks like (and may have been) a white woman posing as a model" (73).

[30] Quoted from Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, 2004. Frederick Arthur Verner: Ojibway Indian Camp. Past Exhibition at MSAC. 15 May 2006 <http://www.msac.uoguelph.ca/verner.htm>.

[31] Excerpt from "[Indian Affairs.](#)" *The Regina Leader*. Morning. 26 June 1884. 2.18:2 (column 1-2): "*The Winnipeg Sun* persistently misrepresents everything ... and of course misrepresents the Indian difficulty at Battleford .... The police seem to have acted well. There is now no cause for alarm. The Indians are quiet and are separating to join their respective Reserves."

[32] David Garneau's painting, "[Riel/Caliban.](#)"

[33] William Shakespeare. *Merchant of Venice*, (1.3.148).

[34] See Moll's (forthcoming) essay that examines Davin's rhetorical style and his use of Shakespeare, theatrical tropes, and stage direction to manipulate public perception, particularly surrounding Riel's trial coverage in *The Regina Leader*, "[Evening. 9 July 1885. 3.19:2.](#)"

[35] Two versions of the *The Regina Leader's* coverage of the events concerning the execution of Métis Leader, Louis Riel are available for reference: Royal Canadian Mounted Police abridged version and *The Regina Leader* original 1885, newspaper coverage version.

[36] "Visionary Riel." *The Regina Leader*. Evening. 29 October 1885. 3.35:4. The article, as with all articles, is not bylined, and subsequently, it cannot be proven unequivocally that Davin wrote the column; however, Davin does state that he was *The Leader* reporter covering the Riel trial; moreover, as the newspaper's editor, all editorial decisions would be Davin's responsibility.

[37] The Cultural Memory Group: Christine Bold, Sly Castaldi, Ric Knowles, Jodie McConnell and Lisa Schincariol. *Remembering Women Murdered by Men: Memorials Across Canada*, a book offered "in memory and solidarity" (28).

[38] For the full interview with Yvette Nolan and the essay introduction to Nolan and MacKinnon's *Julius Caesar* adaptation, *The Death of a Chief*, visit the CASP webpage at [http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a\\_thedeathofachief.cfm](http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a_thedeathofachief.cfm).

[39] During her interview with CASP, Nolan remarks that "Winnipeg which is the most racist town in this country towards Aboriginal people, [aside from] Regina" (qtd. from 12 March 2006 interview). Is there a correlation between the twenty-first-century reality and Davin's nineteenth-century work as editor of *The Regina Leader* newspaper? Refer to the CASP webpage [http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a\\_thedeathofachief.cfm](http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a_thedeathofachief.cfm).

[40] Refer to Davin's *Regina Leader* editorial "Hon/George Brown." Morning. 4 December 1884. 2.41:2. in which Davin quotes from *Julius Caesar*: "the evil that men do lives after them // the good is oft interred with the bones" (3.2.77). Davin, a staunch Conservative, comments on the statue unveiling for George Brown (1884) who formed part of what became the Liberal party of Canada. Brown was also the editor of Toronto's newspaper *The Globe* where Davin also worked for a period. Davin and Brown's lives collided when Davin defended George Bennett, a disgruntled employee who shot George Brown. Brown died from the wound in 1880. Brown, as a Liberal, at that time Grit, had entered into The Great Coalition with John A. Macdonald, and George Etienne Cartier in 1864, a coalition that is arguably the source of Davin's *The Fair Grit*. Demonstrating the breadth in Shakespearean adaptations, and its potential for destructive or constructive work, both Nicholas Flood Davin and Native playwright Yvette Nolan use Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* to question leadership in Canada. See Moll's (forthcoming) essay (and endnote no. 27) that examines Davin's rhetorical style in the close reading of the article "Tory Band of Hope" published in *The Globe*, one year after George Brown's death (1881). Although, the article is not bylined to Davin, the essay evaluates and draws a strong conjecture that Davin is indeed its author by evaluating syntactical style, the use of playwriting devices common to Davin, and references to Shakespeare. Also, the article draws direct allusions to Davin's play, *The Fair Grit*, written five years earlier.

[41] Yvette Nolan and Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon. *The Death of a Chief*. [February 2006 Workshop Script](#). 23.

[42] Caffyn Kelley, in her essay, references Audre Lord's question, "how does a system bent upon our ultimate destruction make the unacceptable gradually tolerable?"

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