Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall and the Art of Resistance

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Abstract

This thesis examines the artistic career of Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall (1918-1993), a Kanienke'ha (Mohawk) artist, activist, philosopher, and teacher who aided in a revival of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) culture during the mid-twentieth century. His artwork, though known throughout his community, has not been formally documented in art publications or in museum collections. Hall is most remembered for aiding in the revival of the traditional Kanonsiononwe (Longhouse), and his participation in the repossession of Ganienkeh territory in New York State. The warrior's flag, which he designed around 1974, has served as a symbol for the revival of not only the Mohawk nation, but of all First Nations cultures.

It is important to re-examine the career of Louis Hall because he was one of a few accomplished Aboriginal artists of the 20th century to develop an explicitly political and activist art practice. A self-taught painter, no First Nations artist was as blunt as Hall at this time when it came to expressing the political motivations behind the "Red Power" movement; he even designed the American Indian Movement's poster in 1973. This thesis will consider his many paintings and drawings, in comparison to other artists working in the political realm or from First Nations descent. His images were meant for consumption by First Nations people, to raise awareness and empower these nations in the wake of overcoming oppression. His work stands as a powerful rebuttal to what could have been lost, but most importantly, Hall showed how cultural practices, images, and signs could be reclaimed.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Liam, Kawennahente, Wyatt, Norah “Beans,” Shakowihon, Emma, Hunter and Tiakohawitha: you are the future and I can only hope to provide you with the knowledge to carry out our cultural traditions.

And lastly, but certainly not least, nia:wenko:wa Karoniaktajeh for providing a wealth of knowledge to the future generations. We have only begun to scratch the surface.

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INTRODUCTION

"According to lessons in history, people [who] give up the struggle decrease in number, die out and become extinct. People who continue to struggle, increase in number, grow strong and achieve survival."—Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall[1]

Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall (1918-1993) created paintings, illustrations and posters that are powerful images conveying strong messages of Native American power, survival and pride.[2] The Mohawk (Kanien'kehá:ka) artist encouraged aboriginal sovereignty from within his own native community of Kahnawake and extending outward to other corners of North America and beyond, mainly during the 1960s, '70s and '80s.[3] These messages were disseminated through the distribution of various newsletters, as well as the oratory and written work which were part of his role as sub-chief of the Haudenosaunee.[4]

The bulk of his paintings and drawings, estimated at two hundred or more pieces, were bequeathed to the Mohawk Warrior's Society upon Hall's death in 1993.[5] It is unsure exactly how many works he actually created, especially since he gave many paintings away as gifts. With the exception of photographic reproductions, many of these paintings have been hidden away since his passing in 1993.The images I will examine in my thesis mostly exist as lithographs or photocopied pages from his self-published newsletters and books. I was fortunately able to track down some of his original paintings which were held onto or photographed by friends and family. Most of these were

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[1] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, *Warrior's Handbook* (self-published, ca. 1979), 46

[2] The terms "Native," "Aboriginal," "Indigenous," and "First Nations" are used interchangeably to refer to the descendents of (as well as) persons indigenous to North America. The term "Indian," though an incorrect and outdated one, is also used where appropriate, specifically in reference to various authors' use of the word, and the historical connotations.

[3] "Kanien'kehá:ka" is the correct term for the Mohawk people and nation. See glossary, p.76

[4] *Haudenosaunee* is the correct native term for *Iroquois*. These are the people of the longhouse, or the Iroquois Confederacy. The longhouse, a structure traditionally used as both home and ceremonial dwelling, is used as a symbol for the unison of the five nations (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk). The geopolitical structure is envisioned as one big longhouse, housing five nations. See glossary, p. 76

[5] Louise Leclaire, "Biography," *Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall.* http://www.louishall.com/bio/hisstory.htm (Accessed 18 June, 2011)

produced from the 1960s onwards- until Hall's death in 1993. And although he is remembered and regarded as a skilled artist among his friends, it is important to note that Hall never exhibited his work in a gallery, nor was his work collected by any museum or cultural institution in Canada.[6]

I want to argue that Hall's paintings should be considered part of his activism, and as what I will refer to as "counter-propaganda," in that the images explicitly counter the colonization process and years of assimilation attempts through religious and educational reform, and geographical and cultural dispossession. For example, the painting titled *Statue of Captivity* (c. 1991) mocks a recognizably iconic symbol of Americana, the Statue of Liberty (figure 1). But instead of the embodiment of freedom, Hall depicts the opposite: the golden statue of a Native man stands atop a pediment, chained to a large pole that rises up through the pediment. The man is stiff, immobile, and helpless. Below are the words: "STATUE OF CAPTIVITY/ 'AMERICA' LAND OF CAPTIVE INDIAN NATIONS." This image works as a counter to the American propaganda that gives the illusion of North America as a land of free people. This is counter to the propaganda of history and education, which excludes the real story of how the United States and Canada came to be independent settler nations.

More specifically, Hall's artwork counters the dominant realm of images of First Nations people. In the paintings of nineteenth-century Canadian artist Paul Kane (1810-1871), for instance, there are often stereotypical representations of Native people

[6] Hall is not mentioned in the many survey books published on contemporary Native American artists. Those I consulted include: Janet C. Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips, *Native North American Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Allan J. Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999); nor is his work found in National or Regional collections such as the McCord Museum in Montreal and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

alongside heroic images of the white men sent to "civilize" them. In many other instances the supposed savagery of Native people is contrasted to the religious and spiritual images associated with the Catholic Church in order to validate the missionaries' work of converting what they called "savages." In the twentieth century, equally offensive images were repeated in the movies and on television. Hollywood Westerns and TV series such as *Bonanza* and *Rawhide* reinforced the stereotype of the angry, dangerous, homicidal savage, the enemy of the cowboys who were always the "good guys."[7] With so many negative and false images of an entire race, it has been important for First Nations people to reclaim their identity and tell stories from the Native perspective, a perspective which has often been ignored or erased from the historical narrative of the so-called "New World" as imagined by European "explorers." All of these historical images can be considered as the background against which Hall's "counter-propaganda" evolved.

But Hall was not only interested in expressing himself through the creation of visual art. He wrote for many locally-produced and self-published newsletters, including the *Longhouse News* in the 1960s, the *Ganienkeh Newsletter* in the 1970s and 80s, and the self-published books the *Warrior's Handbook* (after 1979) and *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy* (after 1985*)*. Re-examining the career of Louis Hall reveals he was one of a few accomplished Aboriginal artists of the twentieth century to develop an explicitly political and activist art practice. Hall was a skilled, self-taught painter who used his gift to communicate Haudenosaunee ideals that have been under threat since

[7] *Reel Injun, On the Trail of the Hollywood Indian,* directed by Neil Diamond, produced by Rezolution Pictures, 2010, 1hour 25 minutes. In this documentary, Cree filmmaker Neil Diamond analyzes a century of film and reveals the constructed identity of First Nations people within this medium, in popular culture and the dominant white society. Features interviews with such personalities as actor/director Clint Eastwood and activist Russell Means.

colonization in the seventeenth century. No First Nations artist was as blunt as Hall at this time when it came to expressing the political motivations behind the "Red Power" movement; he even designed the American Indian Movement's poster in 1973. This thesis will consider his many paintings and drawings, some published in his many Newsletters to the Native community (which circulated throughout North America), that were meant to illustrate the pride and survival of a nation, and inspire hope within his community.[8] I will also investigate how the artist adapted styles of twentieth-century propaganda art and Bolshevik-inspired imagery, as he was developing his politicized art, which presented America and Canada as oppressive capitalist states which all but obliterated First Nations people. His images were meant for consumption by First Nations people, to raise awareness and empower these nations in the wake of overcoming oppression. His work stands as a powerful rebuttal to what could have been lost, but most importantly, Hall showed how cultural practices, images, and signs could be reclaimed.

Deconstructing 500 years of colonization: re-imagining the Indian

I first came across the work of Louis Hall while looking at the catalogue for *Oh So Iroquois*, a traveling exhibition which was curated by Emily Falvey and Ryan Rice at the Ottawa Art Gallery from June 21-September 2, 2007.[9] While researching issues of native self-representation within visual culture, the Warrior's Flag stood out as a fairly important symbol and object. I initially did not know who actually designed it, even though as a Kanienke'ha:ka woman growing up in Kahnawake I have seen it almost on a daily basis, hanging on flagpoles in neighbours' yards, on hats and jackets, just about

[8] Kahentinetha Horn, personal interview with the author, September 21 2010.
[9] The catalogue features a photo of Hall's Warrior flag and a brief description/biography. Ryan Rice, *Oh so Iroquois* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, 2008) 26-27.

everywhere. I just passively appreciated the symbol, and I admittedly took the flag for granted until the moment I learnt who Louis Hall was and the important message that lies behind it.[10]

The iconography of the flag is what Hall is most known for. He first designed it in 1974 to be used as the nationalist flag for the Kanienke'ha:ka, and more specifically was used by the people who were residing in Ganienkeh. Ganienkeh is a sovereign Kanienke'ha:ka territory located in a tiny part of the ancestral homeland just west of Altona, NY (see map in figure 2).[11] Hall led a group of Haudenosaunee traditionalists who wanted to live as a nation free of outside government influences who in 1974 actively pursued and succeeded in the restitution of this small piece of homeland through persistence and physical resistance to assert their treaty rights. Hall originally called his creation the 'Indian flag" or "Unity Flag'. He believed that one important step towards regaining sovereignty was for all First Nations to come together to form a confederacy modeled on the Great Law (Kaienereh'ko:wa).

The concept of the Kaienerehko:wa is expressed in the Haudenosaunee iconography Hall uses in this image. Although the design has changed over the years and across different reproduction processes (from painting to flag, to t-shirts, stickers, etc)., the basic design is still there in a mass-produced flag as it is in the 1980 poster Hall made to mark the sixth anniversary of Ganienkeh territory (figures 3 and 4). A large

[10] Kahente Horn-Miller writes in further detail about the symbolism and genesis of the flag, and its use in various Native political struggles. Kahente Horn-Miller, *The Emergence of the Mohawk Warrior Flag: A Symbol of Indigenous Unification an Impetus to Assertion of Identity and Rights Commencing in the Kanienkehaka Community of Kahnawake.* (Montreal: Concordia University Theses in Sociology and Anthropology, 2003), 81-107

[11] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, *Warrior's Handbook.* (Self-published, Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, c. 1979), 42-47

yellow sunburst radiates from the center of a red field. In the middle of the sun, there is the profile of a stern yet affable- looking Onkwehon'we man, who is clearly identified by his tan skin and hair style. This differs according to the image: in the original painting, the man has long hair; in the contemporary flag available from several Kahnawake vendors, the central figure has a shaved "Mohawk" style hair cut.[12] There is a single feather which the man wears in his hair. This is taken from the Haudenosaunee symbol of *one feather*, which means *all of one mind*. [13] The sun, with its bright, ever-radiating points, is a reminder of our Brother, the Sun, who gives life, warmth, energy and power to everything he touches.[14] While red is the color warriors paint their faces before going into battle, many would argue that Hall did not intend to use this symbol as a battle call, rather that he more or less wanted to energize and inspire his people the way warriors would rev up to prepare to fight. Hall intended for this flag to be part of a bigger project related to Native sovereignty and activism, as a possible nationalist symbol. The flag was adopted as the national flag for Ganienkeh territory, as seen in Hall's painting commemorating the sixth anniversary of Ganienkeh (figure 5). A large image of the flag is shown being brought down to the people from the clouds, from Sky World just as Sky Woman fell, as told in the Haudenosaunee creation story.[15] In the illustration, Hall

[12] Onkwehon'we is the Kanienke'ha (Mohawk) term used to describe Native North Americans. Rough translation means "true human." Hall, 52

[13] Kahentinetha Horn, *The On-going Struggle Between the Great Law and the Handsome Lake Code* (Kahnawake Mohawk Territory: Mohawk Nation News, 2007), 17; Hall, 28

[14] Horn-Miller, 96

[15] In the Haudenosaunee creation story, which is similar to other Eastern Native North American cosmological legends, the creation of the land/earth, Turtle Island, begins with Skywoman. Skywoman, as the first Onkwehon'we woman on Earth, falls from Skyworld when she digs too deep for medicinal roots from a great tree that grew in the middle of her village. Grasping the roots as she falls to the never-ending sea below, the woman is caught aloft by the sea birds. The birds then bring her down to Turtle's back, who has risen to the surface to welcome her. With the aid of Muskrat, who dove down to the bottom of the sea to grab handfuls of mud. With the help of these creatures, the woman was able to plant the roots on Turtle's back, where a great tree grew. The mound of earth on the turtle's back would continue to grow, becoming

deliberately announces his intentions through the inclusion of text that reads: "designed as a Unity flag for all Native Americans". This is an important concept within Hall's art, writing and activism. The idea is one of unity between all nations being handed down from above, or seen as a natural part of the world, as the Kaienerehko:wa is a natural law. The flag was used in Ganienkeh for nearly twenty years before the media frenzy surrounding the events of the 1990 Oka crisis/blockade in Kahnawake put this image in the international spotlight.

