Filth on the Frontier: Examining Hygiene Narratives in the Writings of Alfred Fitzpatrick, Edmund Bradwin and the Early Decades of Frontier College

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Abstract

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Frontier College is one of the oldest and most venerable of adult education institutions in Canada. It has provided an invaluable service to generations of some of the most marginalized people in this country, histories of the college have been largely reverent. This thesis seeks to build upon the much rarer critical historiography. Frontier College founder Alfred Fitzpatrick, and his lieutenant and successor Edmund Bradwin both displayed a marked hygiene narrative throughout their writings. They similarly ascribed to a gendered, racist, nativist, colonial worldview which idealized a white, British Canada. Frequently there is a considerable overlap or even conflation between opinions about hygiene and those about immigration or race. This thesis argues that this is not due to an accident or confusion on their part, but that this sort of opinion is consistent with a broader, problematic discourse on eugenics to which they subscribed.

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To my dad, Derek Moore, I wish so much that you could have had the chance to read this. My quest for knowledge came from you. I can picture the proud happy smile you would have had on your face, and I relish the discussions we could have had. Sorry it took me so long.

I would also like to thank Alfred Fitzpatrick, who for some reason drew me in with his quirky ramblings from a century ago. In a funny way I feel I got to know and mostly to like him. Neither of us saw this coming I assure you. No hard feelings OK?

Dedication

To my sweet wonderful Leah Garfield-Wright
Ever a force for good in my life
Thank you for seeing me through

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Rationale

"From a sanitary point of view alone the reading camp is worth the expense of building.

-A Canadian Employer"

At first glance this opening quote is very strange. It emblazons the title page of one of Alfred Fitzpatrick's earliest writings; an obscure pamphlet published in 1902 with the unwieldy title *Library Extension in Ontario... Reading Camps and Club Houses. With Second Annual Report of Canadian Reading Camp Movement*. Many apparently notable people are quoted in this pamphlet making very similar claims. While I had never heard their names, included were doctors and reverends and businessmen. Such positions as these would have given them some renown within their communities in their own time. Their statements immediately begged the following question: how exactly could the presence of a library in a work camp improve the sanitary conditions there? Was the library filled with literature on how to kill germs, build health, wash hands and prepare food? Were these methods avidly read about by the workers and enthusiastically applied to their daily lives in order to have said effect?

In this thesis I will argue that this was not the case. I will argue that this and a great many other statements of similar ilk from the early twentieth century are indicative of a much more expansive, and in retrospect somewhat disturbing, idea of what constituted sanitation or hygiene. Frontier College founder Alfred Fitzpatrick was by no means the most vociferous promoter of hygiene in his day, but his writings are sprinkled with an undeniable narrative. Particularly for middle-class Protestant people at this time, the meanings of words like hygiene and sanitation were much broader than the physical, primarily medical meaning they have today. Hygiene included the quality of books you read and thoughts you thought. Hygiene had a tremendous

amount to do with sexual morality, far above and beyond realistic concerns about venereal disease. Hygienic problems included drunkenness, idleness, gambling, crime, political radicalism, immigration and race as well as the more enduring conceptions of filth and disease which we recognize. This grab bag of fears was often mixed up and conflated in ways which come across as confused when reading them today. Much of this discussion was conducted in a language so passionate and extreme that it is frankly hilarious to read.

Similarly conflated are the opposites which are presented as necessary to combat the tide of filthy degeneracy feared to be sweeping Western civilization. Pure thoughts, wholesome literature, Christianity, home-like influences, marriage, industry, temperance are each of them somehow deemed to be preventative of filth and disease. It was in this sense that a reading camp could improve sanitation. “By giving them good, interesting, healthy books, you will give them healthy thoughts, and so purer conversation and better moral foundations; and upon these alone can a true and abiding religious life be built.” (Fitzpatrick, 1901, p. 30) At a time of starkly shifting values and paradigms, wrenching social change and rapidly expanding scientific knowledge, the language of new discoveries was routinely applied to old moral positions and prejudices. Relatively new scientific terminology was enlisted to lend legitimacy to ideas which were anything but scientific. By far the most important of these pseudo-scientific positions for the purposes of this paper is eugenics.

To a modern reader, eugenics conjures up all sorts of horrors. Too often the most extreme fellow traveler, Nazism, is most of what is remembered of it. Were it not for the Nazis' putting their version of it into practice, eugenics may well have passed quietly into history as a curiosity, taking its place alongside other discredited pseudosciences like phrenology or spiritualism. Prior to the rise of Hitler, eugenics was enormously popular throughout the Protestant West, not least

in Canada. Since Hitler's downfall, less serious connections to this past are quickly and uncomfortably disavowed; part of a broad willingness to forget about it altogether.

Alfred Fitzpatrick was not a eugenicist and Frontier College was not founded to advocate this position either. Early twentieth century Canada had plenty of institutions much more explicitly dedicated to race betterment than this. However, throughout Fitzpatrick's writing, and that of his lieutenant Edmund Bradwin, are a great many statements which place these men and the venerable institution which they crafted firmly within the eugenic worldview. Pierre Walter has examined these men's racial and colonial views in his "Literacy, Imagined Nations, and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada." This paper seeks to build upon this by pointing out the hygiene narrative in the same body of work. I maintain that their views of hygiene informed and enabled Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's imperial colonial ambitions in constructing their version of an incipient Canadian identity.

Rationale:

Canadian identity is an almost chimerical beast. Many times throughout my life, I have been teased by Australian, British or American friends that my country is in fact nothing more than the "fifty first state." While I know that this is not true, it can be difficult to counter such comments. There is an innate (and sometimes embarrassingly lame) tendency among English Canadians to continually define ourselves as "not Americans" and in the meantime fail miserably to explain how or why we are indeed not.

The ridiculous basis for this state off affairs is that very few Canadians know very much about Canadian history at all. If we knew the history of our land and institutions, we would have considerably less difficulty. As things are; other than a few platitudes about our robust

contribution at Vimy Ridge, or Dieppe; or maybe some notion of Tommy Douglas being responsible somehow for public health care, Canadians generally know almost nothing about where they came from. Michael Welton laments this fact beautifully in his *Unearthing Canada's Hidden Past: A Short History of Adult Education*. Welton (2013) quotes Eric Hobsbawm to say: "the destruction of the past is one of the most characteristic and eerie phenomena of the late twentieth century. Most young men and women at the century's end grow up in a sort of permanent present, lacking any organic relation to the public past of the times they live in." (p.1)

Hobsbawm was, of course, British, and while I strongly agree that what he said is broadly true throughout the Western world, somehow I feel it is doubly true for Canadians. Indeed, somehow I feel that Canadians have always struggled to know themselves and their own history (perhaps with the partial exception of Québec). This is not least because most Canadians always think of elsewhere when asked about their identities; what John Ralston Saul (2008) called the "colonial mentality" in his *A Fair Country: Telling Truths About Canada*. So many Canadians identify themselves as English- or Irish- or Sikh-Canadian, even when their family has been here for generations. I think that present within this mechanism is the knowledge that most of us are not native, and so are colonists still. I think there's a degree of colonial guilt involved (I also think that if asked most people would deny this). The colonial mentality which pervades this "nation" leads us to believe that most of us would rather be, and actually belong someplace else.

To return for just a moment to the Battles of Vimy Ridge and Dieppe I mentioned above—they are actually excellent examples of what I am talking about. Vimy and Dieppe are boilerplate grade nine Canadian history lessons. We learn that it was fighting on foreign fields that Canada became a nation. Canada's contributions to the First and Second World Wars were significant, and I don't seek to diminish them at all. However, in both world wars we were a

junior partner amongst the Western allies. Writing our history of those events is like playing a permanent game of catch-up with the big kids. We're always jumping up and down and trying to get noticed in comparison to British or American feats of arms. Our former allies almost never acknowledge Canada's contribution, and it leaves us with a feeling of lame inferiority. Canada's most significant national events happened someplace else and as a sideshow to the greater efforts of other, much more populous and powerful nations. What does this say about us?

John Ralston Saul (2008) rails against the elites who govern Canada's political-economic apparatus for always seeking to 'make it' someplace else. Our cultural producers move to Los Angeles, our CEOs and senior managers cannot wait to climb the greasy pole all the way to New York. Conrad Black didn't hesitate to throw away his native citizenship for the opportunity to become Lord Black in the old colonial metropolis. Those who we put our civic trust in look South, or back across the Atlantic, looking for their chance to move to a 'real' place once they can scramble off of this hokey stepping stone. Their care for the development of Canada is correspondingly lacklustre, short term, self-serving, penny-pinching, environmentally destructive and just plain stupid.

