RESEARCH ARTICLE

Colonial Continuum: (De)construction of a 'Canadian Heritage' at the Fort York National Historic Site

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ABSTRACT

The Fort York National Historic Site was chosen as the site of research to examine how tourist attractions are constructed through the use of certain images and narratives, which reflect existing socio-political power dynamics through the processes of selecting and excluding what is represented. Research into media representations of Fort York was first conducted on the websites of Fort York and the City of Toronto on May 15th and May 16th, 2018. Field observations were subsequently conducted at the Fort York National Historic Site on May 20th, 2018, from 3–5 p.m.; May 30th, 2018, from 2–4 p.m.; and June 2nd, 2018, from 3–5 p.m. The analysis illustrates how the social, cultural, and historical constructions of Fort York render Canada and Canadians as conceptually White spaces and bodies, thus reflecting how the Canadian settler state continues to normalize the erasure of Indigenous peoples, communities, identities, and cultures within the contemporary Canadian landscape. Application of queer Indigenous theories then helps to conceptualize how multiple uninterrupted strands of settler colonialism intersect to form a cohesive but variegated *colonial continuum*, or the tangible inertia of settler colonialism that self-perpetuates colonial heteronormativity. Queer Indigenous theories are thus argued to provide the framework through which colonized peoples can collectively dismantle the colonial continuum.

Keywords: settler colonialism, queer Indigenous theory, anthropology of tourism, symbolic capital, contact zone, power-knowledge, bureaucracy

INTRODUCTION

The Fort York National Historic Site is a local tourist attraction within downtown Toronto. The site was established in 1793 by the British colonial settlers[1] (Benn 2017; Temprano 2018) who built a military garrison on the territories "of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and . . . the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation"

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[1] The terms *colonial settlers* and *settlers* are used interchangeably in this article to refer to both the past British or American settlers who have colonized North America, as well as all the contemporary non-Indigenous peoples who live and work within the territories and jurisdictions of the modern Canadian state. As individuals partaking in the current economic, social, cultural, and political systems that derive from the continued hegemony of the British-Canadian settler-colonial state, it is quite imperative for the purposes of this article to conceptualize colonialism and colonial identities not as historical, completed, or dead but rather as contemporary, on-going, or living.

(ISSU 2013).[2] Fort York largely fell into disuse after the War of 1812 until it reopened as a historic museum in 1934 when Toronto's residents sought to protect a remnant of the past from the destructive processes of industrialization and urbanization (Benn 2017; Temprano 2018). Today, the Fort York National Historic Site is managed by the City of Toronto with the aim to preserve Toronto's history, a legacy of the War of 1812, and the physical and cultural landscapes that represent the origins of the modern Canadian state.

Fort York was hence chosen as the site of research to examine how tourist attractions are constructed through the use of certain images and narratives, which reflect existing sociopolitical power dynamics through the processes of selecting and excluding what is represented. Research into media representations of Fort York was first conducted on the websites of Fort York and the City of Toronto on May 15th and May 16th, 2018. Field observations were subsequently conducted at the Fort York National Historic Site on May 20th, 2018, from 3–5 p.m.; May 30th, 2018, from 2–4 p.m.; and June 2nd, 2018, from 3–5 p.m. Lastly, due to the practical nature of this project, data collection through informal social interactions have been limited to the employees of Fort York.

In Part 1, the collected data is analyzed through the lens of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1991) and illustrates that Fort York strives to construct a singular Canadian heritage by reproducing a British colonial perception of the land's history, culture, and people. First, Fort York asserts various images of the British military and a whitewashed narrative of the War of 1812 to construct the *tourist gaze* (Urry 1990) and *tourist rhetoric* (Löfgren 2004) that reflect its colonial origins. Next, Fort York emphasizes the historical *authenticity* (Bruner 1994; MacCannell 1999) of such colonial representations through the use of archaeological evidence, original and replicated artifacts, and historical re-enactors. Lastly, Fort York stages its physical site as a birthplace of the contemporary Canadian state by accentuating the sacrifices of the British soldiers during the War of 1812, thus representing Fort York as a *site of pilgrimage* (Graburn 2004) to which all Canadians can visit and pay tribute. Such social, cultural, and historical reconstructions of Fort York legitimize the colonial authority of the Canadian settler state by producing and presenting Canada and Canadians as conceptually White spaces and beings and simultaneously displaces more than ten thousand years of Indigenous histories, influence, and activities within Turtle Island.[3]