In a standoff lasting from July to September of 1990, the people of the Kanesatake Mohawk Territory (Northeast of Montreal island) defended their lands from an outside developer.[16] The people in Kanesatake blocked off a major highway which passes through the village; this sparked a backlash and protest non-Natives who were angry that they did not have access to that road because of the blockade. The Kanesatake people resisted civilians, local and provincial police, and lastly the Canadian Armed Forces. In a show of solidarity, the people at the sister community of Kahnawake put up blockades on the three major highways which bypass the territory, including the heavily used Mercier Bridge. Both communities became entrenched in this standoff with the military, and soon after other Native communities across North America and the world joined the cause. Hall himself was still very much an active part of the Longhouse as chief of the Wolf clan and the Warrior Society in which he played an integral role in their

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Turtle Island or what is now known as North America. Kanien'kehá:ka oral history, Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwenwennen Roatitiohkwa Cultural Center, Kahnawake.

[16] Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors*: *Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism.* (Don Mills, ONT: Oxford University Press, 1995)197.

revival beginning in the 1950s.[17] Though the name Warrior Society may sound threatening, however this was a group of cultural protectors whose duties were not solely dedicated to war but to the well-being of the people. Hall's flag stood as a symbol of righteousness, of the right to exercise our rights. It inspired so many to fight for their rights, and to find the strength to do so after years of governmental ignorance. It also served as a unity flag, and hereafter it truly served the purpose, at least to some extent, that Hall intended when he first dreamt it up. The ideas which were behind the creation of this flag reflect Hall's political position, and reinforce his actions to re-establish the longhouse and traditional values in his community. The flag's symbolism held "the embodiment of his philosophy."[18]

Hall attended a school that what ran by the Catholic Church in Kahnawake, which discouraged any and all expression of Kanienke'ha:ka language and culture.[19] But the knowledge which this self-taught artist and teacher reaped from Kanienke'ha:ka and Western/European traditions soon eroded the beliefs which had been consolidated by colonizing powers over the centuries. Jesuit missionaries arrived in the Mohawk valley (now Upstate New York) in the sixteenth century, and were involved in the migration Northward to the present-day site of Kahnawake, where they established the St. Francis Xavier Mission in 1718.

[17] Alfred describes Hall as a "key player" in the revival of the Kanonsonnionwe (Longhouse). "Hall and his followers developed an increasingly militant strategy for asserting Mohawk political sovereignty vis-à-vis non-Indian society.", 66
[18] Kahentinetha Horn, interview by author, Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, 21 September 2010
[19] Horn, interview, 2010; Alfred, Chapter 2

In an interview with the *Montreal Star* newspaper in November 1971, Hall recounts this discovery. He had his doubts over the years, until the day he decided to read the Bible cover to cover.

> "I was looking for something to show whether the church was right- or just a racket. I read steadily. It took me about three weeks. After that, I never went back to church again.[...] I discovered that our people were called Haudenosaunee- people of the Longhouse [...] I discovered we had an ageless government where men and women were equal."[20]

In 1951, Hall was among several Kanienke'ha:ka who reinstituted the Longhouse in Kahnawake (as an alternate spiritual practice away from the Church).[21] He educated himself by reading the works of philosophers and historians such as Plato and Aristotle, among other Western thinkers, both ancient and modern. He even read an entire volume of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.[22] He wanted to revive repressed traditional knowledge, the Kaienerehko:wa, but he also was determined to understand Native knowledge in relation to European knowledge. He was a very curious person, and he analyzed and criticized the history of colonization within his own community in order to understand what was needed in order to rise above it. Everything Hall did was aimed to revive the traditional knowledge that was by his lifetime all but lost, by educating the people about a history of colonial oppression.

This perspective is reflected in the paintings which Hall made during this "earlier" era of art production (the 1950s/60s). He depicted First Nations subjects in a way that is very different from their representation in the Western canon of art history. Hall's

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[20] Brian McKenna. "The Longhouse- and Indian Way of Living a Life," Caughnawaga: Reservation or Suburb, part 5 of 6, *Montreal Star,* 11 November 1971

[21] Louis Hall, "Why I left the Church", 1960, *Thoughts of One Mohawk*, compiled by Louise Leclaire, 2006, i-ii

[22] K.H., interview with author

images do not show the stereotypical "Noble Savage" and "Imaginary Indians" described by art historian Marcia Crosby. In her essay "Construction of the Imaginary Indian," Crosby writes about how the Eurocentric ideal of what is authentically Indian as merely a construction meant to justify the colonial program.[23] These stereotypes often depict the First Peoples of North America as uncivilized and in need of European civilization to save them. Examples of these representations that seem to document what was thought of as a "vanishing race" are the paintings of Paul Kane, such as *Kee-a-ka-ka-sa-coo-way, Cree Chief* (1848-53; figure 6) and *Half Breeds Running Buffalo* (1849-56.; figure 7). These two images represent First Nations people as inhuman and therefore in need of European civilization and religion to "save" them.

Similar paintings by Kane show Native people, usually named from a specific tribal group, performing dances around the scalps of their enemies, or celebrating after a battle. In these images as well as in historical literary accounts, First Nations people were often catalogued and studied the way a geologist would record a rock formation or the way a naturalist would describe flora and fauna. One author, in justifying this assimilation mandate, even goes so far as to say:

> "[...] as Christians, the duty seems to have been imposed of leading these people out of the darkness of heathenism and superstition to a knowledge of the Christian religion, of raising them from their squalor and ignorance to an improved position physically, socially and mentally[...]."[24]

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[23] Marcia Crosby, "Construction of the Imaginary Indian," *Vancouver Anthology,* ed. Stan Douglas. (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1991) 267-291

[24] William Clint, *The Aboriginies of Canada Under the British Crown with a Glance at their Customs, Characteristics and History* (n.p., ca. 1878), 1, in Early Canadian Online, http://canadiana.org/record/07100 (accessed September 11,2011); see also Alanson Skinner, *Indians of Greater New York* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press, 1915)

If there was sometimes something "noble" about these depictions, such positive qualities were relegated to the distant past, and were not applicable to present-day Indians. Photographers such as Edward Curtis (American, 1868-1952) also used their role as supposed documentarians to mould the image of the Indian to what they imagined him to be. By representing First Nations people as inferior to Europeans, or as a "dying race" in need of rescue, the European settlers could then justify taking control of their educational, social, cultural and economic systems. In Canada, this construction is not only evident in art, but within the Indian Act itself, which was put into Canadian legislation 1876.[25] As Ward Churchill puts it, these European ideals thrust upon the Native community are manifested in the government-created Band Councils, which, along with the propaganda that accompanied these institutions, "sow confusion, providing an illusion of Indian consent to the systematic Euroamerican expropriation of native resources, and [...] vociferously denounce any Indian audacious enough to object to the theft."[26] The illusion of the Imaginary Indian, one who is compliant and willing to accept his fate of extinction, has been around for so long, that it has entered into the social consciousness as a truth, as a given. Generations-worth of seeing images of the Imaginary Indian in art and film and reading about him in the newspaper, travel journals, historical accounts, confirmed the notion of what a "real" Indian is in the eye of the settler. This construction was created as part of a genocidal project: to eradicate First Nations people. This is exactly the problem which Louis Hall spent his life challenging,

[25] The Indian Act was adopted by the Kahnawake reserve (formally called Caughnawaga) in 1890. Its stipulations included the appointment of a non-Native Indian Agent, who would oversee the activities of the Native residents to ensure that they did not practice traditional ceremonies (which were outlawed) and residents needed written permission from the Indian Agent in order to leave the reserve. Alfred, 55; The act was amended in 1985. See: Government of Canada, Department of Justice, "Indian Act," http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-5/ (Accessed July 3, 2011).

[26] Ward Churchill, "Since Predator Came," in *From A Native Son: Selected Essays in Indigenism, 1985-1995.* (Boston: South End, 1996), 28

through his role as a leader in the Longhouse and as a prominent thinker, writer and artist. Through his art Hall sought to create a new image of the Indian; another construction it may be, but one that has a completely different motive behind it.

Hall's art was made to dispel the idea of the "noble savage," of the vanishing and stoic Indian who is only tied to the distant and mythical past as a romanticized ideal; Hall wanted to replace it with a truer, positive image of the real Indian. Although this new archetype was usually exaggerated, as I will explain further in the images that follow, it is based on the real ideals and history of Kanienke'ha:ka people, in order to re-introduce a history and culture that was nearly erased along with its people.

To begin, the revisioning of Native people and history can be seen in Hall's painting, *Deganawida* (c.1980, figure 8).[27] The image depicts Deganawida, also known as the Peace-maker and founder of the Iroquois Confederacy as he presents the Hiawatha belt outward, to the viewer (and to the people).[28] This image is full of color, and Hall has placed the figure of the Peacemaker in the center, taking up most of the space. Deganawida looking into our eyes as he shows the wampum, which woven together in this particular pattern symbolizes the unity of the Haudenosaunee. He wears a variant of the chief's Gastoweh (a headdress usually made with turkey feathers, which is more round in shape rather than the fan-styles seen in Plains-style headdress) As a very important man with great status among his people, Deganawida would have been most respected. Depicted physically strong, suggests he is capable of taking his role. A banner

[27] Many of the dates, unless otherwise indicated, are estimates. Hall's work has not been formally documented, aside from some of the work his niece has been able to contribute to the website dedicated to Louis Hall (http://www.louishall.com). Some works are dated by the artist, however many images such as the posters have been re-printed in Hall's various publications, so in this case I am going by their earliest appearance.

[28] Horn, 12

above him reads "The Greatest American." This is a revisionist version of North American history; often names of European settler "heroes" are written into the history of Canada and the United States as important players in the creation of those countries, but the role of First Nations people is misrepresented, or completely excluded from these national narratives. The role of the Haudenosaunee and Deganawida in the implementation and creation of modern democracy, for instance, is one that is often left out as credit for this is entirely given over to European "founding fathers." Hall addressed this irony that the American constitution is based more on the Haudenosaunee form of democracy than it is on the Greek or French systems.[29] Therefore, the role of Deganawida in the modern, "civilized" political system used in the United States today, is much more important than that of Plato or Thomas Jefferson.

Hall's painting *On the Lookout* (c.1965; figure 9) is another such image which shows an alternate perspective on the historical Native. Taking up much of the pictorial space is a man facing the viewer. He is seen head-on, standing in the foreground. His presence in the image is commanding, not only because he is visibly muscular and physically strong, but because of the way he is standing. He faces out into the distance, not making eye contact with the viewer, but rather watching behind our back, looking out beyond us. The image is meant to look historical; the man holds a spear and wears only a buckskin breechcloth and boots, which is not everyday dress for a typical modern Mohawk man would be wearing. Hall paid attention to detail; visible are Iroquois beadwork designs on the boots and the sash he wears around his waist. Hall was very careful to study what people looked like, and he was equally interested in the visual and

[29] The oral law of the Kaienerehko:wa formed "a truly democratic system of political organization and the first genuine North American federal system." Alfred, 78. This is also mentioned by Churchill, 21-24

material culture of the Iroquois, which included beadwork designs. This is something he would have been aware of, whether it was on items he personally owned, or something he saw his female relatives and friends making or selling at some point in his life.[30]

Behind the man, there is a misty mountain landscape, reminiscent of the Adirondack mountains, the traditional and pre-colonial homeland of the Kanienke'ha:ka. Hall was very careful to create serenely beautiful landscapes of the Iroquois homelands, the densely forested Adirondack and Great Lakes regions.[31] He shows what has been lost over the centuries and although this man stands proud, guarding the land, we know that historically the Haudenosaunee only partially succeeded.[32] What Hall would inevitably imply is the fact that the fight is not over yet. *The Lookout* was also a very personal sentiment, expressed to a close friend. At the bottom we see lettered: "Painted especially for Kahentinetha on the occasion of her birthday." This was therefore a sentiment sent directly to a fellow Kanien'kehá:ka, a fellow activist also fighting for Native rights; Hall is telling her to push on, to keep fighting, that there will always be somebody on the lookout and she is not alone in her struggle.[33]

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[30] Hall's father was an Ironworker who eventually moved back to Kahnawake to work as an entertainer at Chief Poking Fire's Indian Village, a tourist attraction which also sold craft such as the highly popular Iroquois beadwork. Leclaire, http://www.louishall.com/bio/hisstory.html ; For more on Chief Poking Fire's Indian Village attraction, see Trudy Nicks, "Indian Villages and Entertainments." *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Post-Colonial Worlds,* eds. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 301-315

[31] Larry Hauptman, *The Iroquois Struggle for Survival- World War II to Red Power* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), x-xi

[32] In this instance and throughout the paper, the use "we," "our" and "us," denotes to the author's Aboriginal identity and relates to a collective Native/Kanien'kehá:ka identity.