Bitching and moaning about politico-corporate elites is easy enough. I think, however, that even your average middle class Canadian could be said to be guilty of the same tendency. The continual griping about winter weather, and the millions who fly south for as long as humanly possible year after year leap immediately to mind as prime examples. While winter weather and culture form a huge part of the identity of the 'Great White North,' it is telling how many of us hate it. It’s a manifestation of self-loathing which is absurd in no small part because it is unconscious.

A country with a serious problem with collective memory, which is part of a civilization

that is progressively too distracted to remember its own past, and a colonial mentality which leads it to a bizarre sort of unconscious self loathing requires a serious examination of the history of the institutions which helped to create it. The ongoing process of redress for the colonial cultural genocide which was inflicted on native peoples in Canada (land claims, Stephen Harper's apology for residential schools etc.) is a beginning to the inevitable telling of truths we have to have. How can we work on great civic endeavours when we don't really believe in the place we are building? To study the history of the great social movements of the early twentieth century which created the humanistic social democracy of the late twentieth century (to which lately a good deal of willful harm has been done) can maybe help. If you don't know yourself, then other people will define you, and for their own reasons. History is important.

Alfred Fitzpatrick railed against the hyphenation of Canadians. One of his explicit goals in creating Frontier College was to mold a single civic identity; a squeaky clean, white, Anglophone, British Dominion. This ideal was never realized; it broke down under the reality of the diversity of people who flocked here during the last century (and continue to do so). Indeed, that former ideal has fallen decidedly out of fashion and is almost never advocated anymore. This is for the better, I would say. I do think, however, that the failure of this identity left a vacuum which cannot be filled without at least admitting that it is in fact there. Admitting the presence of a vacuum instead of a national identity begs the question of why, and that opens a whole new can of worms which I think a lot of people are uncomfortable with. They don't want to admit that they don't know why.

Alfred Fitzpatrick created an institution which advocated British colonialism in Canada. It was and is, however, also uniquely Canadian. There is something so intriguing about that dichotomy. Lurking in the ambiguity of the man and his creation are, unsurprisingly, a lot of the

tensions and ambiguities which have flowed from his time all the way to our own. An unacknowledged colonial past is Canada's dirty laundry. That a major, and mostly unacknowledged, aspect of that colonialism had to do with fears of dirt itself is interesting. The process of identifying our colonial past can help elucidate our still colonial present. Rather than acknowledge our past, we have opted to forget it, as though sweeping the dirt under the rug will make it go away. Fundamentally, this doesn't work. At a time when much of what defines this country has recently been under assault by willfully reactionary forces, and when the jury is still out on whether that assault has truly ended, a learned and principled knowledge of why Canada became a great place and how much effort it took, can hopefully help us realize how lucky we are and how foolish we are capable of being. Frontier College was a tiny slice of this historical cake, and what I propose to do with this study can constitute nothing more than a crumb. A crumb can be enough however to give you a taste and to make you hungry for more.

I begin my analysis in chapter 2, in which I review a variety of literature pertinent to The hygiene narrative I am examining. The first section describes primary source material written by Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin, as well as several later works of historiography. Following that, I discuss literature relevant to the broader Canadian historical context in which these men lived. The third subsection describes the nature of social, mental and racial hygiene narratives contemporary with the early decades of Frontier College. I continue with a review of literature that describes the colonial context of this era and outlines the history of eugenics.
In Chapter 3, I tell the story of Frontier College and its founder, Alfred Fitzpatrick's early life and motivation. I move on to discusses the social gospel movement of which Fitzpatrick and Frontier College were a part in order to deepen the historical context of their times. I then return to discuss Fitzpatrick and Frontier College in the years following the First World War, up until

Fitzpatrick's death and Edmund Bradwin's assumption of the college's directorship.

Chapter 4 describes Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's anti-immigrant discourse as the first part of their hygiene narrative that I seek to describe, and compares this to the anti-immigrant discourse of an avowed Canadian eugenicist, J. S. Woodsworth. Chapter five begins by describing the conditions in Canadian work camps that these men sought so desperately to improve. It then proceeds to describe how Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's concerns about these hygienic conditions were tangled up in a series of conflated moral assumptions that again compare very well to similar discourses by Woodsworth; the second aspect of the hygiene narrative I am comparing. The chapter concludes by suggesting that it is only through such moral conflation that it is possible to consider libraries as sanitary sites. Chapter 6 concludes by discussing the history of eugenics in Canada, which was much more widespread than most of us know and shows the continuity of much of this discourse into our own times and the implications for our favoured ideas about Canadian history.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I begin by reviewing a series of historiographical works pertinent to the development of Frontier College. Next are works relevant to the broader Canadian historical context of this time and where the college and Alfred Fitzpatrick fit into it. Finally, within that context I examine a series of works dealing with hygiene narratives and eugenics from the same time period. It is important to establish a basis of comparison before launching into a discussion of the evidence itself.

Works About Frontier College

The work most central to this study is Alfred Fitzpatrick's own; his two books, *The University in Overalls* (1920) and T*he Handbook for New Canadians* (1919). Much of the analysis will draw upon this work as a representation of Fitzpatrick's thinking. These books were published throughout the time period that Fitzpatrick was director of Frontier College, a period spanning more than three decades. Fitzpatrick, by all accounts, was an eccentric. His own writing shows this. He was a passionate visionary who in his calls for vocational, part time, correspondence and widespread accessibility in higher education was far ahead of his time. In his fervent promotion of a strong, colonial British Canadian identity he firmly belongs in the Victorian and Edwardian era which was his own. The hygiene narrative I am examining is broadly consistent throughout Fitzpatrick's body of work.

The Handbook for New Canadians is an odd hybrid. While ostensibly for new Canadians, it is really about them. In truth, it is more of a handbook for somebody like a Frontier College labourer teacher in their dealings with new Canadians. Much of the book describes the world's racial hierarchy as seen by Fitzpatrick and his contemporaries. Different races are described based on their desirability as immigrants, their work, cultural and sanitary habits and their ability to assimilate to the Canadian norm. Broadly speaking, Protestant northern Europeans were highly desirable, East Asians were beyond consideration and everybody else fell somewhere in between. The second half of the book is a series of cultural educational material to remind the instructor what is important to impart upon the new arrivals. Descriptions of proper table manners, examples of sanitary bathrooms, imprecations to live cleanly and not in slum conditions clearly show the assumptions of inferiority and lack of hygiene that Fitzpatrick made. Multilingual vocabulary glossaries, advice on homesteading, descriptions of legal rights and

obligations, and civic information about Canada and citizenship naturalization would have been useful and welcome to most immigrants (Fitzpatrick, 1919).

The University in Overalls is Alfred Fitzpatrick's manifesto. It is a call for a full scale mobilization of Canadian society to colonize the north, exploit its resources and in so doing weld Canada's classes together with greater social justice. Fitzpatrick called for a comprehensive expansion of the university system to allow for distance education and vocational training. He wanted to make education accessible to the working class, but also to recognize the valuable knowledge that only existed among workers. In this country, why was the ability to read Latin deemed more valuable than experience building a railway trestle, or felling trees when the latter activities actually reflected daily life here? Not only should manual labourers be educated, but the educated should be encouraged, if not compelled, to perform manual labour. Fitzpatrick saw this grand scheme as powerfully imperative in preventing a 'Balkanization' of Canadian society. At a time when immigrants who Fitzpatrick clearly found undesirable were arriving in great numbers, and many of them were feared to have thuggish, revolutionary ideas, this was only way to preserve the British Imperial social order which he idealized (Fitzpatrick, 1920).

In addition to his full length books, three short books or pamphlets published by Fitzpatrick are also drawn upon in this study. They are: *Library Extension in Ontario. Traveling Libraries and Reading Camps* (1901), *Library Extension in Ontario... Reading Camps and Club Houses. With Second Annual Report of Canadian Reading Camp Movement 1901-02* (1902) and *The Frontier Labourer With Sixth Annual Report of the Reading Camp Association 1905-06* (1906). These round out the other primary sources written by Fitzpatrick. They are a fascinating amalgam of his own writing and published letters sent by a great variety of people from around Ontario and curated for publication. These pamphlets give a glimpse of Fitzpatrick's organizing,

in the early days, and the campaign he waged for support in building Frontier College. The letters are published to show support for his work, and thus their curation doubtlessly shows something of the image Fitzpatrick himself was trying to present. He obviously only published the letters of supporters who said what he wanted to hear. The pamphlets from 1901 and 1902 seem confused by comparison to that from 1906 which is more brief and focused. It is as though Fitzpatrick was floundering in the enormity of the task that he had undertaken, and then after a few years had discovered his direction.

