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Sounding Found Poetry in 1960s Canada

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Voice(ing) Appropriations: Sounding Found Poetry in 1960s Canada

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This essay has its origins in an undergraduate Canadian literature course I taught at the University of Calgary in the autumn of 2019, in which I gave students the option of selecting a reading of a poem by one of the Canadian writers in the "poetry series" at Sir George Williams University (now Concordia) between 1965 and 1974 and performing a close listening of that reading, comparing the audiotext to the written text. Three students selected poems which incorporated found text in some way: Phyllis Webb's "The Time of Man" (read 18 November 1966), which embeds citations from an essay of that title by Loren Eiseley published in *Horizons*; Alden Nowlan's "Secret Life" (read 13 October 1967), consisting entirely of citations from the "confessional magazine" *Secret Life*; and several poems by F.R. Scott (read 22 February 1969) appropriating written text by or about Indigenous peoples, including "The Indians Speak at Expo '67" and "Treaty Poem." Although I was already familiar with F.R. Scott's work in the found poetry genre, and his poems which draw on materials relating to settler colonial and Indigenous relations, I was not familiar with the Nowlan or Webb poems, and these excerpts from the reading series suggest that, at the time, found poetry—or what I'm calling appropriative poetry, that

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word more resonant in ways I wish to explore here—was widely established by the late 1960s as a significant experimental form in Canada.

The term "appropriative poetry," as opposed to "found poetry," emphasizes agency rather than serendipity on the part of the writer who appropriates and recognizes the ethical issues of appropriation, more pronounced in some of these instances than others, that we hear and consider today and which may not have been heard and considered as widely in the late 1960s, not least among settler colonial writers and audiences. Listening to these readings by Nowlan, Webb, and Scott prompted me to consider how a vocalization of a text which consists partly or entirely of language appropriated from another source might differ from vocalizations of other poems. The oral performance of found poetry presents a new layer of interpretive complexity to a practice in which appropriation and recontextualization already complicate understandings of voice, origin, and expression. However, there has not been much consideration given, to my knowledge, to the oral performance or audio recordings of found or appropriated poems, either from the historical moment I discuss here or in the contemporary conceptual poetry which is its successor. Similarly, the ethical issues of "voice appropriation" have been the subject of much recent debate, although without much attention given to the oral performance of appropriative texts.[1] In *Appropriate: A Provocation*, Paisley Rekdal writes, "[w]ith regard to writing and appropriation, the real question is not whether I can simply ignore or override racial stereotypes, or even whether certain cultures have immutable claims to particular subjects and content, but what appetites I feed when I write from a position outside my own" (50). Rekdal's argument builds upon that made by Claudia Rankine and Beth Loffreda in their introduction to the collection *The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind*, who argue we must shift our thinking about cultural appropriation in terms of rights to thinking about it in terms of desire: "What is the charisma of what I feel estranged from, and why might I wish to enter and inhabit it? To speak not

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1 One exception may be critical responses to one of the more notorious instances of aesthetic appropriation in recent years: Kenneth Goldsmith's performance of "The Body of Michael Brown" at a conference at Brown University on 13 March 2015. However, extended critical analyses of that performance, such as that found in Michael Leong's "Conceptualisms in Crisis: The Fate of Late Conceptual Poetry," attend to elements of the performance such as Goldsmith's embodied presence without discussing his voicing of the poem. Discussing conceptual writing more generally, Johanna Drucker suggests its oral performance is marked by an absence of affect: "[r]ead aloud, much conceptualism might as well be automated text-to-voice samplings of contemporary language across a spectrum from banal to more banal" (6).

in terms of prohibition and rights, but desire" (17–18). These "appetites" and "desire" implicate both writer and audience in the ethical questions around appropriation, an implication which takes on further significance when listening to audio recordings of live readings, in which a writer's performance and an audience response are (partially) recorded, as I hope to demonstrate below. I want here to situate the emergence of found or appropriative poetics in Canada in the 1960s, compare oral readings of such work at the time, and consider the differences in how we might hear these readings over fifty years later from how they may have been heard by contemporary audiences, further complicating some of the ethical questions raised by the oral voicing of a form that already "speaks with two voices" (Rosler 196).