[33] Kanienke'ha:ka, b. 1940. Activist, teacher, and publisher, Mohawk Nation News. Described by the Montreal *Gazette* as "the ultimate native radical of the 60s," Kahentinetha Horn is known a militant activist of native rights, and was lifelong friends with Louis Hall whom she considers her mentor. Writers profile, "Kahentinetha Horn," *Atlantic Free Press*, 2010. http://www.atlanticfreepress.com/writers/userprofile/Kahentinetha.html (accessed 15 August 2011); "Horn Fights on for Indians," Echoes, *The Gazette* (Montreal), 18 December 1988

Although this image (along with many others created by non-Natives) puts the notion in our minds of a moment in the past that cannot be revisited, Hall's images were not perpetuating a myth, but rather trying to break through the fantasy. By depicting a strong and capable warrior, Hall sets out to give a different image of the past to the Kanienke'ha:ka of his generation and the next. Rather than seeing a traditional Kanienke'ha:ka man as being uncivilized, feeble, and weak (which is what the Church and residential schools drilled into the minds of Native people), Hall presents a confident, strong, traditional man who knows his culture and is willing to fight for it. He shows the viewer that as Onkwehon'we people we still need to be on the lookout, ever vigilant in order to protect not only what is tangible (the land, water, resources, etc). but the intangible: our language, cultural and social practices.

In *Endurance* (c.1953-1963) seen here in a lithographic reproduction (figure 10), Hall depicts a man in the same spirit as shown in *On the Lookout.* The male figure in this image takes up a large portion of the pictorial space; this time, we see a man in profile rather than head-on. Hall shows the man's entire body, and replicates every muscle movement with detail and with exaggeration. The man is working his way up a rocky cliff with a heavy load upon his back. Once again we see a serene, natural background, reminiscent of the Adirondack area.

In this image, the weight that the man carries on his back can be regarded as symbolic. The burden could be a historical one: he carries the burdens of his people, problems which have arisen from centuries of colonial oppression and the European settlement and exploitation of North America. The problems of our ancestors are carried into future generations; what has happened in the colonial era is still affecting us. This

weight is something that must be lifted off his shoulders, but he will only do that once he reaches his destination at the top of the mountain. We can also look at the burden as a weight of responsibility. This is the responsibility of one Onkwehon'we person to the next, to keep their culture alive and pass it on to future generations; to rise above what has occurred in the past. Both of these interpretations lend themselves to Hall's overall teaching goals. We must take matters into our own hands, to educate ourselves about the past, and the present, so we can move more smoothly and surely into the future. Hall sought to create a reality for Onkwehon'we where we have rights, as we did before European contact.

Words printed below the image reads:

"'Comfort comes as a friend and departs as the Master.' The Ancient Red Indian culture of the human race exercised the Red Man o'yore physically, mentally and morally, resulting in complete self-mastery, hence, the above depiction of disdain for comfort handed down to this very day."

Another painting which even more directly depicts a revisionist history of colonialism and North American settlement, is *Empire State Building* (1974; figure 11).[34] In this image, we see a recognizable rendering of the Empire State Building in New York City, an easily identifiable image of American commerce, progress, and modernism. The building is centered in the image, and appears to be rising up from a misty wilderness, as we have seen in *On the* Lookout and *Endurance*, among others. This engineering feat once boasted of being the tallest building in the world. But the one thing that most people

[34] Since most of Hall's original paintings were taken away his death, the public has not been able to view them as of yet. In the eighteen years since his passing, there are many stories regarding what may have happened to his work. One story claims that the work is kept safe under the watch of a member of the Longhouse, waiting for the day when a museum can be built (as Hall had wished). Another story says that many of the works were separated, some remained in Kahnawake and others went to Ganienkeh. However, there is also the rumour that the works were stored in the local bingo hall but disappeared, were stolen and/or sold for profit. In other words: this is not what Hall wanted for the future of his work and his audience. K.H., L.L., M.L., personal correspondence with the author, July-October 2010.

do not know about this architectural wonder is that, along with many of North America's metropolitan structures, it was built by the hands of Kanienke'ha:ka men. The history of Kanienke'ha:ka ironworkers in Kahnawake goes back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) train bridge. Contractors noticed that Kanienke'ha:ka men were fearless and had a knack for physical feats such as climbing to great heights, and keeping their balance on steel beams.[35] This occupation was also a steady source of reliable income, so many men from Kahnawake and surrounding communities took up jobs in cities such as New York, Chicago, Boston and Detroit.[36]

The role of the Kanienke'ha:ka community in the material construction of modern-day North America has been overshadowed, to say the least, by the feats of white "pioneers" and business tycoons. The building rising up from the mist, seemingly out of nowhere, may be representative of this aura of fantasy surrounding the first peoples of North America and the insatiable thirst for technological progress in Eurocentric Western society. Aboriginal histories have been suppressed within the national narratives of the United States and Canada, and the fact that such technological feats of the modern world were achieved with Aboriginal involvement is certainly not widely celebrated. The very idea that the "Indian" exists in modern society and is actively involved in creating it, is not part of that myth which was perpetuated by artists like Paul Kane and by racist policies like the Indian Act. These are the misrepresentations which Hall sought to eradicate and correct, in one way with his art.

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[35] David Weitzman, *Skywalkers: Mohawk Ironworkers Build the City.* (New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2010),19-21

[36] More about Kahnawake Mohawk Ironworkers is in documented in: Johnny Beauvais, *Kahnawake- A Mohawk Look at Canada/ Adventures of Big John Canadian* (Kahnawake: Khanata industries, 1985) 50-57

A similar sentiment is illustrated in the poster *Fantastic Structures* (figure 12) In this image, the first thing we see are steel skyscrapers and a suspension bridge with its cables spelling out "Mohawk Built"; this could either be the Brooklyn Bridge, or the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, as both structures were built by Kanien'kehá:ka ironworkers. In bold print is this statement: "Mohawks raise fantastic structures for the white man. Now they face racial extinction. Groomed legally for oblivion by said white man." In this image, as in many of his writings, Hall is speaking of the gross unfairness and lack of human rights displayed by government policies, as First Nations people are stripped of land, rights and language, but then, are not even awarded recognition for the hard work they have done to help create this modern world. The modern Indian does not fit into the myth of the disappearing Noble Savage, so these stories get swept under the carpet along with the other forgotten and ignored treaties and oral histories.

It is important to mention that Hall was a self-taught painter. Much of his technique was learnt through copying and studying old master painters such as Leonardo da Vinci, while he also worked with live models. [37] His experience of art would have been much different than that of a formally trained artist, but his layman's approach made his work more accessible and likeable to his key audience: Aboriginal youth. Hall's visual style was very direct, quite like advertisements in magazines published between the 1920s and 1930s, such as those painted by Norman Rockwell (1894-1978) who infused high realism and reflections of society in his work (figures 13 and14) and on billboards seen all over, especially in the urban realm of Montreal, and the suburban atmosphere of Kahnawake.

[37] KH and LL, personal correspondences.

Hall's style of painting and drawing reeled in the audience's attention in order to make them look at the image, read it, and understand it. This approach is similar to that of printed advertisements, in that the image has a specific message, is very uncluttered and clear, and the subjects are often centered in the composition.[38] Human subjects in the image are made to be very prominent, usually taking up much of the pictorial space (as in *On the Lookout*) and/or the person depicted is looking right into the viewer's eye (*Deganawida*). The result of this strategy is a very personalized point of view, as though the painting is directly addressing you, the individual viewer. This has always been an effective method in advertising because the viewer feels very individualized, as though the medium were directly talking to them. To create a successful advertisement one must understand the target audience, the image cannot be tailored to each individual's need; rather, it must address the concerns of the mass audience. So the artist has to think universally, even though the message is very focussed.[39] When writing is present in Hall's images (such as the painting of Deganawida) it is usually presented in a banner form, using clear, bold script so that the statement is quite clear. In many ways, Hall has adapted the colonizer's language of writing, poster-making and painting, and put it to use to disrupt the colonizer's falsified images of people and places.

Hall used his art to correct pieces of the North American narrative which have been twisted and misconstrued over the centuries, in order to construct and maintain the

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[38] Meyer shows successful designs of 20th century American print advertising campaigns which are very direct and get straight to the point. Most successful ads have the same stylistic elements, meant to draw the consumer in and entice using universal appeal. The advertiser, like the propagandist, must know his audience in order to communicate effectively with them. Jackie Merri Meyer (ed). *Mad Ave: Award-winning Advertising of the 20th century.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); see also Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989)

[39] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.* trans. by Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner. (New York: Knopf, 1971), 43, 300

illusion of the dying, uncivilized Indian. But it was not only the image of the Indian, the idea of what an Indian is, that Hall sought to change. It was the very state of reality that the Indian was thrust into and made to adapt to. The Indian Act, the reservation system, membership system, and re-education/assimilation attempts, are the real oppressors behind the construction of the Imaginary Indian, and these were the cornerstones of the colonizer's regime which Hall wanted to tear down.

A revolutionary moment

It is important to point out that the situation in Kahnawake during the 60s and 70s was not unique, and that this community was part of a larger revolutionary movement involving Native peoples across the Americas and abroad. Like others in Kahnawake and various native communities, Hall joined the American Indian Movement and eventually produced a poster for them in 1973.

The American Indian Movement, or A.I.M., was a group which was formed in Minneapolis in 1968 comprised of First Nations people from the U.S. and Canada who were fighting against the government, much like the mass civil rights movements which arose in 1960s North America.[40] The actions of A.I.M., along with the many other Red Power groups were just as significant to Native North Americans as "the counterculture was for whites, or the civil rights movement for blacks."[41] These social upheavals and acts of resistance challenged the hegemonic order of Western "civilization" and changed the social conditions of minorities and marginalised groups. The Red Power movement

[40] The Indian Movement involved many other organized groups though A.I.M. was the most visible. Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allan Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996).
[41] Ibid. viii

gained momentum on November 20, 1969, when a group of Native American college students "took over" the abandoned prison island of Alcatraz in California.[42] The sit-in garnered international attention, because of celebrity endorsements, and further actions such as the Wounded Knee trials which involved Oglala Sioux from South Dakota in 1974.[43] In *Like a Hurricane: The American Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee,* artist and activist Paul Chaat Smith documents first- and second- hand accounts of the key events which have transpired over the latter half of the twentieth century. Although Smith mainly talks about the movement in the United States, it is nonetheless directly related to what was happening within Hall's world. First Nations groups, particularly the Haudenosaunee, have maintained intercultural and now inter-border relations with neighbouring groups; the Haudenosaunee original homeland stretched across the borders of what is now Northern Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York state on the [now] American side, and Southern Quebec and Ontario on the Canadian side (see map, figure 15).[44] Hall's political participation was at all levels, and he was always talking to people, personally trying to make a change. He fought to bring the Longhouse and traditional ideals back to Kahnawake, including traditional government, or the Kaienerehko:wa (Great Law).[45].

The use of art in political movements has had many incarnations over the course of the 20th century. Easily reproducible print media such as posters, leaflets,

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[42] Ibid., 3-17
[43] Smith mentions actor and civil-rights activist Marlon Brando, who was invited by the National Indian Youth Council (NICY) to attend their board meetings. Brando, who participated in Martin Luther King. Jr.`s March on Washington, advocated the NICY`s involvement in civil rights protests. He participated in `fish-in` protests along the Pacific Northwest, where comedian Dick Gregory and actress Jane Fonda also joined in. Smith, 43-46
[44] Alfred, 77; Hauptman, xi
[45] Alfred, 66, 76

broadsheets, were distributed as propaganda in many previous social movements; information between or within groups is often communicated through such printed matter; but the use of art *as* the protest itself can be seen in many movements. Song, for instance, was used as protest during the civil rights movement, not only as a means of getting a message across, but to mobilize a group and promote harmony; in the 1960s, there were several performance-based and site-specific art works created to draw attention to a particular issue. Film and dramatic plays have also been used to convey revolutionary ideas and motives; virtually all forms of media have been employed in the use of social activism.[46] In his book, *Art, Politics, and Dissent: Aspects of the Art Left in Sixties America,* Francis Frascina writes about the use of art as a form of protest and dissent during the Vietnam war period.[47] Although this is a very specific case study, the ideas still pertain to how Hall's artwork functioned as a political motivator. His work was created as a response to a particular problem (colonization) but it also conveys truths and solutions to a problem that for centuries has been ignored or misunderstood.