Similarly useful is Edmund Bradwin's (1972) work *The Bunkhouse Man: A Study of Work and Pay in the Camps of Canada 1903-1914.* Bradwin joined Frontier College as one of the earliest labourer teachers in 1903 after dropping out of the University of Toronto. He truly thrived in this role, and continued to do it for much of the next thirty years. Bradwin took over as director of Frontier College following Alfred Fitzpatrick's resignation in 1933 (he died in 1936), and held this role until 1954. Between Bradwin and Fitzpatrick, we have the first five decades of the college's directorship. The two men were lifelong friends and they seem to have shared much in the way of conviction and ideology.

The Bunkhouse Man focuses primarily upon conditions in work camps during the building of the National Transcontinental Railroad in Northern Ontario and the prairies. Bradwin discusses in detail the conditions in specific labour camps: poor construction, leaking roofs, insect infestation, lack of toilet or septic facilities and prevalence of disease. Also described are the many debaucheries, nickel and dime charges levied by employers and great distance from anywhere which conspired to prevent the greater part of workmen from having much to show for their months of work. Government inspection, however mandatory, was perfunctory if not collusive. Bradwin hardly mentions Frontier College in this work, although his experiences in

northern work camps in the time period covered were as a labourer-teacher for the college. Bradwin echoed Fitzpatrick's feelings about the irrelevancy of much university education to the actual needs of Canadian employment. Most significant for the purposes of this paper, Bradwin spent a considerable number of pages describing a markedly similar racial hierarchy, colonial impulse and hygiene narrative, to what is evident in Fitzpatrick's writing. (Bradwin, 1972)

There is a decent historiography written about Frontier College. A handful of masters' theses are explicitly about it; another handful in some way relate. There are some peer reviewed articles, and a few books, some of them written by employees of Frontier College. Considering that this organization has existed for over a century, is Canada's original adult education program and left such a rich body of source material behind, much more could be written on this subject. There are apparently hundreds of boxes of archival material in the National Archives in Ottawa, and many more kept at Frontier College itself.

For a general historical context of Frontier College, and a good many great photographs, there is Morrison's (1989) *Camps & Classrooms: A Pictorial History of Frontier College.* It is a photo essay and as such there is not much written material in the book. A picture, however, can be worth a thousand words and there is the possibility for a great deal of interpretation from this work. Morrison was himself a long time employee of Frontier College and his book is reverent, however there is no particular reason to revile Frontier College, and so a fond reminiscence is also useful.

George L. Cook's (1987) article "Educational Justice for the Campmen: Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Foundation of Frontier College, 1899-1922" describes in detail Fitzpatrick's personal experience in lumber camps in the Algoma district as a window into a description of life in camps all over Canada. Cook continues, describing Fitzpatrick's early efforts setting up the

first reading camps, and his campaign for public support which went substantially unheeded. After a few years of trial and error, the labourer-teacher model emerged as producing the best results. Fitzpatrick's continuing strong religious conviction and motivation are evident despite the seeming appearance to the contrary based on other sources.

George L. Cook and Marjorie Robinson (1990) describe Alfred Fitzpatrick's long struggle to obtain and then retain degree granting status for Frontier College in their "The Fight of my Life: Alfred Fitzpatrick and Frontier College's Extramural Degree for Working People." The college had this privilege granted by the federal government and then clawed back after a pitched battle with Ontario, jealously guarding its interpretation of the provinces' constitutional power over education. This article describes Fitzpatrick's mature vision of educational availability for all, as well as the reason why he was to die a broken hearted man. Cook and Robinson describe Fitzpatrick's use of anti-communism almost as riding the tide of his times in order to promote the college, which suggests ambiguity as to the earnestness of this as a political imperative for him. The fact was, though, that in the context of the red scare following the First World War, federal support and funding for an anti-communist college was more forthcoming. They also give some notion of the breadth and depth of Fitzpatrick's acquaintance and correspondence. Apparently Prime Minister McKenzie-King took a considerable interest in Frontier College. Fitzpatrick seems to have had a wide network of political friends and supporters both in Ottawa and at Queen's Park.

Charlotte Holland's (2009) thesis *Returning to Our Roots: The Place of Faith in the Early Frontier College and YMCA Educational Programs, and in Faith-based Basic Education Programs* is one of the more recent publications regarding Frontier College. Her time as a director of a faith based adult education centre in Manitoba led her to inquire as to the origins of

her discipline. She sought to validate her belief that religious faith had been a major motivator for those who began many of the modern social institutions involved with adult education in Canada. Holland hoped thereby to elucidate the point that the secularization of many of these institutions following the Second World War has led to a loss of motivation on their part. If faith motivated adult education's founders, then a loss of faith would seem to remove the motivation, perhaps explaining a perceived loss of ground or purpose in recent decades. Holland focused on Frontier College and the YMCA. It is a well written and interesting thesis, with a lot that is germane to this study, however, by her own admission, Holland seems to have not found what she was looking for.

In reading Holland's work, I was torn by the seeming intuitive reasonableness of her assumption placed against the fact that her study was clearly deductive in nature. She has her faith, sought to find evidence to confirm it, failed and then continued to believe anyways. In one ear a little angel whispered to me about my own enjoyment in reading various religious scriptures, not to mention their obvious foundational place in any humanistic discipline. In the other ear however, a devil retold me stories of the Scopes monkey trial and the determined ongoing efforts of evangelical Christians, particularly in the United States, to have "creation science" taught as science, which it is not.

Erica Martin's (2000) thesis, *Action and Advocacy: Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Early History of Frontier College* is, as her title indicates, an excellent description of the college's early years. Her stated purpose is to broaden the insufficient historiography on this rich subject. She gives the historical context in turn of the century Canada, Alfred Fitzpatrick's personal history, and the founding of the Reading Camp Association through its first two decades. Martin determines the beginning of the red scare in 1919 to have been a significant turning point in the

history of Frontier College. At this point, after twenty years of existence, Frontier College had reached a substantial degree of organizational maturity. The anti-communist direction which the college took in the early 1920's similarly marked a departure from its previously greater ideological inclusivity. Martin also gives a detailed description of the history of mass immigration to Canada in the early twentieth century.

Pierre Walter's (2003a) article, “Adult Literacy Education on the Canadian Frontier,” gives an historical description and analysis of Frontier College as a ground breaking, social gospel inspired literacy program. He describes the practical, reflective, needs-based development of the college's labourer-teacher model. Walter also delves into Frontier College's purpose as an institution to promote and construct a correct Canadian identity among immigrants. This was, perhaps, the college's principal mission. Walter likewise describes how a major part of Frontier College's mission of Canadianization was working to counter communist agitators in the camps. Both Fitzpatrick's and particularly Bradwin's extensive writings about their perceived racial hierarchies are described. He briefly points out the very masculine nature of both the work camps and Frontier College. While a very few women were involved in the college, they are overwhelmingly absent from the record. Walter concludes that Frontier College was not an institution which worked for social justice in any sense that we would understand it today. Indeed, he describes the college as having been at best ambivalent towards educating the most marginalized people on the frontier: Asians, darker Slavs, First Nations and all races of women. However, for the people that Frontier College did serve, it did so out of some of the very best impulses that the social gospel had to offer. Walter's work is, thus, a critical historical analysis.

In his other article on the topic, “Literacy, Imagined Nations and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada, 1899-1933,” Walter (2003b) describes Frontier

College in the context of a colonial institution that fit into the "larger narrative of British Imperialism" (p. 43). Frontier College explicitly sought to promote the superiority of the English language and the Anglo-Saxon race at the apex of a hierarchy of races based upon their ability to be assimilated to the white British norm. Walter describes Frontier College as the "quintessential embodiment of the grand project of Anglo-Canadian nation building" in the age of print capitalism (p.42). Educational materials used by Frontier College staunchly promoted Canada's place as an integral part of the British Empire. Within this narrative, however, there was a sense of a Canadian national character which was superior even to that of the British themselves. The hardy, peaceful, orderly and well-governed Canadian frontiersmen were seen to have improved upon their British racial inheritance with their vigorous northern climate and manly lifestyles. This was how they had managed to avoid the erratic violence and turbulence of their American neighbours; not to mention the class divisions of the home country. This myth of Canadian history being better than that of other Anglophone democracies lives on in an altered form even today (p. 51).