A 1971 video recording of an interview with Margaret Avison at Scarborough College, in which the first question asked concerns found or appropriative poetry, would seem to affirm its emerging significance at the time:

> Student interviewer (John Malette): If I may, I'll begin our conversation, Ms Avison, by asking you to comment on found poetry.
>
> Margaret Avison: John Robert Colombo? [laughing] Bad place to start.
>
> Interviewer: Or your opinion of his poetry.
>
> Avison: I've written one found poem from something I heard on a streetcar, and I think that's more legit than stringing together what's already been written as something else. And I feel that the William Lyon McKenzie stuff is pretty good as it was.
>
> Interviewer: There isn't as much found poetry as poetry found, perhaps?
>
> Avison: Found poetry tends to be used as this realigning of something that's already there. I don't think it'll last long; there's too much good poetry that people aren't reading. [smiles shyly] That's mean. (Contemporary Canadian 00:00:50-00:01:55)

Avison here distinguishes between found poetry as a transcription of an oral discourse overheard and found poetry as a rearrangement of a written text, privileging the former as "more legit." Avison's prediction that found poetry would not last long has not been borne out; in North America since

the time of this interview, appropriative poetics, under the umbrella of conceptual writing, has since expanded in influence, audience, and scope.

Avison's alignment of John Robert Colombo with appropriative poetics was apt, however. Although Colombo was not the only poet in Canada in the mid-1960s working with appropriated materials, as the examples of Nowlan, Webb, and Scott demonstrate, he was its most visible practitioner and advocate, his methods described by Frank Davey in 1974 as "preponderantly documentary and artifactual, with special dependance on the art of the found object" (82). Colombo's introduction to his 1966 volume of appropriative poetry *The MacKenzie Poems* argues the form

> seems stylish in the 1960's. It seems part-and-parcel of our informal relationship with the past, in the same way that pop art, camp, environments, happenings, events, son-et-lumière productions, the non-fiction novel and town houses are part of a contemporary approach to the world of the past. Such devices edit reality and make our legacy functional. (25)

Colombo's alignment of appropriative poetics with the decade of the 1960s, as well as his self-consciousness of the decade itself, anticipates Fredric Jameson's argument in "Periodizing the '60s" that the decade witnessed "the eclipse, finally, of all depth, especially *historicity itself*, with the subsequent appearance of pastiche and nostalgia art" (195). More specific to the Canadian context, Manina Jones notes that "Canada had particular reason to reassess its relationship with the past at this time: the date of Colombo's comments is the year preceding the nation's centennial celebration" ("Redeeming" 50). In his introduction, Colombo calls his creations "redeemed prose" (20) and acknowledges other suggested terms for such "metrical metamorphosis": "'translations from the English,' 'poems of theft,' 'pop poems,' 'assemblages,' 'collages,' 'found poems,' 'poetic verité,' and even 'free prose' (as the complement of 'free verse')" (20–21). Tellingly, Colombo addresses the ethical implications of poetic appropriation: "Is it morally justified to make an 'adaptation' of another's creative work? Is some kind of ethical copyright being broken along with some actual copyright law?" (24).

Critical neglect of the implications of oral performance of appropriated poetry may be a result of an emphasis on visual rearrangement and recontextualizations in the earliest practitioners of the form, including Colombo, as well as early critical approaches to the form which posit sound in opposition to the found. In a 1985 essay on found poetry in Canada, for example, Franz K. Stanzel asserts "[f]ound poetry, achieving its effect chiefly by typographical, that is to say, visual means, has its oppo-

site in pure sound poetry" (92). Critical approaches to citational poetics such as Leonard Diepeveen's 1993 book *Changing Voices: The Modern Quoting Poem*, which focuses on modernist poetry of the earlier twentieth century, largely neglected the oral performances of poets such as Eliot and Pound, which were recorded and circulated widely as vinyl records. The only moment Diepeveen references a spoken "quoting poem" is in the book's preface, with an anecdote about a reading by Rosmarie Waldrop he attended, in which she read from a text quoting fellow U.S. poet Lyn Hejinian. Every time Waldrop would read from a section quoting Hejinian, Diepeveen reports,

> a good third of the audience would shift slightly in its seat, sending a rustle of cotton through the auditorium. At the same time, one or two members of the audience would involuntarily grunt. The shifters and grunters reinforced in me a belief that quotations do get from its perceivers a different type of attention than do allusions, and that we do mark quotations off from the quoting text, sometimes in charmingly naïve and involuntary ways. (vii)

Although he devotes an entire chapter to "Poetic Voice in the Quoting Poem," Diepeveen does not address the oral performance of the poems in question. According to Diepeveen, "The poem's voice does not simply speak the quotation; the quotation radically interrupts the poem's voice" (100). Diepeveen argues throughout his book that quoted text introduces a new and disruptive, even oppositional, "texture" to the borrowing text, setting in motion a Bakhtinian dialogism and facilitating disjunction. Although his focus throughout is on the written, he at times references the different ways readers might "hear" quotations embedded in texts. And yet, perhaps ironically, these interruptions are more apparent in the "voice" created by a reader's silent reading than in most actual voicings of poems which incorporate quotations, where the oral performance tends to smooth out or homogenize text which to the eye appears heterogenous and disruptive/disrupted. This is part of a more general contradiction in our critical and pedagogical discourse around poetry, in which the critical act of (silent) reading employs a lexicon suggestive of sound and utterance: "speaker," "voice," and "hear," for example.