Hall was not only interested in what was happening locally, but he informed himself of the various social struggles around the world which occurred during his lifetime (especially the revolutions in Algeria, Cuba and the former Soviet Union). It is

[46] Other authors look at the use of art within social movements. A parallel can be drawn between the Black Panther party's "10-point program for revolution" in T.V. Reed's book, and Hall's "Mohawk Ten Commandments," both of which state the rights of a given group of oppressed people needed in order to fight for social justice. Deborah Barndt also looks at the use of art as a means to draw attention to or elicit social change. T.V. Reed, *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005) 72-74; Hall, 3; Deborah Barndt, *Wild Fire: Art as Activism* (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006)

[47] Frascina mentions the Art Worker's Coalition and the work this group did to speak out about the Vietnam War, such as the AWC's lithograph *Q. And babies? A: And babies* (1970), a piece which graphically depicts Vietnamese children killed by American gunfire piled together on a dirt road. This work is addressing a part of a narrative which may be glossed over, covered up or left out and is similarly as explicit as Hall's message.

evident in his work that Hall was influenced stylistically by the propaganda posters from movements such as the Bolshevik Revolution in the former Soviet Union.[48]

Hall's poster art is similar in both visual form and content, to the political posters which were produced in the early, revolutionary days of the Soviet Union. The Soviet posters I will consider here look at were produced in the early part of the 20th century: Viktor Deni (nee Denisov, 1893-46), one of the "founders of the Soviet political poster," was known for his use of satire and caricatures in his illustrations[49], while another prominent pioneer of the Bolshevik political poster was Dmitiri Moor (1883-46) who was considered by a contemporary to be "the commissar of propagandistic revolutionary art."[50]Moor was known for creating very heroic-style poster designs, and he was a part of the revolutionary movement of his time, taking part in anti-imperialist group activities, which included illustrating and printing political posters.

There is an obvious similarity between Louis Hall's *I Want You- For the Warrior Society!* (c.1973-79) and Moor's *Ty zapisalsya dobrovol'tsem? (Have You Enrolled as a Volunteer?)*, produced in 1920 (figures 16 and 17). Both of these images in turn echo two extremely popular World-War I posters: Alfred Leete's (1882-1933) depiction of Lord Kitchener declaring, "Your country needs YOU " which was first published in Great Britain in 1914 (figure 18); and Montgomery Flagg's (1877-1960)Army recruitment poster featuring American allegorical figure Uncle Sam pointing his finger in a similar manner and this time saying "I WANT YOU – for the U.S. Army"(1917; figure 19). In all four posters, the central figure is large, and is making direct eye contact with the

[48] K.H., interview with the author, February 16 2011.
[49] Maria Lafont, *Soviet Posters- The Sergo Grigorian Collection.* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2007), 282
[50] Stephen White, *The Bolshevik Poster*. (London: Yale University Press, 1988), 43

viewer. They are all allegorical and heroic figures as well, representative of the nation they are coming from (in Hall's, the man is identified as an Iroquois war chief; in Deni's, the main figure wears a World War I- era Russian military uniform). Other lines of comparison can be drawn between Hall's body of work and works by Deni and other political artists, but especially important are the larger-than-life figures which seem super-human and even superhero-like.

Such instances of propaganda seemed to inspire Hall to develop the use of the poster to convey national identity and national ideals; Hall was intent on changing the idea of what national ideal we are to follow. He pushed the idea that the Iroquois nation, and all other independent First Nations, are valid as their own sovereign states and should be regarded as such. This is not about geography, but about family and clan ties. Over the centuries since colonization it has been put into the minds of many First Nations people through religious and governmental re-education programs that they must assimilate and become Christianized and replace their own cultural heritage with that of the dominant Eurocentric society. Hall used his propagandistic art to challenge that notion, to help rebuild the Kanienke'ha:ka nation and rescue it from oblivion.[51] Hall is replacing the assimilation program with a revolutionary message. Hall, like the Soviet artists, used the poster as a part of a larger revolutionary movement within specific social, cultural, political, and geographic contexts. The artwork would have to be blunt in its message, to be clear and attention-grabbing if people were to relate to it. The poster is therefore crucial, since it is a medium that is easily reproduced for minimal cost, and which can be distributed to reach a wider audience.

[51] KH, interview with author, 2010

As mentioned, Hall read many books on history, philosophy and post-colonial critique. One important intellectual connection was to Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), the Algerian psychiatrist who treated and sympathized with rebel militants during the French-Algerian War during the 1950s.[52] Fanon, like Hall, was an activist against colonial oppression in his native Algeria. Fanon documents the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962) and analyzes not only the history of European colonization in Algeria and its effect on the native (or subaltern), but gives us a solution for overcoming and rising up against the threat of extinction. And this is precisely where the two thinkers intersect.

Both authors agree on the subject of assimilation, which is the last thing that the native should have to subject himself to; to overcome this is a victory in the struggle toward sovereignty and survival. In *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*, Fanon writes:

"Initially subjective, the breaches made in colonialism are the result of a victory of the colonized over their old fear and over the atmosphere of despair distilled day after day by a colonialism that has incrusted itself with the prospect of enduring forever." [53]

In a similar vein, Hall writes in his book *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy:*

"The Europeans went on an all-out drive to give the natives [an] inferiority complex which destroys the personality of the people. [...] genocide [...] is an act of war and the Indians must act in self defence. [...] one of the most important [struggles] is to counteract the psychological warfare inflicted on the Indian people."[54]

Fanon emphasizes the importance of all people within a revolution: men, women, children, young and old. "Involving women was not solely a response to the desire to

[52] Hall read many books on resistance, organizing resistance, and oppression. Among them were Albert Camus, Eric Hoffer, and Frantz Fanon, which I chose to focus on here. K.H., Personal Interview, 2010; Horn-Miller also makes the connection between Fanon's writing and Hall's life and actions. Horn-Miller, 62

[53] Frantz Fanon, *Studies in a Dying Colonialism,* trans. by Haakon Chevalier (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1965) 51.

[54] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy* (Kahnawake Mohawk Territory: Self-published, c. 1985) 37-38.

mobilise the entire nation. [...] the women could not be conceived of as a replacement product, but as an element capable of adequately meeting [these] tasks." This is reflected in the belief system of the Kaienerehko:wa, where all persons are equal and carry equal responsibility and importance within their communities and nations. Hall writes in the *Warriors Handbook* (1979): "[the women] were now equal partners in the armed camp. They now had the right to take part in the War Dance...Let's all do the War Dance tonight. Let us shatter the night by our wild yells and war whoops, with female voices in equal volume"[55].

These two authors are part of a "post-colonial" movement because they have analyzed their respective situations as a struggle against colonial oppression. They were able to analyze – through their respective life experiences – the psychological and social tolls colonization has taken on their people. They argued that people can only handle so much abuse, oppression, and violence before their psychic thresholds are breached and they are forced to fight back. Both men came from colonized societies, and had seen firsthand what the denial of humanity can do to a person, and to a group of people. According to Fanon, "colonialism forces the people it dominates to questions themselves constantly: 'who am I?'"[56]Sometimes, this questions leads to the native accepting the colonizer's way because they believe it is their only option. Hall talks about this in reference to the factionalism between those in the community: there are those who follow the Canadian government's Band Council system, and those who have held on to their

[55] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, *Warriors Handbook* (Kahnawake Mohawk Territory: Self-published, c. 1979) 14.
[56] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* trans. by Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963) 250.

cultural ideals in spite of rigid assimilation strategies.[57] Hall describes the chiefs implemented under the Band Council system as "mock chiefs," in that their sole purpose is "to bury the system devised by Indians such as the traditional system."[58]

But it is these costs, the psychological, social and spiritual costs for the colonized native which bring people to the breaking point where they must act. What Hall describes as "psychological warfare"[59] brings the individual to a breaking point which leads to acts of resistance. Fanon similarly states: "The defensive attitudes created by this violent bringing together of the colonized man and the colonial system form themselves into a structure which then reveals the colonized personality."[60]

Like Fanon, Hall was right in the action of the revolutionary moment, and felt he had to incite a change in his people. In order to overcome centuries of oppression and revive what had been taken away, radical action was necessary. Picking up arms was important to both revolutionaries, because this showed the willingness of the individual to risk his or her life for the greater good of their people.

> "There are Indians walking around dazed and confused suffering from identity conflict. This is one of the wars [we must fight]. ... To fight any kind of war one needs courage, gumption, knowledge of the enemy, and strategic planning. The biggest single requirement is FIGHTING SPIRIT."[61]

Hall criticized the effects of centuries of colonization on the Kanienke'ha:ka culture, and this was illustrated in such images as *Indian Statue of Liberty* (figure 20). Here, Hall deliberately appropriated and poked fun at Euro-American ideals and

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[57] Alfred, 66; Horn-Miller, 59-60
[58] Hall, 68
[59] Hall, 9
[60] Fanon writes about this in relation to those who have been affected directly by the war (prisoners, militants, women, children) and the psychological and social problems that come from it, 250
[61] Hall, 12

propaganda. He uses a recognizable image with humour to address the problems facing First Nations people. A large figure of a man stands in the center of the pictorial space. We can only see him from the back, but his mode of dress clearly identifies him as a Native man: he wears only a breechcloth and a headband with a single feather in it. In his hands he holds a torch, and stands vigilant in the harbour. His pose mocks the famous Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island in New York City, the island being a former point of entry for many European immigrants. At the man's feet, we see ships coming in from all directions. The inscription reads: "Europe, Ahoy! Come o ye civilized! Kill us and steal our land...pollute our land, water, air, and our minds, including your own..." Hall bluntly expresses the truth about European colonization and how it has affected Indigenous people. Calling them "civilized" challenges the way that European colonizers justified genocide and plunder with the notion that they were civilized, and the Native people were not. He calls attention to the effect of the acts of so-called civilization on the environment, as well as the cultural loss that has come with a loss of and segregation from homelands. "We have more right to have a country in our own land (America)," Hall writes in the *Warrior's Handbook*, "than do the Europeans who say they were fugitives from European oppression and once established here, introduced their own brand of oppression."[62] The message of this image in comparison to *On the Lookout* is much more directed and we begin to see not just the vision Hall had of the past and the future, but the anger and the guilt or regret that come along with losing one's culture.

[62] Hall, 71

This work also bears a striking similarity to a popular illustration depicting the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the mythical seven wonders of the ancient world (figure 21)[63] Both images are nearly identical: they both feature larger-than-life male statues, standing guard at the harbour, legs wide and torch in hand. Hall likely would have come across this image (or a similar depiction) in a number of books, including the Encyclopaedia Britannica which he read with great intent. And if Hall's painting implicitly compares a myth of the ancient world (the Colossus) to the myth of the Noble Savage, it is to emphasize that what is often advertised is not true; this "land of the free" was in fact founded upon oppression and genocide, masked by seemingly good intentions.

Visually, Hall's art works as a counter-propaganda tool, distorting the message emanating from the hegemonic structure, exposing certain truths, and opening the door to resistance. The tone of this image is very angry, and quite different from the serene and reflective depiction of *On the Lookout* discussed earlier. This sense of urgency and anger is seen in other images. The poster Hall designed for The American Indian Movement in 1973 directly addresses a Native viewer (figure 22).[64] In the middle of the poster the "enemy" or those governing colonial powers that have oppressed First Nations are depicted: we can recognize the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., as well as the Canadian Parliament's Peace Tower, and below the two, a highly recognizable symbol of power: the Church. On the church is written the words: "give us this day our daily cash forgive us our trespasses ...on red man's land!" Above these images, we can see the A.I.M. letters bold and clear. To the left is a strong, righteous, traditional-looking

[63] "The Colossus of Rhodes- a wonder of the ancient world." Rhodes Guide, http://www.rhodesguide.com/rhodes/colossus_rhodes.php (Accessed June 3, 2011)
[64] The A.I.M. poster is still reproduced and available for sale on the A.I.M. website. American Indian Movement, "AIM-GGC Profile," American Indian Movement Grand Governing Council, http://www.aimovement.org/ggc/index.html (accessed August 30, 2011)

Kanienke'ha:ka man identified by the three feathers, standing with his arms crossed. The man is in profile, Hall rendered him in a way that is quite similar to his other drawings such as the flag. On the far right is the "Indian" Statue of Liberty, a recurring in Hall's images, although in this case, the figure is a woman instead of a man; she is shown as a beacon of hope: an Onkwehon'we woman re-asserting her power. To the left are the flags of the United States and Canada, turned upside-down, expressing the Native position: a refusal of the respective governments' policies. The silhouette of a contemporary Onkwehon'we man is crouching with a rifle below; this man is a part of the Warrior's Society, set out to protect the people. Below the image, Hall writes, in his always neat and beautiful script:

> "American Indian Movement. Pledged to fight white man's injustice to Indians, his oppression, persecution, discrimination, and malfeasance in the handling of Indian Affairs. No area in North America is too far or too remote—when trouble impends for Indians, A.I.M. shall be there—to help the native people regain human rights and achieve restitutions and restorations. Paintings and words by Louis Hall. Dec. 1973."

The message in this image is clear: it is a statement of unity between First Nations across the world, and asserts the need to work together to achieve sovereignty after 500 years of colonization.

In *Propaganda: the Formation of Men's Attitudes,* French philosopher and sociologist Jacques Ellul (1912- 1994) looks at the creation and dissemination of propaganda tools as a sociological phenomenon. Though psychology does play a part, he argues that the myth of the propagandist using some sort of subliminal brainwashing tool to implant devious notions into the minds of individuals is just ridiculous. For Ellul, propaganda is a social phenomenon; it can only exist in societies, most notably modern and technological societies, where each citizen is seen as a part of the larger whole, a cog

in the wheel so to speak. Propaganda is not "a self-contained action, covering up for evil deeds. It is an object of serious thought, and proceeds along scientific channels."[65] It is therefore more important to understand the *society* through which one is disseminating propaganda, rather than understanding how individual minds work. Propaganda is anything that presents the masses with social norms, with some idea of what an "average standard of living" is so that one can measure themselves by that standard, just as it is in advertising. The individual can see where they stand on that scale: are they below or above standard? And what should one strive for? Propaganda does not only exist in television and radio broadcasts, as some may think. It exists in all forms of bureaucracy, and namely in education. Educational methods play "an immense role in political indoctrination."[66] This is important to point out, as it was this indoctrination which Hall and the people of the Longhouse were fighting against.