Juxtaposed against the imagined Anglo-Canadian ideal were a variety of immigrants' undesirable traits, ranging from work habits, to table manners and sanitary customs which were viewed as racially consistent. Frontier College labourer-teachers were expected to lead by example and be the ideal Canadian type for others to assimilate to. Walter (2003b) does point out the fact that the conception of Frontier College by its founders in no way ensured that it functioned consistently in this fashion on the ground. Individual labourer-teachers were very much alone in their postings and would have largely made things up as they went according to the demands of their peculiar situations. Some probably wholly endorsed patriotic bluster, others likely did not. Similarly, while the imagined nation was a significant factor in the motivation

behind Frontier College, doubtless plenty of those educated by it took what they wanted from it and ignored the rest. The extent to which the idealized British Canada ever actually existed is debatable. Both as an ideal and as a reality, it has certainly receded from view since a century ago. However much Frontier College actually tried to promote this ideal, in the long run they failed.

Elizabeth Brunet (2007) devotes a chapter of her thesis *Reading, Writing and Unheard Voices: A History of Literacy Education in Canada, 1880-1950* to Frontier College. She makes the excellent point that almost all of the history written about the college is by insiders, and is consequentially reverent. While the college kept meticulous records of correspondence with labourer teachers in the field, produced their own annual reports, and has been the subject of several books produced by staff, the voices of the labourer students are almost uniformly silent. That most of the students were illiterate or non-English speaking immigrants goes a long way towards explaining this silence, however, the fact that there was no effort to record their beliefs is a very convenient omission. Brunet points out that apart from Pierre Walter's articles (and her own), there is almost no critical historiography of Frontier College.

While not seeking to denigrate the accomplishments of the college, Brunet (2007) re-examines at greater length the racial hierarchies discussed by Walter. She also expands criticisms of the gender stereotypes which informed the operation of Frontier College, and ensured virtually zero female participation. Further she ponders the absence of worker's voices in the narrative. Frontier College was a decidedly politically conservative and anti-radical institution which sought to preserve the British, liberal social order of its day. Labourer teachers were explicitly instructed not to get involved in strikes or labour organization at all, and were at times dismissed for doing so. Certainly labourer teachers would have encountered and competed with labour

organizers whose stories have not survived.

This first section of the literature review has described a combination of primary source documents from the early decades of Frontier College and relevant historiography about the college. It is necessary now to consider where Alfred Fitzpatrick, Edmund Bradwin and Frontier College fit into their larger Canadian historical context. This next section will review material that provides an overview of them in their time, other material that describes the social gospel movement these men were a part of, as well as the work of J. S. Woodsworth, a renowned advocate of the social gospel as well as of eugenics. I will later draw specific comparisons between Woodsworth's work and that of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin.

Works about the Broader Historical Context in Canada

Michael Welton (2013) gives a wonderful overview of the history of adult education in Canada in his *Unearthing Canada's Hidden Past: A Short History of Adult Education.* He gives a broad context for Frontier College and Alfred Fitzpatrick, who he described as an example of a "visionary white man" in the construction of the Canadian liberal order (p. xvii). He argues that while seeking to ameliorate the social conditions wrought by industrial capitalism, these reformers sought foremost to re-enforce the system whose oppression they opposed. He notes that it was a strange hybrid of ideology that could imagine for example both universal rights and racial hierarchies, but according to Welton, Canadian adult education has always had this deep ambiguity to it.

The early twentieth century in Canada was a boisterous time. One of the defining movements from this time has come to be known as the social gospel. A great deal has been written about the social gospel around the world. Indeed, more than enough has been written about it in its Canadian context to suffice. I will be closely following Ramsay Cook's (1985) *The*

Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada and David Marshall's (1992) *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940.* Both are extremely well written surveys of the surprisingly interesting intellectual turmoil underway in what many considered (and consider) to be nothing more than a colonial backwater. They describe the fascinating and contradictory process by which progressive protestant clergymen unwittingly became accelerating agents of secularization in Canadian Society. Their attempts to avoid doctrinal strife and serve a true religion by doing good in the world showed the way forward to a more effective state provision of social work while at the same time de-emphasizing the religious function of much of the clergy. Churches eventually ceded much of their institutional ground to government enterprise, while their religious faithful were lost for good. This same process of unwitting secularity describes very well the trajectory of Alfred Fitzpatrick's life, and he is rightly identified as an adherent of the social gospel. It seems fitting to provide some description of the broader social movement that he was a part of.

Considerable portions of the writings of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin were about the problem of immigration, which links them in the minds of many scholars to their fellow social gospelite J.S. Woodsworth. Woodsworth's (1909) *Strangers Within Our Gates* is a more complete survey of the nativist, anti-immigrant argument in Canada. If I did not come to the reading of this book with some prior knowledge of J.S. Woodsworth, I would have been appalled and dismissed him as vile racist. *Strangers Within Our Gates* is a veritable xenophobe's handbook. At the time he wrote this book, and into the 1920s, Woodsworth was a well-known supporter of eugenics. To his credit he was later to renounce this position as he leaned more towards socialism and began to see how eugenics was used as a bludgeon against the working class.

In *Strangers Within Our Gates* Woodsworth (1909) describes at great length a hierarchy

of racial worth based upon his perception of various peoples' value to Canada as potential immigrants. While differing in certain details, the hierarchy he lists is remarkably similar in form to much of what Bradwin (1972) wrote in *The Bunkhouse Man* and what Fitzpatrick wrote in *Handbook for New Canadians* (1919) and *The University in Overalls* (1920). Woodsworth's book is essential reading if one wants to understand what was known at the time as 'the immigration problem.' The similarity to this of what Fitzpatrick and Bradwin wrote makes very clear that they had a good deal in common with Woodsworth, the eugenicist, intellectually speaking. *Strangers Within Our Gates* likewise regularly refers to immigrants as being dirty, unhygienic and like livestock. The purpose of this thesis is to point out that the immigration and hygiene narratives in all of these works are in fact the same thing and are essentially eugenic in nature.

With something of the broader Canadian historical context for Alfred Fitzpatrick, Edmund Bradwin and Frontier College established, the next step is to present some broader historical context for the hygiene narrative in their work that I am seeking to describe. Woodsworth's (1909) *Strangers Within Our Gates* is an excellent segue into this topic, but I need also to draw upon works that provide some analysis. There are a huge and far flung variety of sources which could be drawn in to support this argument. I have picked a few which describe hygiene narratives from this time period both in Canada and elsewhere in the Western World.

Works about Hygiene

Reading into hygiene in the early twentieth century is a vast undertaking, and I cannot pretend to have more than scratched the surface. It is certainly a generalization to consider hygiene as having been a single social movement. There was however considerable and varying

overlap among the three main categories which I have identified. These are social hygiene, mental hygiene and racial hygiene--this last one was also known as eugenics. While I will briefly describe all of these categories, it is racial hygiene / eugenics upon which I intend to focus my comparison of the writings of Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin. This being said, there was such a diversity as well as a broad conflation among all of these hygiene categories, that it is rare to find an example of an opinion that fit neatly into only one of them. While drawing a comparison principally to racial hygiene, it must be noted that social and mental hygiene concerns were part and parcel of this narrative.

Crudely, what was known as social hygiene at the turn of the last century corresponds to what we now call sexual health or sexual education. At that time, this still focused overwhelmingly on abstinence and female 'purity,' at least prior to marriage. Social hygiene included a lot of concern about temperance, criminality and poverty. Indeed, some aspects of social hygiene could fairly be called direct ancestors of today's social work. Much of it could equally fairly be called nineteenth century protestant morality dressed up with modern terminology and the undeserved assumption of scientific authority. Social hygiene also concerned itself extensively with what would now be called 'public health,' including disease prevention, sewerage and other forms of sanitation. All of these concerns show up in the writings of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin, as will be demonstrated below.

Mental hygiene had considerable overlap with many issues dear to social hygiene. As a distinct category, however, mental hygiene can be described as the forbearer of what we today call mental health, psychology and psychiatry. Mental hygiene also overlapped with such pseudo sciences as phrenology and even spiritualism. It is significant that several issues we would now consider to be moralistic were often viewed from a mental hygiene point of view. Thus at the

time alcoholism or prostitution could be grounds for confinement in a mental institution.

By far the most historically controversial hygiene movement, at least in retrospect, was racial hygiene. Also known as eugenics, racial hygiene was based on the pseudo-scientific belief that since improved medical knowledge and practice had drastically reduced mortality in Western nations since the middle of the nineteenth century, it was no longer merely the fit who survived. Now the unfit, feeble-minded, or degenerate also lived to propagate their genes. While wealthy and middle class families (read the fit) had fewer children in every generation, the poor and allegedly congenitally diseased (the unfit) were seen to continue having large families. As such it was feared that within a few generations these degenerates would crowd out the healthy and society would collapse under the heavy burden of caring for them.[1] The most famously enthusiastic adherents to racial hygiene theories were, of course, the Nazis, and the hygiene movement will be forever sullied with the dirt of their subsequent extremism.