The John Robert Colombo fonds, housed in the William Ready Division of Archives and Special Collections at McMaster University, includes a series of reel-to-reel recordings of Colombo reading his work in the CBC studios, dating from September and early October 1967. In the recordings,

Colombo's performance of *The Great Wall of China* in the CBC recordings supports this centripetal approach.

Colombo reads from poems he composed himself as well as found poems, including *The Mackenzie Poems* and *The Great Wall of China*. Colombo's prefatory note to the latter volume tells us it includes "a) original poems / b) other people's poems / c) original prose / d) other people's prose / e) found poetry / f) found prose" (Colombo 1966). In other words, *The Great Wall of China* is a variegated serial poem presenting stylistically differentiated text from multiple sources beyond the poet's own writing. Colombo's reading voice across the recordings is remarkable consistent—gentle and clear—regardless, for the most part, of whether he is reading his own "original" writing or appropriated work. On the recording, Colombo introduces his reading of *The Great Wall of China*, "a long poem in many parts," by suggesting it takes a kaleidoscopic, heteroglossaic approach:

> Through 99 different takes, or settings, or poems, it tries to define what the Great Wall could possibly represent to a North American poet today. It deals with the wall historically, sociologically, chronologically, poetically, and any possible way you could imagine. It's composed of original poems, original prose, found poems, found prose, concrete poems, and it uses many other devices as well to bring across a single, dominant impression of the Great Wall of China. (Tape 7, 00:01–00:43)

Colombo thus regards the heteroglossia produced through the variations in style and the incorporation of "voices" not his own in the found texts as centripetal, cohering into a "single dominant impression," rather than centrifugal, which would place these differing styles and voices into Bakhtinian dialogism.

Colombo's performance of *The Great Wall of China* in the CBC recordings supports this centripetal approach, flattening the differentiated contours of the long poem through a consistency of reading style. Analyzing a six-minute reading of the first five parts of the poem through the audio exploration tool Drift, for example, reveals that Colombo has a mean pitch range in this segment of 109.51 hertz, with a pitch range of 2.04 octaves. In comparison with the poets which Marit MacArthur, Georgia Zellou, and Lee M. Miller analyze in their study of the performance styles of one hundred U.S. poets, for example, this puts Colombo at the low range in average pitch and about the middle of pitch range, or what they call an "inexpressive" style (29). In terms of reading speed calculated in terms of words per minute (WPM), MacArthur, Zellou, and Miller state poets "typically average around 134 WPM" (29), which is the exact speed at which Colombo reads in this segment. This reading speed, along with

an average pause duration of 0.82 seconds, would place Colombo into what MacArthur, Zellou, and Miller call a "conversational" reading style, using "less predictable rhythm" and speaking "relatively fast" (28). This would categorize Colombo's overall reading style, again using the categories as articulated by MacArthur at al., as "Conversational-Inexpressive" (29). Regardless of how we characterize Colombo's reading style, my main point is that he does not appear to alter that style to differentiate between "original poems" and "found poems," or "original prose" and "found prose" in *The Great Wall of China*, a long poem that otherwise incorporates many "voices."

These recordings of Colombo reading his found poems, in particular poems that were still in manuscript form at the time, have implications for textual and genetic critical approaches. As Charles Bernstein asks in his introduction to *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*, "[w]hat is the status of discrepancies among performed and published versions of poems, and, moreover, between interpretations based on the text versus interpretations based on the performance?" (7). Writing in 1998, Bernstein observes that "[t]he relation of a poem to variations created in a poetry reading has not, so far as I know, received attention" (9). During the autumn 1967 sessions, Colombo also read from a manuscript of what would become *The Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire*, which would be broadcast on CBC's *Anthology* on 26 December 1970 and published by Fiddlehead Poetry Books in 1971. The poems of *The Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire* were drawn from James Russel Wilson's 1906 book *San Francisco's Horror of Earthquake and Fire*. Both the recording and the publication of Colombo's book reveal that he did not always quote with precise accuracy—one poem comprising a section of Wilson's prose which reads "The freaks of the earthquake were many" becomes "The freaks of the earthquake / were marvelous"—and a number of the poems in the sequence are read out of order from their eventual publication in 1971. That is to say, the recording reveals that in his composition process at the time, Colombo appeared to be selecting text from Wilson's book to create the small segments which would eventually comprise the serial poem, and while the synchronic selections were beginning to cohere, the poem's diachronic structure remained indeterminate. However, one section of the long poem, running from pages 25 to 29 of the 1971 publication, remains in sequence in Colombo's reading: a sequence in which Wilson describes San Francisco's Chinatown and its inhabitants in racist terminology, referring to Chinese-Americans as living "like so many prairie dogs" and coming "out of their / underground burrows like rats." Colombo's

reading of this section, selected from across Wilson's book, suggests that from its earliest iterations Colombo wished to foreground (and presumably critique) these elements of the book by recasting them in a kind of racist ethnographic narrative.