In Part 2, Fort York is further conceptualized as a *contact zone* (Pratt 1992) between the colonial institutions in its control and the individual tourists who similarly consume but differently digest the presented materials. Such analysis reveals the process of symbolic negotiations through which tourists can practice agency with their interpretations of the tourist site. However, application of the *power-knowledge* (Foucault 1980) nexus illustrates how the Canadian settler state uses a system of *bureaucratic authority* (Weber 1946) to monopolize the means of knowledge production at Fort York. Consequently, the limitation of Indigenous self-representations at Fort York continues to naturalize the *heteropatriarchy* (Smith 2010) or *heteronormativity* (Driskill et al. 2011) of settler colonialism that privileges White, British, heterosexual, masculine, and cismale representations and identities.

[2] *Indigenous* is used as an umbrella term without regards to the specific First Nations, Métis, or Inuit groups, unless otherwise clarified. It is still important to recognize the multiplicity of Indigenous cultures, nations, and identities that can be both complementary and conflicting with each other at different times.

[3] *Turtle Island* is a term deriving from native Algonquian and Iroquoian languages and refers to the whole continent of North America rather than to any individual modern nation-state that exists today. Turtle Island can be found in various North American Indigenous origin stories and represents the world and/or life in many Indigenous cosmologies. The term holds significance for Indigenous spirituality and symbolic sovereignty.

This is evidenced at Fort York through the dehumanization or *animalization* (Kim 2015) of Indigenous representations within the colonial *racial hierarchy* (Kim 2015) that dignifies White British male subjects as normal, rational, "full" human beings, but devalues Indigenous male subjects as abnormal, irrational, "less than" human beings. Similarly, within the context of global capitalism, the commercialization of appropriated Indigenous artifacts at Fort York exemplifies how reducing the multiplicity and diversity of various Indigenous peoples, nations, cultures, and identities into a single totalizing concept perpetuates symbolic assimilation and genocide. The Fort York National Historic Site thus demonstrates how the Canadian settler state continues to normalize the erasure of Indigenous peoples, communities, identities, and cultures within the contemporary Canadian landscape.

Lastly, Part 3 attempts to illustrate the ways in which multiple uninterrupted and entrenched strands of settler colonialism can be conceptualized to intersect and form a cohesive but variegated *colonial continuum*, or the tangible inertia of settler colonialism that self-perpetuates contemporary colonial heteronormativity. It further demonstrates how the *logic of Indigenous genocide* (Smith 2010) and the logics of settler colonialism entrap all Indigenous peoples, immigrant communities, and Canadian settlers within the colonial continuum. It then introduces queer Indigenous theories to begin to explore how Indigenous *intellectual sovereignty* (Warrior 1994) and the *subjectless critique of Indigenous theory* (Smith 2010) can allow us to engage in our *disidentification* (Muñoz, 1999) with the logics of settler colonialism and to participate in the *radical remembering of the future* (Meyer 2003). Queer Indigenous theories are thus identified to provide the framework through which colonized peoples can collectively dismantle the colonial continuum while reconstructing our *collective decolonial futures* (Driskill et al. 2011).

PART 1: COLONIAL RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE TOURIST SITE

The data collected at Fort York is first analyzed through the conceptual lens of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1991, 72, 106), which is adapted and defined here as the approximate level of value, prestige, or honour that is conferred by the tourist site upon the materials and subjects of its main concern. The conceptual lens of symbolic capital enables the analysis of how the social, cultural, and historical constructions of the tourist site reflect, whether intentionally or not, the dominant values and beliefs that are held by the social group in control of the site and Canadian society at large. The analysis here illustrates how Fort York attempts to construct a Canadian heritage by reproducing the British colonial perceptions of Canadian land, history, and culture, displacing more than ten thousand years of Indigenous histories and activities within Turtle Island.