To a large extent, there was overlap and conflation among the various hygiene movements. Thus the perceived 'racial problem' of the underclass outbreeding those deemed worthier was simultaneously viewed as a social problem; the kind that social gospel activists like Alfred Fitzpatrick were trying to solve. Alcoholism or prostitution could land somebody in a mental institution, although these failings were equally likely to be viewed as the results of social problems or inherited racial degeneration. All three categories of hygiene could be mutually

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[1] It is an interesting aside that the term eugenics was coined by Francis Galton, perhaps the greatest of all eugenic theorists. His much more famous cousin, Charles Darwin appears to have broadly agreed with him when he wrote: "We civilized men, on the other hand, do our utmost to check the process of elimination; we build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed, and the sick, we institute poor laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of everyone to the last moment. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from a weak constitution would have succumbed to smallpox. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. It is surprising how soon a want of care, or care wrongly directed leads to the degeneration of a domestic race; but excepting in the case of man himself, hardly anybody is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed." (Baron, 21)
Perhaps the term 'social Darwinism' is more aptly named than I had previously thought.

competitive or entirely conflated. While there were almost certainly some social hygienists who believed in racial equality and mostly wanted to promote birth control, they were a minority. They were also in the same milieu as some appalling racists, and that is what history has mostly remembered about them.

The milieu the majority of these people came from, was precisely that of Alfred Fitzpatrick. He was an influential, progressive, Anglophone Protestant with serious concerns about hygiene and immigration. Angus McLaren's (1990) *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* describes the vast extent to which this very milieu inclined towards eugenics in this time period. The ideological overlap is striking. Eugenics had a wide advocacy in Canada, a fact that has been largely forgotten, although implementation of eugenic policies was much more limited here than in Germany or the United States.

According to McLaren (1990), those considered to be eugenically unfit were mostly the same groups who had been derided for moral failings in various ways beforehand. In fact, eugenics was largely middle class Protestant morality attempting to validate itself in changing times by appropriating a veneer of scientific validity. In this sense, it compares very well with the social gospel; something profoundly unscientific trying nonetheless to talk the new talk as a substitute for walking the new walk. Unsurprisingly, it inhabited the same social niche. Alcoholism, prostitution, venereal disease, criminality, insanity and even political radicalism were all seen to be more or less genetic traits which could be bred out of society by controlling the reproduction of the undesirable underclasses. The notion of white racial superiority featured prominently in eugenic discourses as well.

A series of policies to preclude a so called dysgenic future was advocated in several countries, which encompassed segregation of the feeble minded in asylums, sterilization

(voluntary at first but increasingly compulsory), immigration restrictions, marriage restrictions, anti-miscegenation laws and at its most extreme, humane eradication of the unfit in order to end their suffering and prevent their being a burden on society. While it is primarily Nazi Germany that is remembered for implementing these policies, Jeremy Hugh Baron (2007) points out in his *The Anglo-American Biomedical Antecedents of Nazi Crimes: An Historical Analysis of Racism, Nationalism, Eugenics, and Genocide* that almost none of the Nazis' ideas were unique to them; everything including the gas chamber having been previously discussed in Britain or the United States. More eugenic policies than we care to remember were implemented elsewhere also. Nazi laws passed to segregate Jews were actually based on segregation laws from the southern United States. That South Africa was in the midst of constructing apartheid within the British Empire at the same time should not be forgotten either.

Indeed, I did not immediately recognize Alfred Fitzpatrick's hygiene narrative for what it was, because I was initially unaware of the currency these ideas once had. At first I found it merely strange, then as it came up again and again, I wondered if it was a psychological peculiarity of this likable but strange man. Eventually I was reminded of a reading I had done years ago about medical colonial history in South Africa; and it was from here that I developed this thesis. The article was Swanson's (1995) "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony." This article describes how an abhorrence of filth and the promotion of remedial, punitive sanitation was one of the driving forces of the construction of the apartheid state in colonial South Africa.

Disease, filth and violence were often conflated with poverty and the working classes in the English colonial metropolis. In South Africa, however, it was native African and imported workers from the Indian subcontinent who filled this class role. Whereas in England, discussion

of sanitation and infectious disease was a social metaphor for talking about the poor, in a colonial setting, the metaphor was about race. In each case, efforts were made to segregate the problematic 'unhealthy' group from 'respectable' read middle and upper class or white society (Swanson, 1995).

In early twentieth century Canada, these social, racial, medical and colonial categories were conflated in very similar ways and the language used to do it was that of hygiene in its various manifestations. Thus while the 'white,' Canadian-born worker building the railroad might be described as clean blooded and his 'non-white' immigrant companion would be described as drunken, violent and filthy, even though both of them probably drank some of the time and were frequently covered in mud. The same colonial and racial metaphors existed here as elsewhere in the British Empire and this is strikingly evident in the early writings about Frontier College.

In South Africa, it was taken as a given that 'lesser' races did not know how to live, were ignorant of the newly developed germ theory of disease, lived in overcrowded and squalid conditions and spread disease. Therefore, the very least that could be done was to isolate this problem from the white community. That much of this uneducated poverty and resulting ill health was in fact the result of the very segregationist policies allegedly designed to deal with the problem was not viewed ironically at the time. It became a self-fulfilling prophecy (Swanson, 1995). This transatlantic digression is warranted because the same highly loaded sanitary preoccupation is recurrently evident in Fitzpatrick's writing. Indeed, there is mounting evidence to suggest that we need not cross the Atlantic Ocean to find evidence of apartheid, we had a similar project underway in this country. While this undoubtedly happened on a smaller scale here, it was also much more successful.

A recently released documentary film *The Pass System* by director Alex Williams (2015) describes a secretive and extra-legal (read illegal) process by which agents of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs assumed the right to issue passes giving permission to native peoples to leave their reservations in western Canada following the Northwest Resistance of 1885. Without a pass issued by the local Indian agent, people were forbidden to leave their reservations. This system never had basis in law but nonetheless severely restricted the movement of thousands of people for many decades. This is a very disturbing and little known chapter of our history which will require more elucidation in the coming years. The similarity to contemporary apartheid segregation in South Africa is obvious. This is evidence of a racially motivated segregationist policy in Canada; precisely the kind of eugenic policy being constructed elsewhere and which we Canadians like to pretend never marred our history. According to Cullingham & Williams (2015) film *The Pass System* there was a concerted effort on the part of various Canadian authorities to destroy the evidence that remained of this chapter of our history. As such, only a few examples of these passes have survived.

The principal legislated eugenic policy in Canada was immigration restriction. This was undertaken by the federal government. The tables describing deportations to be found in J.S. Woodsworth's (1909) *Strangers Within Our Gates* (see below) show the extent to which immigration law was influenced by the desire to exclude those deemed inferior. McLaren (1990) describes how at the provincial level, both Alberta and British Columbia passed legislation enabling the sterilization of the feeble-minded. Some thousands were in fact operated upon during the four decades these laws were on the books. The racist dimension of eugenics is clear in these Canadian cases as well; while First Nations people made up only 2.5% of the population in these provinces at the time, they were the victims of 25% of the sterilizations (pp. 159-160).

Disproportionate sterilization in the Prairie provinces, when linked with the movement restriction imposed upon native people by the pass system in the same area, hints that a perilous trend was underway in this country as well. It may be that eugenic excess in Canada was limited by small population size spread over vast amounts of land. Maybe this had the effect of at least allowing some native nations' territory to continue existing, however restricted and marginal the land left to them may have been. I suspect, however, that in the years to come, more and more evidence will be found to corroborate a eugenic, if not genocidal, intent at work here in Canada too. I believe that the idea of Canadian history as having been somehow gentler and better than for example that of the United States will not survive the coming decades.

Alfred Fitzpatrick, Edmund Bradwin, J.S. Woodsworth and almost everybody else who wrote anything about native people during this time period viewed them with nothing but contempt, if not disgust. This generation of men made no effort to hide their attempt to destroy native cultures. To be clear, I do not seek to paint Fitzpatrick and Bradwin as Nazis or authors of a genocide. They were not. However, the trends inherent in the hygiene narrative in their work which I am discussing are disturbing when viewed in their global context. Smaller numbers of people and greater geographic isolation may have served to defuse latent possibilities in their intentions and ideology. Exactly the same kind of thinking elsewhere led to some of the very worst outcomes the twentieth century has to offer. Because the worst did not happen here does not mean that these trends in Canada deserve to escape historical comparison.