It is important to remember that Colombo was reading his poems in a recording studio, recordings which were to be broadcast rather than read in front of a live audience. Peter Middleton suggests that, in contrast to the contingencies and intersubjective relations of a live poetry reading, a studio recording "takes on a third, in-between status of poem, neither written text nor performance" (16). Robert McCormack, in an essay in the early 1960s on the postwar explosion of the poetry reading, also distinguishes between the poetry reading, in which "there is an authority and an intimacy in the presentation which is absent from the poem on the page," and "the case of broadcast or recorded readings" in which "some of this intimacy may be lost" (29). In an email to me, Colombo remarks, "One of the worst venues is a recording studio because there is no audience there except the one imagined by the presenter, yet it is possible to re-do the reading to take the text into a different direction the second time around" (11 July 2022). I had hoped to locate a recording of Colombo reading his found poems in the 1960s, in order to maintain consistency in comparison with my analysis of the recordings I discuss below, but was unable to do so.[2] In contrast to the studio recordings of Colombo, the remaining poets I will discuss not only read before a live audience but as part of the same reading series, the recordings of which Jason Camlot describes as "an audio record of a local poetry community interacting with and literally performing itself alongside contemporary national and international poetic philosophies and practices" (31).

In their readings, Nowlan, Webb, and Scott all felt the need to acknowledge they were reading found poems in whole or in part, and to name their sources in prefatory remarks: both an ethical and a performative paraliterary gesture. But the ethical implications of their performances, both at the time and in our hearings today, differ substantially. Here are Nowlan's prefatory remarks to his performance of "Secret Life," on 13 October 1967:

2 In another email to me, Colombo recalled, "Decades ago the League of Canadian Poets sent me to read at McGill, which I did, in the Law Faculty curiously, before a microphone but no audience at all! I thought at the time, 'Quite bright of these McGill writers … they have found a way to dispense with the audience altogether'" (24 March 2022). I have not been able to locate this recording nor any recordings of Colombo reading his found poems before a live audience in the 1960s.

> This is another, sort of a found poem, I'm not really terribly convinced that it's a poem at all. Last year, when I had a quite serious illness, one afternoon I was in the waiting room at the doctor's office, and the only thing that seemed to lay at hand for me to read was a copy of one of these confessions magazines entitled *Secret Life*. [Laughter] And as I glanced through it, it seemed to me, all that I actually read of it, you know, were these sort of captions at the top of the articles, and some of the big type in it. But it seemed to me really, as I glanced through it, that it had, that it contained sort of a crazy poetry of its own. At least, in the mood that I was in at the time, I sort of responded to it as though it were a crazy sort of poetry. And so as I sat there I sort of jotted down some of these things from the magazine, and ever since I've been trying to pass it off as a poem. (00:34:22–00:35:36)

Nowlan reads "Secret Life," comprised of citations from advertisements in the magazines as well as anonymous testimonies, at times traumatic, shared by women living under mid-twentieth century heteropatriarchy, to the amusement of an audience whose laughter, to my hearing, includes that of both men and women. The genre he alludes to, "confessions magazines," appears to be familiar to the audience, as is the title of the magazine from which he has appropriated his text. The humour seems to arise from the disjunctive gap produced between Nowlan's embodied masculine presence and the unseen feminine bodies whose voices he appropriates, as well to the reframing of the discourse of advertising with which the poem opens. Nowlan appears drawn to the "crazy poetry" of the typographical variations of the magazine's headlines and advertisements, variations he reproduces at least in part in his written text:

> WONDERFUL things
> happen to YOU
> when you learn
> to play the piano …
> DO YOU HAVE A SKIN PROBLEM?
> many girls are scarred inside for life
> because they're afraid to face people.
> If you too have this problem—
> read on …
>
> (At his place and two girls
> that he used to go out with

came up to the apartment …
I just want to cry my heart out.
He has never touched me and he says
he won't.)