Following Ellul, centuries of religious conversion, language reform, and cultural assimilation, and over a hundred years of having the Indian Act in place therefore have all been propaganda deployed by the colonizer (first the French, then the British, and finally the Canadian government) to deface and exterminate First Nations people. This includes the Residential school systems which were put in place in the early to mid twentieth century, where Native children were displaced from their homes and moved to church-run schools where they were indoctrinated to believe in the European ways, where their hair was cut, their language and heritage was denied, and where they were

[65] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, trans. By Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York: Knopf, 1971) 5
[66] Ibid., xiii-xiv

abused physically and mentally.[67] The Catholic-run school on the reserve in Kahnawake was similar to these Residential schools, in that the children were essentially treated as though they should be ashamed of who their Aboriginal identities and would be punished if they did not conform. It is from this background that Hall emerged, and it was this indoctrination that he wanted to free his people from.

In his book, Ellul also describes the external characteristics of modern propaganda as something aimed at the mass and the individual, interdependently. In this way the individual viewer is provided with "a complete system for explaining the world, and provides immediate incentives to action."[68] It can only work if its statements contain some truth, if they are somehow reflective of reality; the messages are never trivial, and always very clear, and are always biased. It must also have a purpose, it cannot be aimless. Propaganda is made 'because of a will to action, for the purpose of effectively arming policy and giving irresistible power to its decisions. Whoever handles this instrument can be concerned solely with effectiveness. [...] Ineffective propaganda is no propaganda."[69]

The belief in the propagandist's message is based on truth, and it is important to emphasize this in the case of Louis Hall's efforts to create counter-propaganda. He wanted people to open their eyes; and he needed a medium that would grab their attention. His messages would be much better received if they are familiar, but also striking and bold. Hall's style, which combines at times Soviet poster art, the centrality of

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[67] *Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools.* (Ottawa: Partnership between National Archives of Canada, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2003)
[68] Ellul, 11
[69] Ibid., x

Art Deco advertising and lettering, and comic-book imagery contains all the qualities of traditional propaganda, but with a message which arrived as a challenge to dominant culture. Hall understood his audience, more so because *he* was a part of that society.

Hall shows us just what sort of propaganda he was up against in the *Message from Ganienkeh* Newsletters (1974- approx.1984) and the *Warrior Society* newsletters (ca. 1988-89).[70] In the March 1989 issue of the *Warrior Society* newsletter, for example, Hall re-published a leaflet he found being distributed throughout Kahnawake by the Pentecostal church.[71] The leaflet denounces Longhouse traditionalism by calling false-face (hadowi) ceremonies "fearful" events, and saying that "God" would never hide behind a false face. Hall responded to the church in a letter pointing to the fact that false face ceremonies and other types of healing ceremonies help those taking part, that it is very real and in tune with nature, as opposed to the church's practice of having their god hide behind a priest rather than show himself. Hall always made it his duty to point out the mistakes or the wrongs in the Eurocentric idea of American history. He condemned the restraints put on Aboriginal societies by the governments that have all but destroyed them, and exposed the Colonizer's crimes and rejected their ideals in his art and writing.

In the *Message from Ganienkeh* newsletters, as in the *Warrior's Handbook,* Hall tells history from the Native perspective. He explains not only how important it is for Native people to fight for their land and collective rights, but *why.* "We never ceded our land..." it was stolen, and the laws of the Canadian and American governments were

[70] Many of Hall's newsletters have been archived by individuals (such as his niece) and institutions (the Kanienke'ha:ka Onkwenwennen Raotitiohkwa Cultural Center in Kahnawake, for one). However, there is no definitive collection of his writing.
[71] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, "Propaganda Against the New Longhouse," in *Warrior Society Newsletter*, March 1989.

thrust upon Aboriginal societies without consent.[72] Treaties were broken, or worded in a language different from our own so that we would misunderstand it. Fighting back and repossessing the land as Hall and others did in Ganienkeh was seen as necessary and within all means, fair, legal and right.

Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy

In 1984, a painting of the legendary Big John Canadian shooting up the Lachine Rapids in his canoe was presented by then Grand Chief Joseph Norton as a gift to Alwyn Morris, a Kahnawakero:non athlete who won a gold and a bronze medal in the mens' pairs kayak event at the Los Angeles Summer Olympics that year.[73] As this painting was somewhat of a local treasure, it was decided that a replica would be painted. Louis Hall was commissioned to create the new painting, copying directly from the original so as to keep as much of its integrity as possible (figure 23). To commemorate this event, an edition of 250 prints of the painting was produced by the Techno-colour printing company in Montreal. By this time Hall was an elderly man although he was still active in Ganienkeh. While not as productive as his earlier years, Hall continued to write many newsletters and paint in the last years of his life.

In his vision, Hall set his sights beyond the scope of Kahnawake and the Kanien'kehá:ka/Haudenosaunee nation. He was successful in aiding the reestablishment of the longhouse and the traditional ways, and in the repossession of Ganienkeh territory in New York State. Now he wanted not only his people to get involved, but *all* First Nations. *Message from Ganienkeh* and *Warrior Society Newsletter* contained not only

[72] Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, *Longhouse News*, No. 40, March 15, 1969
[73] Beauvais, 4

pertinent information about laws and history pertaining to the Kanien'kehá:ka, but was meant to guide the reader into a self-realization that what they have been taught by the colonizers was wrong and meant to destroy them; and that they could actually do something about it. He wanted to see the teachings of Deganawida put into action, not only for the Iroquois Confederacy but for "all Indian Nations."[74]

This idea is seen in the painting *World's First Peoples' Republic* (c.1985; figure 24) where Hall combines elements from his other paintings, just as he has done with the A.I.M. poster. He uses various images to convey the history of the Six Nations confederacy, using interlocking rings in the middle of a larger ring to represent the six Iroquois nations (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and later the Tuscarora were taken in as allies).[75] The ring is carried by an eagle, amid a background of the sky where the moon lingers with a few clouds, one on either side of the big ring. On the left, a man appears with his arms crossed, facing the ring; on the right there is a silhouette of a woman standing through a bright opening in the clouds. Below her is an image of a woman who appears to be swept up by the clouds, reminiscent of Skywoman and her fall from Sky world onto the Turtle's back. Below the rings, there are two portraits, each encircled, of a man and a woman. These images look very similar to the image of the man and woman in *Wedding Invitation* and in one of the drawings for the Unity/Warrior flag (figures 25 and 26). There is also the image of the Flute Player, which appears in an illustration in the *Warrior's Handbook*. On the left is a smoky image of a city, or what appears to be two cities: a seemingly imaginary collection of buildings that appear to be

[74] This message appears in many of Hall's written work, namely because he saw unity as an important solution to regaining sovereignty among all First Nations. A suggested set of "rules" is outlined in his manuscript, "The New Bible", 1990.
[75] The Tuscaroras, who originally inhabited what is now the Carolinas, joined the Confederacy in 1713. Horn, 16; Also see Alfred, 77-82

composed of white light are reaching high into the sky, above a more realistic cityscape (most likely New York City) where Onkwehon'we people in traditional clothing convene, in a way similar to the *Empire State Building* painting. Below this is a misty landscape, seen in many of his other paintings and reminiscent of Leonardo Da Vinci's use of *sfumato* in landscape paintings. The War Chief's headdress appears atop the landscape, rising up from the horizon like the sun. Above is a banner that looks very much like a wampum belt that reads: "World's First Peoples Republic/ at the height of its glory/ the only sovereign nation on Earth."

Hall always points out in his writing that what our ancestors did in the past by only uniting five nations (later six) instead of *all* First Nations, as Deganawida intended when he delivered the Great Law to Aionwatha, the Onondaga man who brought the teachings of the Peace-maker to the people and later was adopted by the Kanien'kehá:ka and made a Turtle Clan Chief.[76] Had all nations been united, says Hall, at the point of European contact these nations would be much stronger and able to defend their homes and their people from being taken away by these foreign settlers. Hall is only depicting the six nations in this painting, however he is not using the image to indicate a superiority over other First Nations, but to present its accomplishments as a model everyone could follow.

He also created symbols such as the Six Nations seal which depicts the strength of all people, clans and communities with interlocking rings (figure 27). The image reads "Sken:nen, Karihwiio, Kasastensera," which translates as "Peace, Righteousness, Power,"

[76] *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy,* 1; Aionwatha is also known as *Hiawatha*. He recited the wampums (laws) of the Kaienerehko:wa to the members of the Confederacy and carried on Deganawida's message through the creation of what is now known as the *Hiawatha belt,* the purple and white symbol of the Iroquois Confederacy. Horn, 12

the motto of the Haudenosaunee people. This reminds us of the balance which must be maintained in nature as well as in society.[77]

Hall's writing and his message of sovereignty, resistance, peace, righteousness and power, were made to inspire a true change in the people who read it—it can even be said that Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall was a modern-day Deganawida. He brought the Great Law to his people and sought to make peace by following these natural laws and through national unity. In *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy,* Hall reflects on what he was able to achieve over the years (the reinstituting of the Longhouse and the repossession of Ganienkeh) and looks at what work still needs to be done. To his last days he painted and wrote, penning letters to various government bodies and First Nations councils in different territories, spreading his message of resistance. The focus of *Rebuilding* is not geared as much toward resistance as *Warrior's Handbook,* rather it aims to clear misconceptions about what the Iroquois Confederacy actually was and what mistakes were made, but more importantly Hall tells the reader what can be done to make it stronger.

"...By removing the biggest stumbling block in the way of the unity of Indian Nations, the way shall be clear for the people to realize the vision and hopes of the Founder of the Iroquois Confederacy. By joining in a big alliance, Indian Nations shall be helping each other and shall grow strong together."[78]

[77] Three criteria are essential to maintaining peace during decision-making through the Kaienerehko:wa: "1) Skennen, which is 'peace,' and does it preserve the peace that is already established? 2) Kariwiio, which is "righteousness," meaning it is morally correct, just as the natural world is correct; and 3) Kasatstensera, which is "power" and does it preserve the integrity of the nation? What does it do for the present and how does it affect the future seven generations from now?" Horn, 22

[78] Hall, *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy,* 43

Comparison to other native artists /contemporaries

During his lifetime, Hall's art was unlike that of more commercially popular First Nations artists who worked in the same medium, such as Alex Janvier and Norval Morriseau. These painters may on occasion have worked with similar subject matter, but their respective styles were much more stylized and abstract, and their artworks were not so direct in their political content as Hall's work.

Of course there were many First Nations artists active in Canada during Hall's lifetime. I have chosen to specifically look at Janvier and Morisseau because 1) they were active and quite popular/influential in the 1960s and 1970s, at the height of Hall's career; and 2) both were featured in the Indians of Canada Pavilion at the 1967 Word Expo in Montreal.[79] As I have mentioned earlier, Hall's own artistic career did not follow this traditional trajectory. He never showed his work in any type of exhibition such as the Expo 67, even though by then he was a well-respected painter and philosopher in Kahnawake, the closest First Nations community to the Expo site on Île Ste-Hélène which is located northeast of the reserve.

Morisseau, like Hall, was a self-taught painter who was also exposed to images in the history of art.[80] However, Janvier and Morisseau had completely different styles of painting from Hall. Both came from the Anishnaabe school of visual training; their work is much more abstracted, and some would even call it "traditional" or "primitive". These artists used a painting style that is considered more traditional to the Anishnaabe culture,

[79] Ruth B. Phillips, "Show Times: De-celebrating the Canadian Nation, De-colonizing the Canadian Museum, 1967-92" in *National Museums: Negotiating Histories Conference Proceedings,* eds. Darryl McIntyre and Kirsten Wehner (Canberra, AU: National Museum of Australia, 2001) 85-97
[80] Carol Podeworny, "Introduction," in *Woodlands: Contemporary Art of the Anishnabe.* (Thunder Bay ON: Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1989), 5-15

seen in Janvier's *Where the Big Fish Live* (1973) and Morisseau's *The Coming of the Black Robe* (1977; figures 28 and 29,) although the latter does have a historical reference to colonialism. Both artists represented subject matter which was ephemeral, spiritual, mysterious and even exotic to non-Native art collectors. Their non-confrontational, apolitical and serene subject matter was perfect to penetrate into the mainstream Canadian art world.[81]Their style may have been a little easier for art critics and curators to swallow, compared to something that would draw such radical attention as Hall.