Having reviewed literature pertinent to the historiography of Frontier College, its broader Canadian historical context and the hygiene narrative I am focusing on in this thesis, I now need to provide a historical description of the creation of Frontier College. The following chapter contains a brief biography of Alfred Fitzpatrick's early life as well as the specific personal

motivations he had for abandoning his career in the church and dedicating the remaining three and a half decades of his life to a campaign to further the development of the college.

Chapter 3: The History of Frontier College

This chapter briefly describes Alfred Fitzpatrick's early life, and why he became motivated to pursue the career that he did. Frontier college is placed in its historical context among other institutions that grew out of the social gospel movement in the early twentieth century. Next I return to the story of Frontier College, particularly the period following the First World War. Establishing the context enables a better understanding of the period between the wars, the time when both Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin were writing the works which I will examine in detail below.

Fitzpatrick's Beginning

The headline quote at the beginning of this paper, about reading camps promoting sanitation, is from Alfred Fitzpatrick's (1901) second annual report. It is some of the earliest published material by the author, and it dates from the very beginning of Fitzpatrick's work to improve the lives of the tens of thousands of frontier labourers in Canada's north. The Reading Camp Movement began in Nairn Centre, Ontario in 1899 and would over the next few years morph into Frontier College. It soon became a Pan-Canadian institution which still exists over a century later.

Frontier College has been one of the great adult education movements in Canada's history. For the bulk of its time as an institution Frontier College has worked to provide literacy and English second language education to people working in remote resource extraction

industries far from urban centres. Mining, lumbering and railroad construction camps were where the least well served new Canadians and illiterate workers were located. Taking education out of the cities and to where the need was greatest was the cornerstone of Alfred Fitzpatrick's vision. Frontier College reading camps were located in tents, log cabins and railcars as well as in more permanent structures (some of which later became schools or libraries in their own right). As the economy has changed, and most rural work mechanized, many of this demographic now find themselves in the cities. This is where Frontier College continues to operate today. In this way, the institution has reflected the needs of its constituents and changes in Canadian society.

Throughout this time, Frontier College has also been a quintessentially Canadian institution of the kind that can be difficult to identify. One of the great anxieties of Canadian-ness, at least in English Canada, is not really knowing who we are. There are too many identities in this multicultural country to be able to definitively say which ones are really 'ours.' Frontier College was founded at a time when this was not the case, when the sturdy British hewer of wood or drawer of water was not yet an antiquated cliché. Following the fervent desire of its founder, Alfred Fitzpatrick, Frontier College sought to consciously mould Canada in this very image; a nation of hardy frontiersmen, true north strong and free. However, as times changed so did this institution. In past times it reflected many of the tendencies, good and bad, of the society it sought to propagate. It still does.

Alfred Fitzpatrick was born into a staunchly Presbyterian loyalist family living in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, in 1862. He was the tenth of twelve children and the seventh son born in his family. As such, there was never much expectation that he would take over the family farm, and indeed, there seems to have been plenty of other hands to enable young Alfred's physical burden to be somewhat lighter, allowing him to turn his mind to study. While his parents

believed strongly in education, it was only Alfred who went on to post secondary study, a privilege about which he always felt guilty (Martin, 2000, pp. 50-60). Fitzpatrick (1920) dedicated *The University in Overalls* "To my brother Tom who did too much manual labour while I did too little" (dedication page).

From the beginning, Alfred Fitzpatrick had powerful influences that pushed him towards his life's work. His principal at Pictou Academy, Alexander Mackay, was a leading advocate of educational extension in his time. Similarly, George Munroe Grant, principal of Queens University during Fitzpatrick's time there, was a driving social gospel force behind Queens' development of an extension department to make education broadly socially accessible. Fitzpatrick took these lessons to heart and made them his creed. He was decades ahead of his time in calling not only for a comprehensive system of adult education in far-flung locations, but for the state to take responsibility for this task. Fitzpatrick called for a decentralization of Canadian education away from the cities and universities and out into the hinterlands where he believed the most deserving and least well-serviced Canadians were located. He strongly believed that not only should workers be educated, but that the educated should work (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990).

Fitzpatrick began his reading camp association (as Frontier College was first called) in 1900 and always viewed it as a stop-gap demonstration project. He intended to prove that labourers could learn and that learning improved their lives. He wanted to draw attention to what he saw as a glaring social omission in Canada, one that he believed was the state's responsibility to fix. Repeatedly throughout his life, Fitzpatrick drew attention to the huge revenues and economic benefits brought to Canadian society by mining, lumbering and railroads. That this wealth was created upon the backs of an exploited class of labourers while mostly flowing

upwards to enrich a managerial and rentier class seriously bothered him. If society benefited so grandly from these men's labour, then why shouldn't they have a chance to derive some benefit from society? Access to education seemed like the obvious starting point for self improvement (Martin, 2000).

A pivotal change in the development of Alfred Fitzpatrick's career as an educator had come during an 1892 during a trip to California. Having just graduated from Queens and become an itinerant Presbyterian minister, Fitzpatrick decided to go and find his brother Isaac who had lost contact with the family but was known to be working in the redwood lumber camps. Another brother, Leander, had previously traveled to California and drowned in a log driving accident; locating his grave was a further motivation for the trip. Fitzpatrick found Isaac alive, but was gravely saddened by the miserable conditions he and his fellow labourers lived in. Upon his return to Canada, and pastoral appointments in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Ontario over the course of the next decade, Fitzpatrick observed similarly impoverished lifestyles in a whole range of frontier industries (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990).

Eventually Fitzpatrick reached the conclusion that ministering to men's souls, while their lives were a desperate material struggle with little chance of escape, was a waste of time. People could not be expected to ponder and understand theology when they had not had enough to eat. Preaching at ever changing groups of people with whom he had no personal relationship, seemed to him to have very little effect. Fitzpatrick wrote “there was simply no point sermonizing to men who were largely Catholic and Orthodox and who were unable to understand either the language [of the sermon] or the message” (G. Cook, 1976, p. 20). Like so many other social gospel clergymen from his time, Fitzpatrick decided it was far more important to improve the physical conditions of the impoverished, polyglot masses, in order that they then would be capable of

receiving the Christian message. Likewise, he concluded that that message needed to be distilled down to its fundamentals so that it could be presented simply, in everyman's language. He decided to leave the ministry and pursue his idea of building and promoting reading camps full time (Martin, 2000).

Before further pursuing the life and times of Alfred Fitzpatrick and Frontier College, it is pertinent to briefly discuss the social gospel movement he was a part of. This improves the understanding of the historical context of the times. Also, a more detailed understanding of Fitzpatrick's milieu and their commonly held opinions can lead to significant elucidation of statements that Fitzpatrick himself made. That many liberal, protestant, clergymen like Fitzpatrick were eugenicists casts light on the hygiene narrative in his own writing.

Fitzpatrick and the Social Gospel

Alfred Fitzpatrick's decision to leave the ministry and work to improve the living conditions of his parishioners should not be viewed as a loss of faith on his part. Indeed, it was entirely consistent with one of the main activist thrusts of Protestantism in the early twentieth century. At the time, it seemed to be a more effective and practical form of faith than remaining within the constraints of the clergy. While the result of his actions would seem to lead Fitzpatrick's work further and further away from religion for the rest of his life, that was not his intention at the outset. An undeniable motivation for him was to help others build "better moral foundations; and upon these alone can a true and abiding religious life be built" (Fitzpatrick, 1901, p. 30).

The late nineteenth century saw a tremendous intellectual crisis wrack the western world. Questions raised by Charles Darwin's publication of *On The Origin of Species,* and by the

application of historical criticism to the Bible led to a profound crisis of belief. Particularly within Anglophone Protestant churches, there was a widespread tactical response. In an attempt to salvage the essence of Christianity from the apparent wreckage, many protestant clergymen determined that it was expedient to reconcile scientific findings with their own beliefs. In so doing, they unwittingly accepted the thin end of a wedge. In the name of defending their faith, they themselves became principal actors in an accelerating process of secularization. Each accommodation to modern beliefs that they conceded logically led to others, causing a sort of revolution of falling expectations. Once any part of the Bible was accepted to be less than the literal truth, so could it be claimed was the case for another part and so on until enough had been questioned to make any claim of scriptural infallibility ridiculous. This seemed to many to undermine the very essence of Protestantism. One of the great ironies of the secularization of western society in the early twentieth century is that the people who oversaw the process, and who crafted the institutions which enabled it were the clergy whose intentions were to do the opposite.