I CRIED myself to sleep!
I'll kill myself if she does it again!
(in fact the awful mess I'm in
is because I kept trying
to AVOID trouble!) ("Secret," 19, ll. 1–19)

By placing the women's "confessions" after the citation of advertisements for piano lessons and complexion remedies, Nowlan's poem establishes, or rather reveals, the relationship between consumer capital and patriarchy. That the women's confessions are placed in parentheses, however, distinguishes them as a private discourse—made public through both the magazine and Nowlan's citation of it—in contrast to the already public advertisements. On the recording of the reading there occurs what sounds like a brief technical interruption in the recording (00:36:03), which serves coincidentally to further emphasize the divide between the citations from advertising and those from the confessions. To my hearing, Nowlan slightly modulates his reading between the two parts of the poem as well, reading the advertising language in a more demonstrative fashion and the confessions in a slightly more subdued tone. His pauses during the performance suggest that he has read this poem before and expects laughter at certain points from the audience, and the uncertainty he expresses over the ontological and aesthetic status of the text—"I'm not really terribly convinced that it's a poem at all"—would further suggest that he regards the text as a crowd-pleaser to be delivered in the manner of a stand-up comic.[3] His decision to perform "Secret Life," then, might confirm Lionel Kearns's observation at a poetry reading he gave at McGill University in the 1960s, cited by Louis Dudek, that "the poetry-reading circuit encourages the writing of comic or gag-type poems because these always go over well, whereas serious poems tend to drag" (113). However, "Secret Life" might also be read and heard as an exaggeration and

3 "Secret Life" was published in *Bread, Wine, and Salt*. That volume also includes "In Our Time," which remediates citations from print media. In that poem Nowlan offers comment on the irony of the headlines/captions and the stories that accompany news of torture. Nowlan read "In Our Time" following "Secret Life" at the SGWU reading, but he did not preface that reading with any comment on its citational elements.

a displacement of a confessional form that readers of Nowlan would be familiar with, such as his much anthologized "The Broadcaster's Poem." At the risk of presumption—about which more below—I would suggest that we can hear a gap between the reaction of the audience in 1967 and of a hypothetical audience today, and that gap indexes both a shift in normative gender politics and a mass culture in our time that is more immediately self-parodying.

Almost a year earlier, on 18 November 1966, Phyllis Webb read at Sir George Williams along with Gwendolyn MacEwen. Her reading that evening included the poem, "The Time of Man," published in her 1962 collection *The Sea is Also a Garden*. Here is how Webb introduced "The Time of Man":

> The next poem is called "The Time of Man" and had a rather interesting genesis. I was reading an article in *Horizon* by Dr. Loren Eiseley, [in] which he was putting forward some new ideas on evolution and it was very beautifully written – this Dr. Eiseley's an excellent stylist as well as a good scientist. And I discovered that as I was going through I was marking the sentences and a few days later I began writing a poem and picked up the book and listed the sentences. And so this poem takes off from the Eiseley article which is called "The Time of Man" in which Eiseley says we must live evolution forward amongst many other interesting things. And it is studded with quotations, which you will get some of the time and some of the time you won't. I sent it to him for confirmation about the scientific aspects of it. He said, "OK, I used to write poetry too" [laughter]. (Poetry Reading 00:19:04–00:20:23)

This was not the only found poem Webb read at that event.

In contrast to Nowlan's appropriation of the anonymous "confessions" of women in "Secret Life," Webb's attitude toward the source of her appropriations is immediately respectful, referring to "Dr Eiseley" as an "excellent scientist as well as a good stylist." She also shares that she consulted with Eiseley before publishing the poem. This was not the only found poem Webb read at that event; she began her reading with her poem "Alex," which she describes as a "found poem, in that it was simply given to me by a child behaving in my presence" (Poetry Reading 00:02:21–00:02:34). An explanatory note below the title of "The Time of Man" describes the poem as "*extrapolations from an article by Dr. Loren Eiseley,*" although throughout the poem she distinguishes between direct quotations from Eiseley and her own writing by employing quotation marks:

"The little toe is attractive
to the student of rudimentary
and vanishing organs,"
and whooping cranes claxon
to the spellbound preservers
of what would naturally vanish.
When the adored ones
pass through the door ("the future
of no invention can be guaranteed")
who does not follow them,
half in love with his tears,
tickled by the lower brain,
"the fossil remnant,"
claws
scratching at the large
symbolic order,
animal sad, watching the members
fade:
clitoral love, the royal we
stumbling:
"The perfectly adjusted perish with their environment"
—then take me with you
crying
take me with you
The brain when it began to grow
was "shielded by a shell of bone
as thick as a warrior's helmet." (*Peacock Blue* 112)

Webb's anticipatory description of her reading of the poem, that the audience will "get" some of the quotations at times and not at others, seems borne out by my listening. She doesn't overtly modulate her reading of the quotations to distinguish them from the non-quoted text, other than perhaps the lines "('the future / of no invention can be guaranteed')," which is further distinguished typographically in the written poem by the parentheses. However, there are moments in her reading where her reading seems to foreground passages that are clearly *not* part of Eiseley's text, such as the plaintive "then take me with you / crying / take me with you," which Webb reads in a slightly melodramatic fashion.