The Tourist Gaze and Rhetoric

The work of Urry (1990) illustrates that a tourist site uses certain images and symbols to shape the visitor's perceptions within the intended *tourist gaze* (9). At the Fort York National Historic Site, images of the British military and symbols of Britain and Canada are used to construct a tourist gaze that accentuates the colonial British heritage of both Fort York and Canada. For example, various images of the British soldiers, generals, uniforms, and weapons are prominently featured as drawings and photographs throughout the websites of Fort York and the City of Toronto, specifically on their front pages, galleries, posters, and event advertisements. The same images are also displayed at the physical Fort York grounds and exhibits as photographs, artifacts, souvenirs, and costumes. Images depicting the British military condition the site's visitors to presume a tourist gaze that implicitly limits their comprehension of Fort York within its

connections to the War of 1812, and thus the history of its British colonial settlers. Similarly, the overt use of the British Union Jack and the National Flag of Canada—such as the ones flying side by side on the central flagpoles—compel their viewers to assume the presented links between the identities of Fort York, Britain, and Canada. The site's visitors are therefore encouraged to adopt the induced tourist gaze that not only limits their comprehension of Fort York within the bounds of its colonial history but also leads to the association of contemporary Canadian state and society to their British colonial heritage and identity.

The suggestive effects of the tourist gaze are made explicit by what Löfgren (2004) calls the *tourist rhetoric,* an overarching narrative that directly manipulates the visitor's interpretation of a tourist site (93–94). For instance, an article posted on the Fort York website and a short film presented to the visitors at the beginning of their tour both illustrate the War of 1812 as a story in which the heroic British military and their Mississauga and Ojibwe allies were forced to confront the Americans who had already assaulted the territories of the Ohio First Nations and were now invading Southern Ontario (Benn 2017). At the same time, Fort York omits from their narrative the story of Chief Wabakinine, a Mississauga chief who was murdered by the British military *after* the Mississauga's territories were acquired through a treaty agreement that the British later broke (Fiddes 2014). The presented history of Fort York and the War of 1812 thus creates an underlying narrative that configures the British colonial settlers as the moral protagonist and the American colonial settlers as the antagonist within their military conflict. It also constructs the British as a friend and ally of the Indigenous peoples while the Americans are constructed as their collective enemy. The colonial rhetoric at Fort York thereby positions the British as good and Americans as evil within the imaginaries of the tourists, which directly conditions visitors to identify themselves, Fort York, and Canada within the identities of the moral and rightful British colonial settlers.

Additionally, the omission of rich Indigenous histories within the Great Lakes and the delegation of Indigenous peoples as auxiliary to the British protagonist reconstructs the historical, social, and cultural landscapes of Fort York and Turtle Island as conceptually White and British spaces that were neither significant nor existing prior to the European contact. For example, the Fort York National Historic Site and the City of Toronto occupy Indigenous territories that are "the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Anishnaabek and Allied Nations to peacefully care for and share the resources around the Great Lakes" (ISSU 2013). However, by only introducing the War of 1812 as the period of significance, and British colonial history as the subject of interest, the tourist gaze and rhetoric at Fort York disregard and negate the significance of Indigenous human activities and histories that have shaped the Great Lakes region for centuries prior to the arrival of European and British colonial settlers.

Touristic Authenticity and the Site of Pilgrimage

The manipulative effects of the tourist gaze and rhetoric are magnified at Fort York through the certification of its historical and cultural legitimacy, or what Bruner (1994) and MacCannell (1999) refer to as *authenticity* (399–400; 14–15). For example, Fort York evidences that the battles of the War of 1812 took place within its physical site by displaying their surviving artifacts—such as the rifles and canons—coupled with archaeological research that together prove such claims. The originality of the artifacts and archaeology's academic authority are thus utilized at Fort York as legitimate certificates

of its historical authenticity (Bruner 1994, 399–400), which subsequently authenticates the site's colonial tourist gaze and rhetoric. Fort York's authenticity thereby strengthens its capacity to obscure the visitor's comprehension of the site and Canada within the presented British-centric narratives. Additionally, by replicating the British soldiers' barracks and employing historical re-enactors to verbally and physically engage with the tourists, Fort York creates the experiential cultural realism that certifies the site's authenticity as a British-owned and -occupied territory, both in its past and present (Bruner 1994, 399–400; MacCannell 1999, 14–15). The visitors at Fort York are thus more likely to trust and assume the presented tourist gaze and rhetoric that configure the identities of Fort York and Canada as spaces that exclusively resonate with its presumed British colonial heritage.