This debate inspired within the clergy about whether or not to accommodate scientific findings led to a splintering conflict. In Canada, as elsewhere, a series of doctrinal controversies and heresy trials took place in the final decades of the nineteenth century; the result of an old guard among the clergy trying to expunge those who advocated giving ground. This received a great deal of publicity at the time. For example, George Workman was expelled from the faculty of Victoria University in 1891 for his liberal thinking after a process that was gleefully followed by the national press (R. Cook, 1985, pp. 29, 75). Similarly, Alfred Fitzpatrick's later tutor, George Munroe Grant was involved in a long simmering controversy over whether organ music was acceptable in his Presbyterian congregation in Halifax (Marshall, 1992, pp. 42-45, 76-80).

At one time such a ritualistic expurgation of error would have reinforced the religious edifice. In these changing times however, with all the messy details splashed across the front page of the widely disseminated newspapers, such a high handed mincing over details made church hierarchies appear ridiculous to a lot of people, and harmed their status. That which was supposed to reinforce belief helped undermine it. Indeed, even the recognition that their efforts to bolster Christianity were having the opposite effect were far from obvious at the time. Many clergymen, and Alfred Fitzpatrick was certainly among them, tried to sidestep the controversy by actually applying their beliefs to the real world. Their engagement with the secular world was not intended as compromise, but indeed as evangelism.

On the surface there appeared to be a tremendous resurgence of religious fervor that swept across the western world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as thousands of highly motivated clergy (and parishioners too) like Fitzpatrick got down to work. Revival meetings, overseas and 'home' missionary work, the temperance and women' suffrage movements, broad efforts at church union, the creation of social service institutions such as the YMCA and Salvation Army at times all seemed to be pulling together towards the same goal. Protestantism exuded tremendous confidence in the future. Indeed, many activists enthusiastically talked about achieving their dream, "the evangelization of the world in this generation" (Carter, 1971, p. 23).

The seemingly unending series of great revival meetings that packed urban meeting halls and tented rural fields with believers hoping to be saved were a great example of the social gospel dichotomy at work. This was a new style of religious ceremony, created for mass consumption, and was much more participatory and exciting than regular church worship. From Dwight L. Moody's immensely popular campaigns of the 1870s and 1880s to the Oxford Group

movement of the 1930's, revival groups toured the country like circuses and became a fixture of the Canadian spiritual and entertainment landscape. Huge energy and massive attendance seemed to many to imply a great awakening of religious engagement among the population as a whole (Marshall, 1992, pp. 72-98, 205-228).

The trouble with revivals was that they actually served to drain attendance from regular church worship, and provided a sensationalist and ultimately shallow substitute. Rather than entering into a regular, profound spiritual relationship with a community, revivals allowed people to believe that their sins could be washed away by a single conversion experience, a sort of religious quick fix. Similarly, they were designed to have a mass appeal, and so focused on areas of doctrine considered to be fundamental to all forms of Christianity. The downside of this doctrinal inclusiveness was that it allowed a seriously diluted form of religious knowledge and expectation to prevail among the faithful. The impact of revivals can be used as an example to extrapolate what was going on throughout society during the social gospel.

Missionary activity sent many of the most energetic people in the churches elsewhere. While expanding into imperial colonies the churches lost their base in their home countries. The Y.M.C.A. began with deep Christian roots and intentions, but then gradually evolved into a community organization that provides gymnasia and swimming pools to the public and housing to the homeless. The Salvation Army is another classic example of a social gospel institution. Today, it is mainly known for running thrift stores, food banks and homeless shelters. The Salvation Army is still religious after a fashion, although it always was bare-bones non-denominational Christianity. In providing crucial social services which were not being filled by the state or any other group, these organizations adapted through time to the point where many people are unaware of their religious foundation.

This is exactly the transformation which occurred at Frontier College as well. While this was never a religious institution, it was founded by a churchman who sought to instill patriotic and Christian values into new immigrants. Fitzpatrick's stated purpose at the outset was to provide an educational and material foundation in these workers' lives upon which a true religious edifice could be built. The fairly rapid transformation is visible in Fitzpatrick's writing as well. In his 1901 *Library Extension in Ontario. Traveling Libraries and Reading Camps* Fitzpatrick shared the views of many of his religious minded middle-class sponsors of the reading camp movement. "As a matter of fact the need for an extension to the public library system to lumber and mining camps is imperative, as the majority of men on the frontier seem prejudiced against the so called religious literature, the supply of which is fragmentary..." (p. 12). Fitzpatrick, in his early years, seems to have been unable to believe that so many workmen would reject Christian literature. The best reason he can think of for this lamentable state of affairs is that these men did not have access to the entire texts. If only they had the time and education to read, and comfortable libraries to read in, then surely they would read literature of an uplifting, Christian nature. The workers would thereby be brought closer to god, and to emulating the middle class morality of the hopeful sponsors.

The hope of an increased religiosity spread among camp-men through the availability of literature however was quickly proved to be ill founded. Even in his *Library Extension in Ontario. Traveling Libraries and Reading Camps 1901,* Fitzpatrick (1902) published a single letter which voiced a criticism of the religious intentions of those who worried about workmen not having literature, showing that he was well aware of the opinion. The letter was from George E. Vincent of Chatauqua, NY (whose reading camps in the upstate New York lumbering camps had inspired Fitzpatrick) which stated "The great mistake that Christian people make, it seems to

me, is providing a literature which does not interest these men. They do not want so-called religious reading. They ought to have good literature, and by supplying this the church people can get into relations with them" (p. 28). The intention is still to proselytize, although the means are beginning to change.

Within a few years of operating the reading camp association, Fitzpatrick himself had changed his tune, fully agreeing with George E. Vincent. In *The Frontier Labourer With Sixth Annual Report of the Reading Camp Association 1905-6* Fitzpatrick (1906) himself was asking people not to bother donating "second hand church and Sunday school papers [because they] do not meet the need. Current general literature is the best" (p. 10). People were obviously donating this kind of material, and men in reading camps were obviously not reading it.

Fitzpatrick still wished to evangelize the workers, however. In 1911, he wrote:

> Let no religious zealot think that because it [the problem on the frontiers] is chiefly educational it is, therefore, not religious. The fifty-five story building is feasible only on condition that a foundation to correspond first be built. Vital religion is impossible on a foundation of ignorance and barbarism. (Martin, 2000, p. 56)

A few years of effort at building the foundation had shown Fitzpatrick that bringing water to a horse carried no guarantees that he would drink it. This is a classic example of the central dynamic of the social gospel.

With earnest moral hope, the religious middle class undertook reform on behalf of the working class in the hope of bringing the workers vaguely towards religion or morality. Their efforts mitigated camp conditions in a gradual, limited sort of way and were reportedly appreciated. However, the outcomes of their actions did not match their intentions. If religious faith was a major motivator in adult education movements as Charlotte Holland (2009) tried to

show in *Returning to Our Roots: The Place of Faith in the Early Frontier College and YMCA Educational Programs, and in Faith-based Basic Education Programs Today*, then I think this changed very early in the process. Men in camps were not interested in religious literature, and read about other things. Institutions founded with religious roots and motivation, quickly adapted to the changing social reality and filled an increasingly secular role in society. Frontier College today is strictly concerned with literacy. The eventual religious hopes of its founders fell by the wayside years ago. With Frontier College better situated in the historical context of similar institutions I can discuss its history in greater detail.

Building Frontier College 1900-1933

The first two decades of Frontier College's existence are considered by some authors to have been its most interesting period. This was the time of rapid and idealistic growth in the organization, and when the greatest methodological experimentation bore fruit. Fitzpatrick's first effort was decidedly humble. In either 1899 or 1900, Fitzpatrick set up shop in a single camp outside Nairn Centre Ontario (near Sudbury). The lumber he purchased himself to build his reading cabin was pilfered by the workers so that they could build privacy partitions in their sleeping quarters. Fitzpatrick nonetheless succeeded in setting up his “reading tent” with a few donated books. In 1901, a single “librarian-instructor” was posted. The following year there were eleven, although many of these professional teachers were apparently not long willing to endure the hard living conditions. Increasingly Fitzpatrick turned to hiring university students looking for summer work (Martin, 2000).

In 1903 there were twenty-four librarian- instructors at work in northern Ontario. One of them named Angus Grey reasoned that rather than sit around all day while the workmen worked, he could much better gain their trust and attendance at his lessons if he were to labour alongside

them as an equal. The labourer-teacher model, which was to become Frontier College's hallmark for decades, was born. In this period, individual labourer-teachers had a broad latitude and independence as far as their lessons and methods. That the labourer-teacher model was itself an innovation of an employee demonstrates this very well (Martin, 2000).