However, another Anishnaabe artist, Carl Beam (1943-2005) was successfully able to make an impact in both the contemporary Canadian art scene and in First Nations art circles.[82] He was the first contemporary First Nations artist who self-identified himself as a Canadian of Aboriginal descent to have their art collected by the National Gallery of Canada (they purchased *The North American Iceberg* in 1986; figure 30).[83] Beam was mainly known for creating large-scale two-dimensional works on wood panel using photo-transfer, painting and collage, and he later began painting directly onto Plexiglas plates. He was also an accomplished ceramist who studied traditional methods in New Mexico for a number of years. His style of collage has been compared to Robert Rauschenberg's "combines," though he was not directly inspired by the artist. He used subjects and events from various historical moments in his work, combining these to create a visual hybrid, corresponding to one man's observations on North American

[81] Curtis Collins explains in his thesis how these two artists broke through as contemporary aboriginal painters. Morrisseau's work is more "shamanistic" in practice and in subject matter, and Janvier considers himself to be more along the lines of a contemporary abstract expressionist, with his artistic practice not totally reliant on his aboriginal heritage. Curtis J. Collins, "Janvier and Morriseau: Transcending a Canadian Discourse" (Master's thesis, Concordia University, 1994).
[82] Greg Hill, *Carl Beam: The poetics of being.* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada/Art Books Canada, 2010)
[83] Ibid., 18

history. In a 1983 interview, Beam says about his work: "I want to make (people) aware of individual responsibility, both for themselves and for the rest of the human race...you, yourself, are totally responsible. And your awareness is your best protection."[84]

In his most well-known series, *The Columbus Project* (1992) Beam uses images, words and ideas relating to the 1492 "discovery" of the New World by Christopher Columbus, and the beginning of more than 500 years of colonial reign over First Nations people. In one work from this collection, *The Columbus Chronicles*, he juxtaposes images of Columbus with that of a First Nations man, and other recognizable symbols (figure 31). On the top half of the image there is a barely recognizable aerial photograph with the word HOROSHIMA stencilled above. Below, on the right, is the image of Columbus; he is opposite an image of Honii-Watoma, a Chief of the Southern Cheyenne. Between the two figures is a $5 U.S. bill, bees and a traffic light is below. The images, in black and white, are covered in drips which distort and almost wash away the photos. Beam compares historical events, a more modern destructive moment at Hiroshima with the genocide in North America. Money, keeping the bees hard at work, and the traffic light are symbols of patterned behaviour. [85] This could also be a comment on the way the world is run: commerce is what drove Columbus to America. People keep going on with their lives, oblivious to the horrors that are happening right under their feet.

Louis Hall also addressed these historical discrepancies in his work. Many of his writings and posters contain messages directly addressing the colonial myth, but his poster of Christopher Columbus (c. 1974-1980) is directly infusing the hard truth into a

[84] Hill, 15
[85] National Gallery of Canada, "Columbus Chronicles," *Collections*, http://www.gallery.ca/en/see/collections/artwork.php?mkey=42659 (Accessed 3 August 2011)

celebrated American legend and figure of colonial conquest (figure 32). Hall is more direct than Beam in his message, which is written loud and clear across the illustration "The white man steals the red man's land in the name of God. John Dillinger should have robbed the banks in the name of God, the approved way." Hall's drawing is a lot more tongue-in-cheek than Beam's. *Columbus Chronicles*, though explicit in its title, contains imagery which can be left somewhat open to interpretation. There may be critical thoughts about the myth of Columbus' figure, but these opinions are not literally spelled out just as Hall has done here. The angry words and feelings of resentment are clear in Hall's illustration. The drawing itself seems simple enough; it is just a black and white depiction of Columbus arriving in North America. It looks like something that may be seen in a school text book or even a poster commemorating the so-called "discovery." But with the words appearing so bold and clear in the poster, Hall plays with the conflicting images of explorer-hero-mythical figure and homicidal criminal.

Beam was using his work to address the historical discrepancies in the narrative of North America and the role of First Nations people within that history. He was also touched by other events of discrimination and genocide: after visiting Anne Frank's house in Amsterdam, he felt sympathetic to this girl's story and of all the people who were displaced or killed in the events surrounding the Holocaust. Hall also made a connection between the Jewish Holocaust and the struggle of First Nations people to keep their culture alive after moments of persecution and potential extinction.[86] Both artists were concerned with the use of Western sciences and philosophy to justify the eradication of an entire cultural population. It was paramount to these men that these

[86] Hall, *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*, 47-49

discrepancies be addressed and corrected by the best means necessary. Beam was not a militant activist like Hall, although his art exposed certain voids in the popular narrative. They employed different methods, but had similar views. Beam had "envisioned a role for art in constructing and enhancing awareness... He challenges common assumptions including those related to understanding, worldview, identity and being."[87]

Many other artists of Aboriginal ancestry have been able to lead successful careers as internationally renowned professional artists while not sacrificing their opinions or their identity and playing an activist role with their art. These artists have been successful in part because a more open climate has opened in the art world, due partly to the 1990 enactment of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in the U.S. and the 1992 Task Force on Museum and First Nations in Canada.[88] These policies changed the way museums collect, display, and care for objects associated with First Nations cultures. Institutions were required to involve scholars, curators and artists of Aboriginal ancestry in exhibitions and collections where Native objects were concerned.[89] This allowed many groundbreaking exhibits to occur and institutions to be built, including *Land Spirit Power* (1992) at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, *Indigena* at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (also in 1992) and

[87] Ann Beam, quoted by Greg Hill, 31
[88] U.S. Congress. *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*. 101st Cong., November 16, 1990. 104 Stat. 3048, Public Law 101-601. National Park Service U.S. Department of Interior, http://www.cr.nps.gov/nagpra/MANDATES/25USC3001etseq.htm (Accessed January 28, 2011); Canada, *Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: People to People, Nation to Nation.* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/pubs/rpt/rpt-eng.asp (Accessed February 6, 2011)
[89] Phillips, 91

the building of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, which opened its doors in 2004.[90]

One prominent artist-writer-activist is Jimmie Durham (b. 1940), who is of Cherokee descent. Durham was the founding director of the United Nations International Indian Treaty Council in the 1970s, a group which sought human rights for Indigenous people in North America and abroad.[91] He also wrote about the historical misconceptions and misdeeds of the United States (coming from Oklahoma, Durham was more connected to Indigenous issues happening in the U.S). just as Hall did, inserting the Native side of the story. Durham wrote many essays pertaining to history, literature and art criticism. He is still an active artist to this day, using performance art and installation to not only address issues related to indigeneity (his work is not solely based on his cultural background) but issues related to ecology, the physical world, and history, connecting people, places and things in unconventional manners.

Luiseño artist James Luna (b. 1953) is another performance/installation artist who is recognized internationally as a contemporary American artist. He does, however, address the misconceptions within pop-culture and history that encapsulate Native American lore. "I attempt to articulate the discrepancy between the Indians who occupy the White imagination and those who occupy the federal reservations."[92] This notion is evident in the performance-installation *Artefact Piece* (1990; figure 33). Luna spent hours

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[90] Amanda J. Cobb, "The National Museum of the American Indian as Cultural Sovereignty," *National Museum of the American Indian: Critical Conversations.*eds. Amy Lonetree and Amanda J. Cobb. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008) 331-352

[91] Jean Fisher, "Introduction," *A Certain Lack of Coherence,* Jimmie Durham and Jean Fisher (ed). (London: Kala Press, 1993) x

[92] James Luna quoted in Carolyn Eyler, *The Turtle/Television Island Project* (Gorham, ME: University of Southern Maine Art Gallery, 2010) back cover.

in the San Diego Museum of Man in a display case, wearing only a sheet of fabric around his waist, reminiscent of a loincloth. He stayed still, symbolically performing the role of the stagnant Noble Savage, forever frozen in time.

Canadian multimedia artist Kent Monkman combines high-realism historical paintings with immersive installations and video projections which retell the colonial history of Canada through a lens of humour, while giving an Aboriginal and a queer perspective on events and the fascination Europeans have with the "Other". [93] He retells history in paintings such as *Clouds in the Canyon* (2008; figure 34). The image at first glance appears to be a frontier landscape à la Paul Kane or James Earle Fraser. On closer inspection, though, we see his take on Fraser's attraction to and his distorted fantasy of what an Indian is. Monkman, like Hall, creates images which challenge the historical stereotypes by playing with dominant master narratives.

It is clear to see after looking at these more contemporary artists, that Louis Hall was ahead of his time. He was involved in a struggle which many did not believe in during his lifetime, but which the younger generation continued. Especially with the events that transpired during the Oka Crisis, Red Power was more alive than ever in the 1990s.

Kanien'kehá:ka social anthropologist and teacher Kahente Horn-Miller has written about the adaptation of Hall's Warrior Flag by several other First Nations groups in their own struggles against the government and private companies for their land rights. Notable amongst these was the Lobster Dispute of the Mi'kmaq community at

[93] Baker, Joe and Gerald McMaster (eds). *Remix. New Modernities in a Post-Indian World.* (Washington: National Museum of the American Indian in collaboration with the Heard Museum, Phoenix, 2007) 74-75

Eskenoopetitj, New Brunswick in 2001.[94] The flag is even featured in Gord Hill's graphic novel, *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book.* In a chapter illustrating the 1990 Oka Crisis, an image of Hall's Warrior Flag is drawn boldly and with precision, as something instrumental in this struggle.[95]

The symbol of the flag lives on, and is probably one of Louis Hall's most lasting legacies, as it stands for so much—it is either a beacon of strength and resistance to First Nations people, or a threatening image of social upheaval to the oppressors or misguided non-Natives. The symbol has been reproduced in so many forms, as a flag, t-shirt, bumper stickers, blankets, and hats, anything that can be emblazoned with a logo. But it is the idea behind the design of the flag, the idea of unity and all "of one mind" that is most important, and it should be this sentiment that is remembered and carried on by present and future warriors.

Conclusion

Hall's work, his teaching, writing and art, were a means toward one goal: of re-imagining the Iroquois Confederacy and applying the Great Law to modern society. He not only wanted to rebuild the confederacy and have the nations within re-establish power as they had in the pre-colonial era, but to make it something bigger, greater and more fair than it was in the past.

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[94] Horn-Miller, 11

[95] Gord Hill's book illustrates many other struggles which took place in the Americas since the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492. In this graphic history, Hill illustrates a historically accurate account of Indigenous contact and resistance against European colonizers/oppressors. A straightforward and informative introduction written by Cherokee scholar and activist Ward Churchill adds an illuminating backdrop of facts and anecdotes to the graphic narrative. Gord Hill, *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010)

Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall also had a dream that one day, a museum would be built that would house his art and writing to make them available to anyone who wanted to learn.[96] Most of his collection was bequeathed to the Mohawk Warrior's Society upon his death in 1993, though much of it has not seen the light of day since. Some friends and family still hold on to what they have, though, including limited edition prints and paintings given as personal gifts. Hall's niece runs a website dedicated to his art and writing, which may be the closest thing to realizing his dream of making his work accessible.

Today, the Kahnawake Library has most of Louis Hall's writing made available to the community. As we get closer to rebuilding what was stripped away, more and more efforts have been made to preserve our culture. The local cultural center has Mohawk curriculum available and language courses and learning tools such as Rosetta Stone, and there are Mohawk immersion programs in the local schools. Traditional ceremonies are kept alive by the Longhouse that Hall was such a vital part of.

Hall's self-propelled written and artistic production aided in grassroots efforts towards Indigenous sovereignty. The concepts of the centuries-old Great Law or Kaienerehko:wa which he preserved and promoted remains fundamental within Haudenosaunee culture, but also as something that could benefit all human society. The concept of equal power between not only human constituents but all beings within nature is what inspired the symbol of "one feather": all of one mind, all things working together to maintain a beautiful balance. Politics, society, ecology, humanity and nature, can all benefit from the concept of "one feather."

[96] Leclaire

Kanien'kehá:ka and First Nations still have much to learn from Louis Hall. There is so much more to his work which could not be included in this short study, which warrants more scholarly research. Today, when I go for a walk around my neighbourhood in Kahnawake and see the flag flying on a neighbour's lawn or on a storefront, I will not look passively. I will not only be reminded of that summer we struggled to survive, but of my ancestors' struggles, and Louis' struggle. We need to be reminded of the past so we do not lose sight of what is in front of us. The end of the struggle is not in sight, but we can get closer if we face the sunrise each day and march on together, as one.