The Fort York National Historic Site subsequently uses the tourist gaze, rhetoric, and authenticity to present and legitimate itself as a Canadian *site of pilgrimage* (Graburn 2004, 27) and in the process exerts a singular, whitewashed British-Canadian identity upon the tourists. For instance, the tourists at Fort York are asked by the end of their visit to commemorate the deaths of heroic British soldiers who defended Canadian territories, identity, and autonomy from the Americans through their sacrifices. Fort York is thus simultaneously illustrated as a birthplace of contemporary Canadian state and society as well as the sacred place at which Canadians can forge interpersonal connections to their assumed colonial-historical origins and British-cultural identities. Hence, as Graburn (2004) suggests, the Canadian tourists at Fort York are physically removed from present reality as they enter the authentic-historic past, experience personal and symbolic transitions through the consumption of Fort York's tourist gaze and rhetoric, and are reincorporated back into society once their conceptualization of their Canadian self is associated with the colonial state's British history, heritage, and identity (26–29). Additionally, because Fort York assumes a singular Canadian identity based on its British-colonial origins, the authentic Canadians are conceptualized as exclusively White and British beings. The social, cultural, and historical constructions of Fort York therefore attempt to legitimize the colonial authority of the Canadian settler state by manipulating the tourists to imagine Canada and Canadians as conceptually White and British spaces and beings. This not only displaces the abundant histories and activities of Indigenous peoples within Turtle Island but also erases the continued impacts and presence of Indigenous peoples and ethnocultural minorities within the Canadian landscape who individually and collectively possess, influence, and shape contemporary Canadian identities, which are in reality flexible, dynamic, and multitudinal.

PART 2: THE CONTACT ZONE AND THE REPRODUCTION OF COLONIAL HETERONORMATIVITY

The conceptual lens of symbolic capital has allowed the analysis of the presented materials at Fort York and how their social, cultural, and historical constructions could manipulate tourists' imaginaries within the ideological values and beliefs of the Canadian settler state. Yet, further analysis of how individual tourists may actually interact with the tourist site and produce their own interpretations requires the use of Pratt's (1992) *contact zone* as another conceptual lens (4, 6). The term contact zone is adapted and defined here as spaces in which the individuals who possess different histories, cultures, identities, and perspectives come to meet, interact, clash, and re-establish their conceptualization of self and others in relation to each other, usually within the context of asymmetrical power dynamics such as settler colonialism. Examination of how different tourists with prior social, cultural, historical, and political values, beliefs, and understandings may come into ideological

contact with the Fort York National Historic Site subsequently reveals the unequal power dynamics between the tourist-consumers, colonial-producers, and the Indigenous communities who are continually being displaced within the ideological Canadian landscape.

Privileged Knowledge Production within the Bureaucracy

While Fort York presents the same materials and experiences to all its visitors, each tourist possesses the ability to practice agency within their own interpretations of the tourist site. For example, a British-Canadian tourist from Ontario is much more likely to accept the presented colonial gaze and rhetoric and is also more likely to reaffirm their conceptions of self, Fort York, and Canada within the offered British colonial heritage and identity. On the other hand, a non-British, non-White, or Quebecois Canadian tourist may feel alienated by the same materials that are presented, and thus be more likely to reconceptualize their own identities, values, and beliefs to fit within the British colonial heritage and identity. In contrast, these tourists may be compelled to reject these suggested notions and ideas altogether. Fort York can thus be viewed as an ideological contact zone in which tourists can participate in symbolic negotiations; however, while the tourists all ingest the same materials and experiences, they each may digest them differently based on their pre-existing values and beliefs that conflict and interact with the site's presented materials (Pratt 1992, 4, 6).

Yet, the application of Weber's (1946) *bureaucratic authority* and Foucault's (1980) *power-knowledge* nexus as conceptual lenses illustrates how the Canadian settler state uses its legal and political systems and authority to monopolize the means of knowledge production at Fort York and thus perpetuate the asymmetric power dynamics that reduce the authority and legitimacy of the tourists' interpretive agency and their produced knowledge (196–198; 51–52). For example, the legal and political authorities of the municipal, provincial, and federal governments of Canada empower the selective few bureaucrats to curate the official histories and narratives of Fort York but strictly within the rules, procedures, and regulations set by the City of Toronto. Meanwhile, the tourists must consume the official versions of Fort York's histories and narratives to recreate their own personal and informal interpretations. The Canadian settler state thereby uses its bureaucratic authority to monopolize and control the production of true knowledge and official histories and thus undermines the tourists' ability to produce knowledge that can be considered valuable and legitimate through their symbolic negotiations within the contact zone.