Webb's reflections on the poem's "unusual genesis" and her description of the poem as "extrapolations" suggests sentences from Eiseley provide a foundation that the poem, in Webb's words, "takes off from"—we might

say evolves from—and Webb's poem extends Eiseley's ruminations on the impact of recent scientific discoveries about the evolution of the human body and in particular the brain. Eiseley's phrases provide points of departure for Webb's "own" writing, but that writing introduces a gendered and sexualized dialogic with Eiseley's masculine, rational discourse. The phrases "symbolic order" and especially "clitoral love" most exemplify this dialogic, the latter phrase suggestive of a lesbian poetics which Webb would develop further several years later in *Naked Poems* and which she would also read that evening. In his article, Eiseley dwells at some length on how the human foot still retains traces of our very distant, tree-dwelling past, from which her opening quotation about the little toe is drawn. Eiseley writes of the foot: "the overall perspective is a rude palimpsest, a scratched-out and rewritten autobiography whose first anatomical pages were contained in some arboreal attic" (8). Just as Eiseley employs a metaphor of palimpsestic writing to describe evolution, so too might we read in the poem an evolutionary metaphor to describe Webb's appropriative writing practice here. To extend the comparison a bit further, Eiseley's reference to the palimpsest brings to mind J. Martin Daughtry's notion of palimpsestic listening, an argument he makes in a discussion of music, but which could also apply to audiotexts:

> Palimpsestic listening brings all of these hidden layers to the surface. The palimpsest metaphor urges us to seek out and recover the hidden layers of agency and history and creativity and politics that underwrite and overwrite all sound experiences, and to understand that the acts of making and listening to music always involve both inscription and erasure. (24)

Webb's statement to her audience that the poem "is studded with quotations, which you will get some of the time and some of the time you won't" acknowledges the indeterminacies of hearing the oral performance of a poem incorporating appropriated text in contrast to reading the written version. "The Time of Man" is most overtly palimpsestic in this layering of quoted and composed text, but I would suggest the gender dynamics at play in the poem, as well as the knowledge of Webb's larger oeuvre listeners bring to the poem, generate further "hidden layers of agency and history and creativity and politics."

Daughtry's palimpsestic listening, though, might perhaps best be applied to F.R. Scott's 22 February 1969 reading, in particular several poems he read which appropriated written text by or about Indigenous peoples, including "The Indians Speak at Expo '67" and "Treaty Poem."

Such a palimpsestic listening, which "urges us to seek out and recover the hidden layers of agency and history and creativity and politics that underwrite and overwrite all sound experiences," seems particularly necessary when listening to the layered performance of an appropriated poem. Scott's seemingly decolonial or reconciliatory poetic gestures could be read or heard as reproducing a colonial appropriation of Indigenous subjectivity, of an extractive process that underwrites a liberal politics of recognition. Here is how Scott introduces the first of these appropriated poems, "The Indians Speak at Expo '67":

> And now, one or two more found poems. The first is from the Canadian Indian Pavilion at Expo. And it is found in this way, and those of you who remember that they had these various rooms and in each room they had one or two lines of statements, up on the wall, about themselves and their relations with the white man. And all I did was to collect these various statements from a number of rooms and put them together to make a single poem, and it goes like this, I call it "The Indians Speak at Expo '67." (Poetry Reading 00:29:25–00:30:24)

"The Indians Speak at Expo '67" was the first poem in Scott's collection of found poems *Trouvailles*, published in the centennial year. If we comparatively listen to Scott's reading of "The Indians Speak at Expo '67" with other, non-appropriative poems he read that evening, we can distinctly hear how he alters his voice and delivery in reading "The Indians Speak," heightening the pitch so as to emphasize or reinforce the distance between his own voice and the "voices" he appropriates. The heightened pitch could also be Scott's attempt to convey the condemnation of hypocrisy and betrayal he perhaps read/heard in the statements on the wall of the pavilion. The following lines were read at the highest pitch of that poem, suggesting Scott was mimicking a tone of incredulity at such hypocrisy and betrayal:

> The great explorers of Canada
> Travelled in Indian canoes
> Wore Indian snow-shoes
> Ate Indian food
> Lived in Indian houses
> They could not have lived
> Or moved
> Without Indian friends (277, ll. 7–14)

Machine-assisted listening provides data which would support this hearing. Using Drift, I compared the average pitch of "The Indians Speak" to three other poems read that evening by Scott: "Old Song," "A Grain of Rice," and "Laurentian Shield." The mean pitch for "The Indians Speak" registered 151.83 hz; the mean pitch for the other three poems was 119.27 hz, 138.01 hz, and 139.71 hz, respectively. The effect Scott perhaps intends is irony, but the tone could also be read as paternalistic. His pronunciation of "ate" as "et" in the line "Ate Indian food" (277, l. 10), for example, perhaps a product of his Oxford education or simply an index of his own privileged class position amongst an Anglo-Quebec elite, to my hearing amplifies the distance between the voice in which he reads and the voices he purports to represent.