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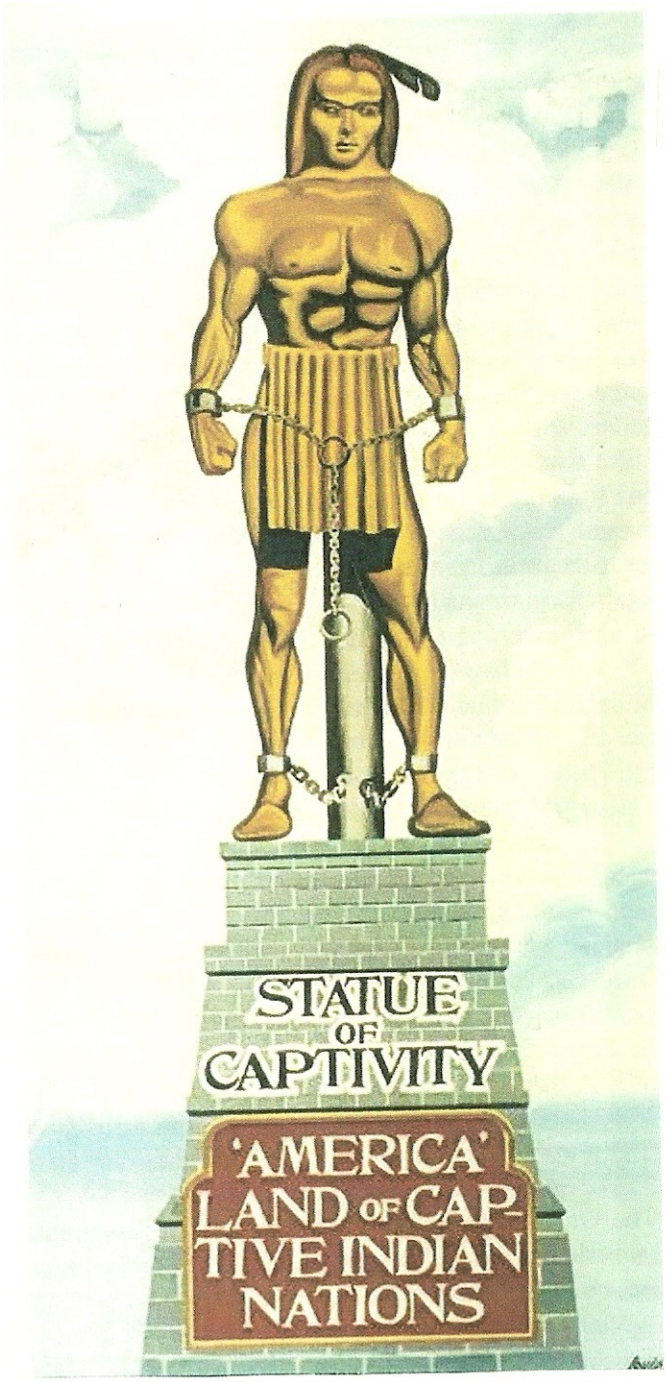
Figures

Figure 1: Louis Hall, *Statue of Captivity* c. 1991. Acrylic on plywood. 81.92 x 48.26 cm
Image: Louise Leclaire



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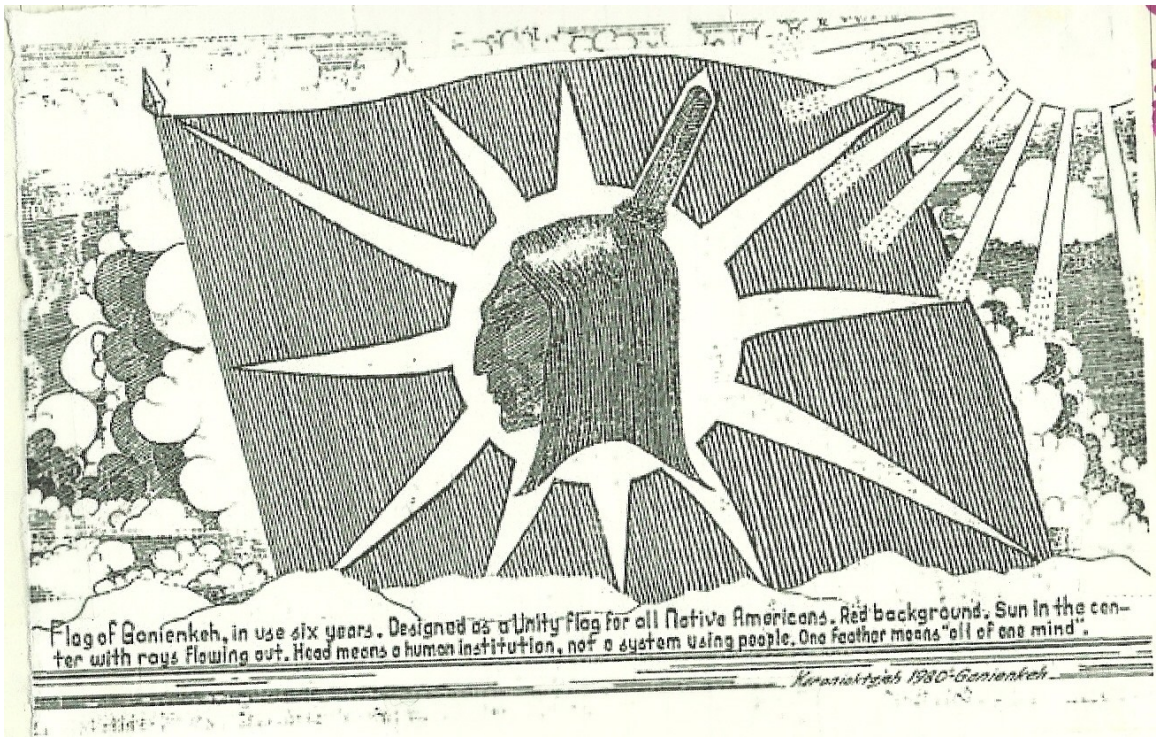
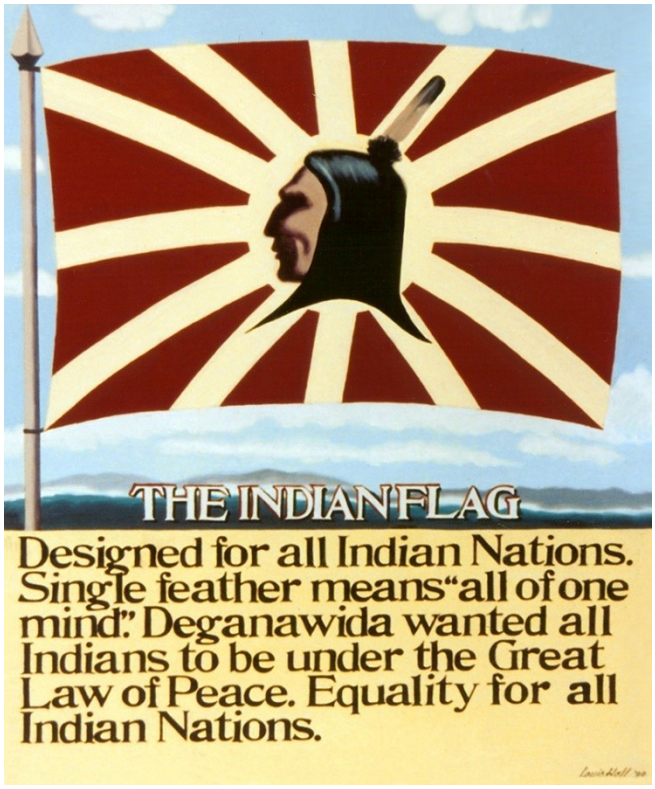


Figure 5: Louis Hall, *Unity Flag*, c. 1980. Acrylic on plywood. Dimensions unknown. Image: Kahnawake Longhouse



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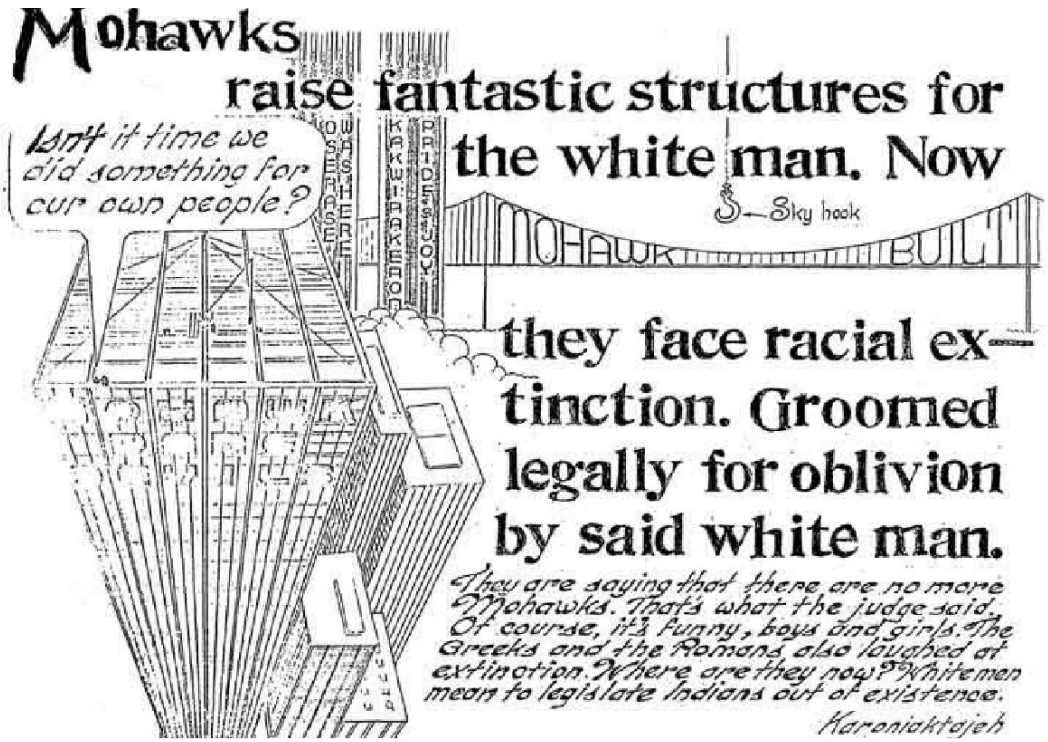

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Figure 15: Map of traditional Haudenosaunee and Kanien'kehá:ka territory. Source: Alfred, 27

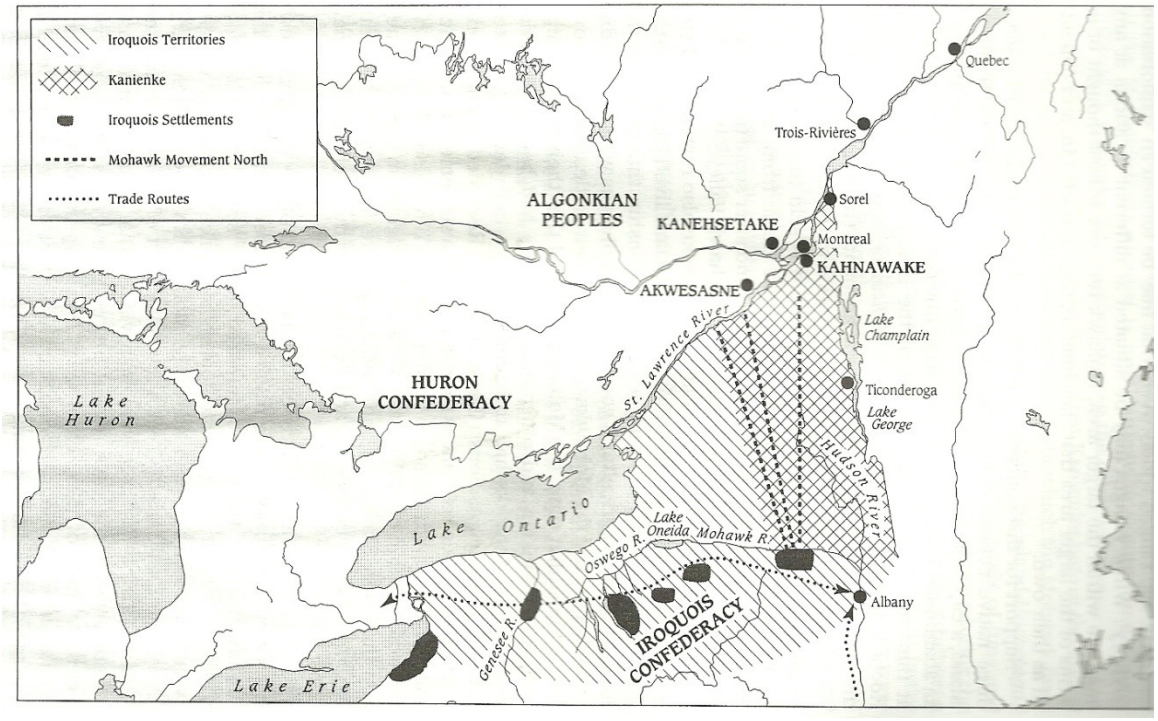

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Figure 18: Alfred Leete, *Your country needs YOU* , 1914. Source: http://www.world-warpictures.com/war-artist-alfred-leete.htm (Accessed August 3, 2011)

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Figure 20: Louis Hall. *Indian Statue of Liberty*. c.1970s. 29.6 x 13.9 cm. Source: *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy,* 18