Colonial Heteronormativity and Its Effects

The settler state's monopoly on official knowledge production simultaneously displaces Indigenous communities' rights to self-identification and sovereignty and hence continues to perpetuate what queer Indigenous scholars Driskill et al. (2011) and Smith (2010) call the *heteronormativity* or *heteropatriarchy* of settler colonialism (19; 610).[4] The heteronormativity of settler colonialism refers to the naturalizing of colonial social hierarchies that privilege heterosexuality, masculinity, the cis-male gender, White and European identities, and systems of British-Canadian colonial governance above the sovereignties, identities, values, beliefs, and practices of all colonized peoples, especially those of Indigenous heritage (Driskill et al. 2011, 19; Smith 2010, 61). At Fort York for instance, its images and narratives of war, honour, and violence are dominated by White, cisgender, heterosexual British male subjects—such as male soldiers and generals—while the discussion and representation of British female subjects are

[4] Heteronormativity and heteropatriarchy are used synonymously throughout this essay.

confined to the kitchen where traditional domestic work is conducted. Furthermore, in the rare and brief instances in which non-White peoples–specifically those of Black and Indigenous heritage and identities–are the subject of discussion, their representations are exclusively limited to those of cisgender men of colour.

More troubling still is that the only anthropomorphic representation of all Indigenous peoples at Fort York is the wax figure of a male Anishnaabek "warrior," portrayed as angry, yelling, violent, and intimidating. On the other hand, the wax figure of a male British "soldier," which parallels the Anishnaabek warrior, is portrayed as calm, gentle, peaceful, and approachable. The limited portrayal of Indigenous peoples as a man who is violent, frightening, less significant, and different from the "normal British man" exemplifies the continued dehumanization or *animalization* (Kim 2015, 43) of Indigenous peoples in which Indigenous peoples are seen and regarded as less civilized and less human than their European counterparts. At the same time, it exhibits the privileging of Europeans within the colonial *racial hierarchy* (Kim 2015, 43) where non-British and non-White peoples are, in that order, placed below White British people who inherently possess greater abilities, values, and civility within the colonial imagination. Therefore, the lack of self-representation from visible minorities at Fort York, especially from the members of Indigenous communities that can accurately describe and thus humanize traditionally marginalized and misrepresented peoples, allow the perpetuation and normalization of British heteropatriarchy within the lived histories and current realities of Canadian settler colonialism.

Furthermore, deconstructing the process of souvenir commodification at the Fort York gift shop illustrates how the dehumanizing influence of settler colonialism is amplified within the context of global capitalism. For example, the tourists visiting Fort York are bombarded by the site's Union Jack key chains, British soldier costumes, toy guns and rifles, British-Canadian history books, and Victorian houseware items, as the tourists must transit through the gift shop to access the historic grounds. As Urry (1990) and Löfgren (2004) suggest, these souvenirs repackage Fort York's tourist gaze and rhetoric into small, digestible pieces so that the tourist-consumers can easily and perpetually reconsume and reaffirm the presented colonial histories and ideologies (13; 100–101). And as Schwenkel (2006) and McMaster (2014) demonstrate, such souvenirs are used within the global tourism industry to not only further accumulate economic capital through the material commodification of tourist experiences but also to exacerbate the scale and speed of legitimization and dispersion of Fort York's colonial tourist gaze, rhetoric, and authenticity within the globalized capitalist economy (20–22; 5, 24).

Likewise, a small corner of the gift shop houses the Indigenous themed souvenirs, such as dream catchers, copper jewelries, bead works, toy bows and arrows, fur accessories, and arrowhead replicas that have mostly been mass-produced in China for consumption by the tourists. Consequently, such commodification of Indigenous artifacts and aesthetics reduces Indigeneity—which includes diverse nations, groups, identities, spiritualities, cultures, beliefs, and practices—into a simple and one-dimensional concept that can much more easily be consumed by the tourists (Driskill et al. 2011, 8; Smith 2010, 59). The simplification of Indigeneity at the Fort York gift shop then illustrates how the settler state historically and continually perceives authentic Indigenous peoples as non-existent, vanished, dead, and/or assimilated, and it simultaneously reproduces Indigenous lands as invadable, resources as extractable, identities as absorbable, and cultures as freely useable (Driskill et