Recorded images of the pavilion itself—as depicted (selectively) in Michel Régnier's 1967 NFB film *Indian Memento*—demonstrate that Scott was more selective in the text he appropriated than he acknowledged in his remarks. He leaves out the French versions of the text, for instance, and the displacement of the text from the space of the pavilion eliminates the dialogue between the text and art of the installations, such as the sculpture *Celestial Bear* by Haudenosaunee artist Nathan Montour. Excluded as well are passages such as "The white man's school, an alien land for an Indian child" and "An Indian child begins school by learning a foreign tongue" (Régnier 13:05). Although much of the installation text references ongoing colonialism, most clearly articulated in these panels referencing residential schools, the only text Scott's poem cites *are texts which reference colonialism in the past*, ending when Indigenous lands "Passed into the White Man's hands." Scott also leaves out text which might emphasize resurgence, survivance, and Indigenous futurity, such as in one panel which reads, "But we spoke with God—the Great Spirit—in our own way. We lived with each other in love and honoured the holy Spirit in all living things" (Régnier 10:46). In other words, Scott's poem selectively appropriates to privilege what Unangax scholar Eve Tuck calls "damage-centered narratives" (415) and which consigns colonialism to a regretted past, rather than recognizing its ongoing present.

Ruth Phillips and Sherry Brydon have argued that the installations for the interior of the "Indians of Canada" pavilion were created through a process alternating between "confrontation and moderation" and that "the displays ultimately strove to achieve a balanced representation of the survival of traditions and participation in modernity and between generalized stereotypes and local particularities" (38). It is important to recognize that the text for the installations from which Scott appropriates was pro-

duced through a collaborative settler-Indigenous process, in which a settler writer contracted by the Centennial Indian Advisory Committee (CIAC), Robert Marjoribanks, alongside members of the Indian Advisory Council, held consultations across the country with "Indian leaders, artists, craftsmen, and others" (38). According to Phillips and Brydon, "this hurried and informal tour constituted one of the first attempts at a broadly conceived national sampling of Aboriginal opinion, and the organizers were careful to make clear in their exhibition texts that the authority with which they spoke was derived from this broad, consultative process" (38). Jane Griffith suggests that the pavilion was a collective attempt at public pedagogy by Indigenous peoples, and "[w]hat the archival record reveals is a pedagogical intention to open the public's eyes and expose injustice" (180). However, "non-Indigenous people during the Centennial were largely unable or unwilling to hear the lessons offered by the Indians of Canada Pavilion, for the most part … because of the almost impenetrable colonialism of the Centennial" (172). In his prefatory remarks to his reading of these poems, Scott acknowledges that members of his audience may have visited the pavilion at Expo 67, and an interpretation generous to Scott, recognizing the liberal "best intentions" on the part of a man who devoted much of his life as a poet, lawyer, professor, and political activist to the causes of social justice, might read his appropriation and recontextualization of the text as an attempt to make his audience hear those lessons, to extend the public pedagogy of the pavilion into the space of the reading. Christina Alt, for example, suggests that "Scott discovered in the genre of found poetry a medium particularly *appropriate* to the presentation and reevaluation of existing assumptions regarding Native history" (6; emphasis added). I would suggest Scott's spoken performance both amplifies and attenuates the admittedly questionable decolonial potential of his appropriative recontextualizations.

Scott read two other appropriative poems concerning settler-Indigenous relations at the event: "Treaty" and "Nor'Westers," although these two poems appropriate from settler rather than Indigenous discourse. "Treaty" reframes the text of a treaty displayed at the Indians of Canada pavilion: namely Treaty 45 ½, signed between the Crown and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation in 1836. In his prefatory remarks to his reading of "Treaty," Scott remarks that

> [t]he treaty was signed by two chiefs; signed, that is to say—the chiefs could not sign their names, and presumably could not read the treaty, but they made little drawings, marks, to indi-

> cate that they had approved, and this is what part of the treaty contains. There was a signature at the top, Chief Ningaram, and at the bottom, Chief Wabuminguam. (Poetry Reading 00:31:44–00:31:56)