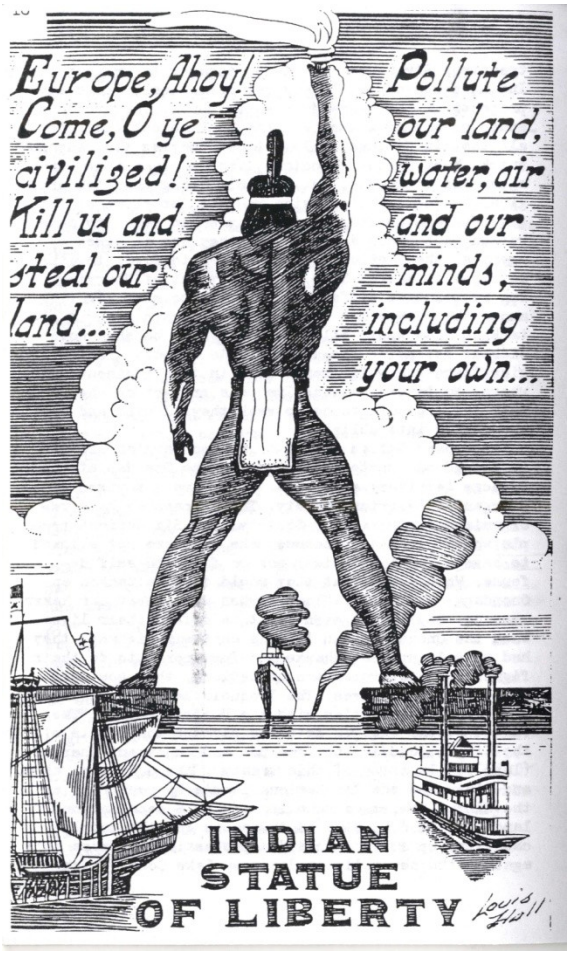

Figure 21: *Colossus of Rhodes*, n.d. "Rhodes Guide, http://www.rhodesguide.com/rhodes/colossus_rhodes.php (Accessed June 3, 2011)

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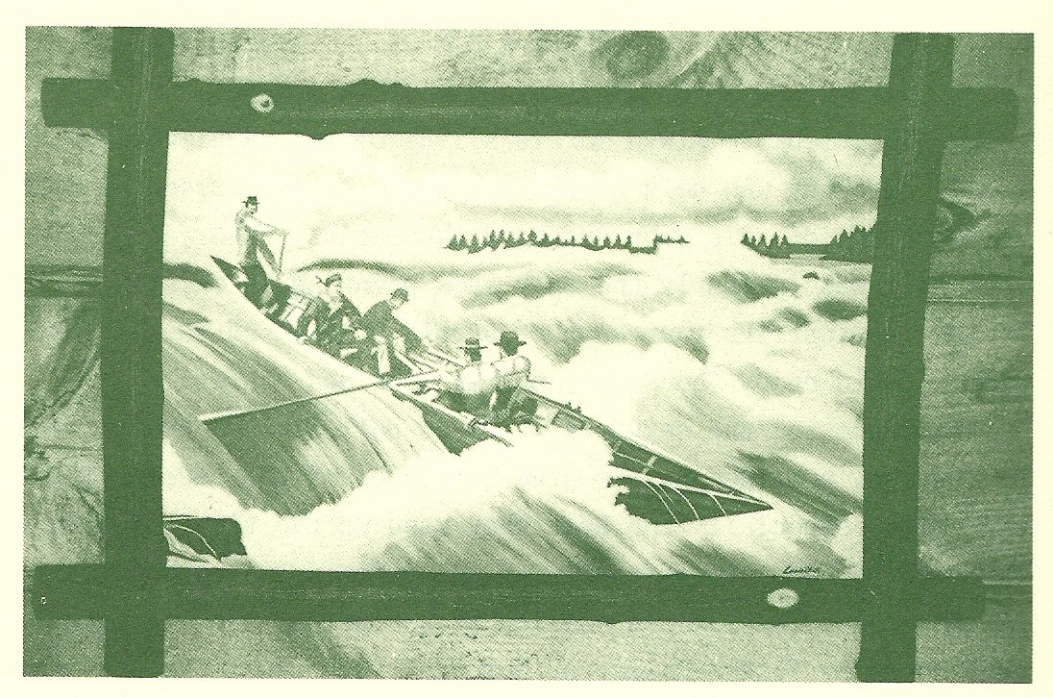

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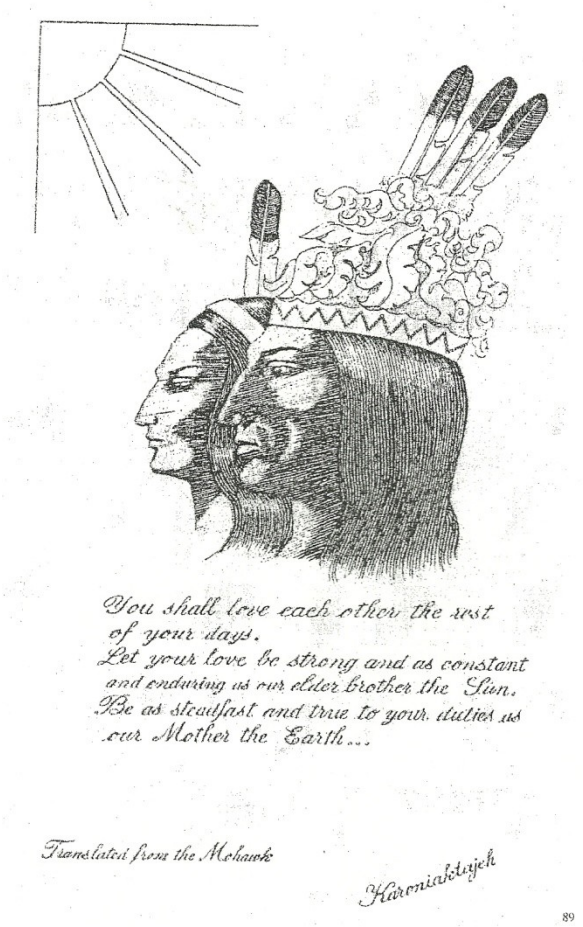

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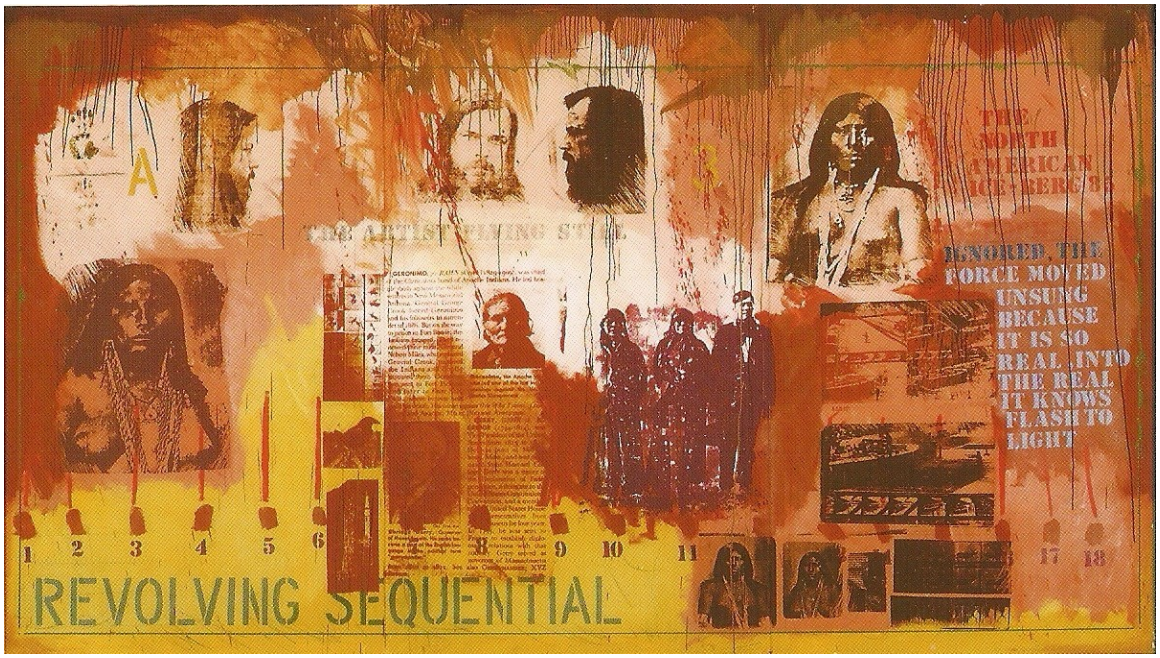
Figure 30: Carl Beam, *The North American Iceberg*, 1985. National Gallery of Canada.



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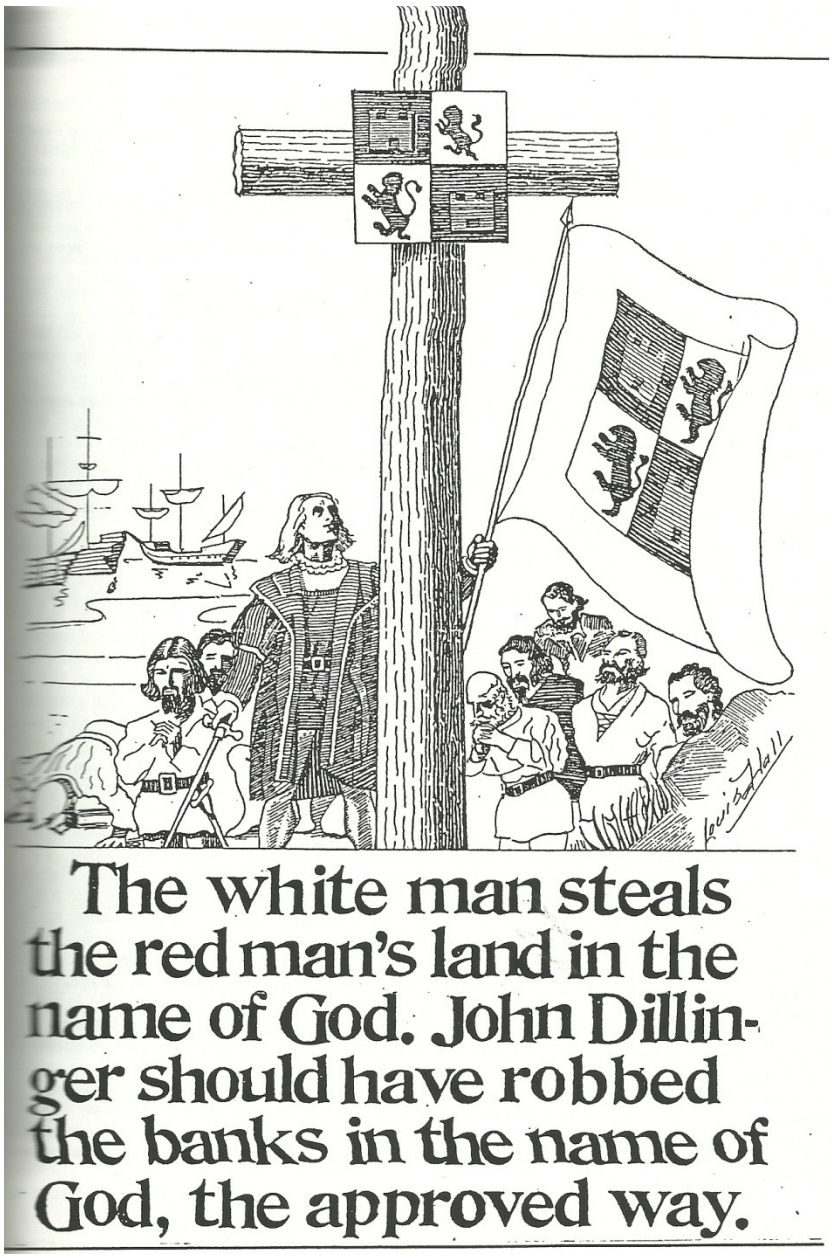

Figure 33: James Luna, *Artifact Piece.* Source: *Heritage in Maine*, http://heritageinmaine.blogspot.com/2010/09/not-nice-indian-storyteller-james-luna.html (Accessed August 13, 2011)

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Glossary

Haudenosaunee correct term for the "Iroquois" confederacy/group of nations. Meaning "People of the Longhouse," or those belonging to the confederacy nations (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk). Does not mean the structure of the longhouse itself, but the symbolic structure of the nations which are united under the confederacy. In Kanien'kehá, it is also called "Rotino'shonni:onwe," a variant on the term "Kanonsonnionwe."

Kaienerehko:wa known as the "Great Law." The natural law and belief system of the Haudenosaunee, as told by Deganawida, the Peacemaker. Emphasis on a reciprocal and equal relationship between humans and their environment, using the three concepts of Peace, Righteousness and Power.

Kanien'kehá The language spoken by Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) people.

Kanien'kehá:ka "People of the Flint." The correct term for "Mohawk." Refers to the people and culture.

Kanonsonnionwe The longhouse; roughly translates to "big house." Not just the physical structure, but a way of living.

Kariwi:io "Power." One of three elements of the Kaienerehko:wa. Using an individual's talents and abilities to contribute to the balance and well-being of themselves and others.

Kasatstensera "Righteousness." Another element of the Kaienerehko:wa. Means to be fair and respect natural law.

Sken:nen “Peace.” Element of the Kaienerehko:wa. Maintaining peace through the balance of power and nature.