al. 2011, 19; Smith 2010, 53, 61–62). Furthermore, the displacement of Indigenous peoples from the production of their own cultural commodities leads to the loss of new opportunities for them to accumulate economic capital as well as the inability to properly represent their own individual nations, cultures, histories, beliefs, and practices to diverse foreigners[5] (Grove 2002, 54; Jalais 2005, 1761–1762; Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2004, 146, 152; Schwenkel 2006, 20–22). Hence, the settler state's monopoly on the production of knowledge and cultural commodities at Fort York exemplifies the symbolic genocide of Indigenous peoples through the erasure of self-identified Indigenous nations, histories, cultures, and identities within the totalizing Canadian landscape.

PART 3: QUEERING SETTLER COLONIALISM FOR COLLECTIVE DECOLONIZATION

The use of the contact zone as another conceptual lens in the analysis of Fort York has demonstrated how the asymmetrical dynamics of knowledge, power, and control perpetuate the attempts to dehumanize, devalue, exploit, and assimilate Indigenous peoples within the hegemonic and colonial Canadian landscape. While the conflictual and dynamic nature of the contact zone has allowed the broad recognition and examination of Canadian colonial heteronormativity, its further interrogation and scrutiny require the distancing and alienation of the totalizing logics and realities that perpetuate colonial heteronormativity, within which much of North America is entrenched.

For instance, the Fort York National Historic Site reinforces *the logic of Indigenous genocide* (Smith 2010) by presuming the Canadian settler state as the natural and permanent form of national identity, social organization, and political governance (Smith 2010, 50, 53; Driskill et al. 2011, 2–3). The conceptualization of the settler state as natural forces Indigenous peoples—as well as all non-Indigenous peoples—to accept the realities of settler colonialism within the present, to accept the sovereignty of colonial governance in order to legally exist, and thus in the extreme sense, to accept the death of Indigenous identities and sovereignties through any form and degree of assimilation within the Canadian settler state (Smith 2010, 53). The notion that the settler state is natural also compel all Canadian citizens, immigrant communities, temporary residents, and Indigenous peoples to embody the heteronormative norms of settler colonialism within their lived realities in order to properly live and exist within such contemporary Canadian landscape (Smith 2010, 50; Driskill et al. 2011, 2–3).

In order to further recognize, examine, and interrogate the entrenched heteronormativity of settler colonialism, the individual instances of colonial heteronormativity are proposed here to be conceptualized as *a strand* of settler colonialism while the cumulative whole in which multiple strands of settler colonialism intersect is conceptualized as forming a cohesive but variegated *colonial continuum,* or the tangible inertia of settler colonialism that has historically self-perpetuated and continues to self-perpetuate colonial heteronormativity.

To elaborate, settler colonialism is thought to manifest at the levels of individual, group, community, institutions, and nations through each iteration of thoughts, actions, speech, and governance that mimic past instances of colonial heteronormativity (i.e. racist segregation laws, actions, comments, and representations). Each manifestation of colonial heteronormativity possesses the ability to further spread and reinforce the power and logics of colonial heteronormativity through its wider socialization and accumulation of colonial social capital. However, individual instances or strands of

[5] The term *foreigners* is used to indicate any persons who do not belong to the same Indigenous nation or culture group and not to indicate only those who are legally not Canadian or ethnically non-Indigenous.

settler colonialism can also be much more easily identified, scrutinized, and dismantled by different individuals and groups, rather than when settler colonialism is conceptualized as an immense immaterial and impersonal ideology. Thus, the formulation of colonial strands can help to incrementally dissect and dismantle settler colonialism and its ability to self-perpetuate within the existing social, political, legal, and economic systems. In the case of Fort York, conceptualizing each image, story, artifact, souvenir, and re-enactment as individual instances of colonial heteronormativity facilitates the recognition and subsequent removal of the colonial ideals and narratives that they exhibit. By scrutinizing and removing each strand of setter colonialism, we could reduce or even eliminate the colonial social capital that self-reinforces its currency and power within the constructed colonial reality, thus dismantling the colonial continuum that exists at Fort York.