In the printed version of "Treaty," Scott represents the chiefs' signatures using asterisks and circles; just as the chiefs "presumably could not read the treaty," Scott is unable to orally perform their signatures. Manina Jones's extensive discussion of "Treaty"[4] argues the placement of Treaty 45 ½ in the Indians of Canada Pavilion was itself an appropriative gesture, insofar as "[t]he contemporary enunciation of the document breaks a verbal contract because it puts words to uses for which they were not 'originally' intended" and "foregrounds the element of betrayal in the contract itself, exposing both its supposedly 'dated' terms (both the terms of agreement and the language in which they are stated) and the extent to which the subsequent treatment of Native groups in Canadian history in fact continues to fulfil those terms" ("Double" 87). She also notes Scott's ambivalent position vis-à-vis the treaty document, suggesting Scott's authority, particularly as a professor of law, "depends on the very discourse he cites" but whose quoting of the text in this framework potentially "opens gaps in the dominant discourse that defines them as such" (89). Scott's oral performance of "Treaty" amplifies these ironies: in first appropriating the language of Treaty 45 ½—a language written by settlers that claims to speak in the voice of the Indigenous signatories—and then orally performing it in an ironic tone, Scott's performance ventriloquizes the settler authors of the text and replaces the fiction of Indigenous voice with his own settler voice.

Scott's reading of "Treaty" prompts audible laughter from the audience at least four times in the recording, in particular the lines

> And foreseeing all the benefits
> That we and our posterity
> Are likely to derive
> From the surrender of large portions
> Of our Reserve
> In the year of our Lord 1854 (Poetry Reading 00:32:56)

How do we hear this laughter? As the audience making light of the duplicities of the treaty which Scott's poem, and his performance, ostensibly seek to foreground, or of the consequences of that treaty for the Saugeen

4 See Jones, "Double Exposures," 85–89.

Ojibway Nation? Or do we hear it as uncomfortable and contradictory: an attempt by the audience to distance itself from the authors of the treaty over 150 years prior to their hearing, but also a response to the discomfort felt in recognition of the continuities between the settler audience of 1969 and those treaty authors? We cannot, of course, speculate with any certainty about audience response to a performance, particularly at a historical distance and through the mediation of recording, and the ironies generated through appropriative poetics renders speculations about audience response all the more indeterminate. Appropriative poetry operates through what Linda Hutcheon calls a "constructive irony," one which "works to assert difference as a positive and does so through double-talking doubled discourses" (30), a "double-talking" doubled further by its oral performance and audience reaction, both captured, partially and liminally, in these audio recordings. Hutcheon's suggestion of a "perhaps particularly Canadian use of irony … in relation to a series of self-defining self-positionings" (30) seems all the more apt as applied to the recordings I have discussed here, all of which were made during the heightened moment of Anglo-Canadian cultural nationalism around the time of the Centennial, and two of which directly present challenges to dominant Canadian historical narratives: Colombo through his remediations of texts by figures such as William Lyon Mackenzie, and Scott through his reframing of texts presented at the "Indians of Canada Pavilion" at Expo '67.

The "capture and certainty of information" are often subordinated to the affective elements.

In a 1976 essay on Colombo, Jean Mallinson unwittingly but tellingly aligns appropriative poetics with a history of colonial appropriations in Turtle Island: "If the French discovered 'found poetry' it is surely appropriate that a North American should claim it for his own—finders, keepers—because it is the most democratic of poetic kinds" (67). Thinking about the over fifty years between the audience listening and responding to Scott's (and Colombo's, and Nowlan's, and Webb's) performance of these appropriated poems—textual, intermedial, and authorial palimpsests—and our own listenings to these recordings, we might consider how relative historical position inflects Dylan Robinson's call for a "critical listening positionality" which "involves a self-reflexive questioning of how race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and cultural background intersect and influence how we are able to hear sound" (10). If, as Robinson argues, "hungry listening prioritizes the capture and certainty of information over the affective feel, timbre, touch, and texture of sound" (38), in the oral performance of appropriated poetry, which reframes information taken from a non-poetic source, the "capture and certainty of information" are often subordinated to the affective elements Robinson describes. Moreover, to

the extent that appropriated poetry operates through a belated temporality of citation, the oral performance of such poetries—the recitation of re-citation—could invite "anticolonial listening practices" in which the "'fevered' pace of consumption for knowledge resources be placed aside in favor of new temporalities of wonder dis-oriented from antirelational and nonsituated settler colonial positions of certainty" (53). The arguments of Rekdal, Rankine, and Loffreda referenced at the beginning of this essay address the more familiar debate around appropriations of voice, situations in which a writer "imaginatively" writes from an identity position or represents a cultural community not their own, rather than the textual appropriations I have discussed here. But their emphasis on audience appetite dovetails well with Robinson's arguments about hungry listening, and it suggests that the problem of speaking for others is as much a problem for those who listen as for those who speak.

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