Nevertheless, the conceptualization of colonialism and its ideologies should be careful as not to determine settler colonialism as either a passive *or* an active social force. This is because on the one hand, to conceptualize settler colonialism as only a passive social force can lead to the reducing of contemporary settler colonialism as the unintentional and unfortunate remnants of past imperialism and fails to hold account of individuals and groups who actively attempt to reproduce and reinforce settler colonialism. On the other hand, to conceptualize settler colonialism as only an active social force can lead to the undermining of individual agency, which can lead to resistance to, and conversion from, the logics of settler colonialism. It also would assume settler colonialism as the dominant and punitive social force that cannot be changed or renewed within our lived realities.

With that in mind, it is also imperative to highlight here the works of queer Indigenous scholars who can provide the framework through which all colonized peoples could jointly question, deconstruct, resist, and reform the logics of settler colonialism and achieve our *collective decolonial futures* (Driskill et al. 2011, 18). For instance, Warrior (1994) calls for the restoration of Indigenous *intellectual sovereignty* that would position Indigenous knowledge and peoples as the producers of intellectual theories, concepts, and methodologies (123–124). Indigenous intellectual sovereignty would then allow what Smith (2010) calls the *subjectless critique of indigenous theory*, or the use of the multiplicity and complexity of Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, and pedagogies to identify, question, and deconstruct the logics of settler colonialism (43–44). Indigenous intellectual sovereignty and the subjectless critique of Indigenous theory subsequently allow us to reimagine our futures that are free from the strands of colonial continuum—a process that Meyer (2003) calls the *radical remembering of the future* (54).

Queer Indigenous theories could therefore empower all colonized peoples to collectively escape the logics of settler colonialism, to recognize the artificiality of our colonial realities and thus begin to diverge from the colonial continuum, or what Muñoz (1999) calls *disidentification* (11–2). As Smith (2010) suggests, queer Indigenous theories provide "a critical framework for not simply representing the interests of indigenous peoples, but deconstructing Western epistemology and global state and economic structures in the interests of building another world that could sustain all peoples" (63). At the same time, queer Indigenous theories highlight the need for us to move beyond transactional identity politics towards compassionate politics in which collective action against hegemonic power is taken not only because it can benefit the individual or their social group but rather society as a whole (Driskill et al. 2011, 2–3; Smith 2010, 50, 62–63). We could collectively dismantle the colonial continuum through constructing "alternative modes of national belonging that

are not definitionally exclusivist" (Smith 2010, 63), and by engaging in multiple confrontations that incrementally remove the various strands of settler colonialism (Driskill et al. 2011, 2–3; Smith 2010, 50, 62–63).

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the Fort York National Historic Site reveals how the tourist site operates within the logics of settler colonialism. It demonstrates how the settler state continues to normalize the dehumanization, devaluation, and assimilation of Indigenous peoples, nations, cultures, and identities by naturalizing the conceptualization of Canada and Canadians as White and British spaces and beings. Furthermore, multiple uninterrupted strands of settler colonialism intersect to form a cohesive but variegated *colonial continuum*, or the tangible inertia of settler colonialism that self-perpetuates the logics of settler colonialism upon Turtle Island. Within the context of the colonial continuum, queer Indigenous theories provide the framework through which all colonized peoples could collectively recognize, deconstruct, challenge, and replace the totalizing logics of settler colonialism.

The presented analysis is, however, limited by the lack of data intensity and variety. For instance, further research should engage with the tourists at Fort York to understand how different individuals–such as British-Canadians, French-Canadians, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and foreigners–are actually influenced to produce their own interpretations of the site's materials. This work should also investigate the system of bureaucratic governance using methods such as *institional ethnography* to fully comprehend how the state controls the Fort York National Historic Site's materials, representations, and history. Moreover, further research should compare Fort York with diverse tourist sites around Turtle Island to find their commonalities and differences. Future inquiry could also investigate the ways in which online virtual spaces extend the dynamics of settler colonialism, empower Indigenous peoples to produce and distribute genuine self-representations, and allow the development of a new collective consciousness that is informed by the queer Indigenous framework. Lastly, further research should engage with the Indigenous communities, such as the members of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, to develop the right framework through which to study and critique the mechanisms of settler colonialism on Turtle Island. The research should similarly explore the ways in which other non-European ontologies, epistemologies, and pedagogies could aid in the reconstruction of our collective futures.

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