One of the most famous men to be employed by the college at this time was Norman Bethune, who was to go on to become a world renowned doctor who worked with Communist parties during the Spanish civil war and Chinese revolution. While Bethune's later life in no way implies that Frontier College had Communist tendencies during this period, I think it is nonetheless an example of the relative ideological openness of the college vis-a-vis its later sharp turn towards anti-Communist British nationalism. Fitzpatrick was very willing to go along with what worked. Certainly, many librarian-instructors and labourer-teachers struggled to attain results. Some were defeated by the difficulties presented by their remote locations and lack of resources. Those who rose to the occasion however thrived and reported huge satisfaction with the unique task they were undertaking; they played a vital role in creating Frontier College from the ground up (Martin, 2000).

The First World War proved to be a significant if not total hiatus for the development of Frontier College, as it did for so many things. Tens of thousands of young Canadians went overseas to fight and many of them never came back. While extractive industries by no means stopped at this time, the available pool of labourers was certainly lessened. Many of the middle class, pro-British, Canadian born university students who might have become labourer-teachers went off to fight in Europe. After the war, the world had changed in ways which would also have a profound impact on the direction the college would take. Erica Martin (2000) chose to end her study of Frontier College in 1919 for three reasons; first, because of the organizational maturity

attained by the college by this point. Secondly, because the 1920's were a turning point for Canadian adult education as a whole; when it stopped being only the province of "gifted amateurs out to change the world" (p. 8) and began its long road towards secular professionalization. Thirdly because of the sharp nationalistic, xenophobic and anti-Communist direction that Fitzpatrick took the college in at this point. I posit that the hygiene narrative I am examining is part and parcel of this tendency.

G. Cook and Robinson (1990) pick up where Martin leaves off in their "The Fight of My Life: Alfred Fitzpatrick and Frontier College's Extramural Degree for Working People." This is a great description of the college's increasing sophistication and broader goals. It is also entirely consistent with the broader trend towards professionalization of adult education across Canada. Fitzpatrick was a lifelong advocate of university extension. He spent decades exerting himself through every possible influence he had to try and convince Canada's regular universities to allow equal standing and credit for courses offered by correspondence. Here he was to meet his match.

Only a fraction of Canadian adults had finished secondary school in the first decades of the twentieth century, and a fraction of one percent made it through university. There was no public support whatsoever for the university system. Higher education remained available only to the elite, and the effective consensus seemed to be that it should remain that way. The argument that university extension courses were of fundamentally lower quality than traditional lectures prevailed. While several of the established Canadian universities began to allow parts of their programs to be completed by correspondence, all of them balked at allowing entire degrees to be completed that way. The fear was that issuing such degrees, perceived as lower quality as they were, would undermine the value of the degrees of those students who followed the

traditional curricula. This maintained an effective roadblock to the constituencies that Alfred Fitzpatrick was trying to empower (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990).

Fitzpatrick had no illusions about this stonewalling, and he came to the conclusion that if the existing universities would not enable frontier labourers to earn degrees, then Frontier College must. Throughout the 1920's and into the 1930's he campaigned to anybody who would listen, advocating for the creation and then expansion of Frontier College's degree granting ability. Amazingly the college was given this power for a few years, although it was soon clawed back in a bitter dispute with the province of Ontario. The federal university charter Fitzpatrick had managed to obtain was not unprecedented, but quickly became very unpopular particularly with those in charge of the University of Toronto. A battle of influence ensued and Fitzpatrick ultimately lost. In the name of defending its' constitutional prerogative over education, Ontario set back the development of correspondence degrees for adults in Canada by half a century. Alfred Fitzpatrick, who had become obsessed with the federal charter for Frontier College, was crushed by its loss. He resigned as director of the college in 1933 and died three years later, a broken hearted man. (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990)

The fight over degree granting power for Frontier College was Fitzpatrick's undoing as its director. It also nearly drove a wedge between Fitzpatrick and Bradwin (who had been working with the college since 1903). Bradwin had agreed to go along with the degree granting program on the condition that it never undermine the literacy work of the labourer-teachers; what he considered to be the truly essential work of the college. Fitzpatrick's insistent battle with Ontario had cost thousands of dollars in lost provincial grants from the college's home province. This certainly did undermine the ability to support labourer-teachers and it drove the college into debt. Bradwin offered to resign, and apparently spent a tortured month wandering the streets of

Toronto not knowing what to do next. He too had poured many decades of his life into Frontier College. (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990)

After a time, Bradwin returned, and it was he who took over as director when Fitzpatrick retired. Bradwin directed the college through two more decades, refocusing Frontier College's work upon the labourer-teacher during his time in command. He retired in 1954. Thus, between Fitzpatrick and Bradwin we have the creators and the directorship for five and a half decades of the Reading Camp Association and Frontier College through several distinct phases; up to the First World War, between the wars, and a time after the Second World War. These two men loom large in the story of the college, and their writings are a rich source of analysis for the first half of the college's history. While I draw on material from earlier years, the bulk of the source material for this thesis is drawn from the two decades following the end of the First World War. This was the time period when these men published their major works. It is not a surprise that these works reflect the political and racial atmosphere of their times. The fact that these men had serious concerns about an expansive version of what constituted hygiene bears comparison to other contemporary thinkers who went much further. It is not a coincidence that this same time period was to see the greatest acceptance of eugenic theories.

Frontier College continues to exist today, having never ceased to deliver literacy education to Canada's marginalized adults. Much more could be written about the six decades that have elapsed since Bradwin stepped down. There are still labourer-teachers working on Canada's frontiers, although the definition of frontier has perhaps changed somewhat. Positions are still available at remote mine sites for example, although some of the more classic contracts on the railroads or lumbering operations have ceased relatively recently. Frontier College still sends teachers to small communities in the far north for children's literacy summer camps, for

example. Many volunteers for the college work as tutors for students or with homeless people in large cities. There are more employees engaged according to the classic labourer-teacher model among migrant labourers on farms in southern Ontario than there are in the far north. These modern endeavors continue the important work begun by Alfred Fitzpatrick as part of Canada's oldest organization for adult education. These latter decades, however, are beyond the scope of this paper, which focuses upon the writings of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin, and thus upon the college's first half century.

The Canada Fitzpatrick sought to build was a plucky place of bush-hardened yet classically educated, manly, sober, god fearing British lumberjacks. Something of this national myth lives on, however much it may be decried, from Dudley Do-Right to Monty Python's lumberjack song. Economically speaking, Canada is still very much a nation of resource extractors and to many alive nowadays, myself included, the sort of camp life described by Frontier College's founders echoes loudly in much of the Canadian frontier. I think of the countless seasonal tree-planting camps which are a rite of passage for thousands of young Canadian adults. Similarly, I recall the notoriety of hobo jungles, trailer parks, drug addiction and prostitution of contemporary Fort McMurray, Alberta. This is not so very far from the drinking, gambling and lewdness decried by Fitzpatrick and Bradwin. While the country has changed a great deal, there is a tremendous continuity to it as well.

Having described the relevant history of Frontier College, I can now begin to focus in on the sanitary conditions endured in various work camps throughout Canada. This is the specific context in which Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's hygiene narrative existed. This narrative existed in two overlapping parts. One side of the hygiene narrative I am examining has principally to do with immigration, while the other has more to do with immorality. The language used to describe

both is very similar and there is a considerable overlap between the two. I maintain it is essentially the same narrative. I commence with immigration in chapter four; the discussion of this narrative as it pertained to immorality will follow in chapter five.

Chapter 4: Anti-Immigrant Discourse in the Writings of Alfred Fitzpatrick, Edmund Bradwin and J.S. Woodsworth

This chapter demonstrates the negative type of language used by Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin in their discussion of the 'immigration problem.' This is afterwards compared to an extremely similar, if more detailed, narrative described by a contemporary of theirs who was a well-known eugenicist, J. S. Woodsworth.

The 'Immigration Problem'

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw unprecedented levels of immigration to Canada which caused a serious social tension to develop. On one hand, this pliant, exploitable workforce was viewed as necessary to the development of industrial capitalism in this country and powerful elite groups, like railroad company directors, generally pushed for a wide open immigration policy. On the other hand, immigrants became the subject of serious xenophobic fears and a major nativist backlash from trade unionists for example, many of whom viewed them as competition. (Martin, 2000)

The nativist backlash I am describing had roots deep in the nineteenth century, although it increased tremendously in the years following the First World War and culminated in

immigration restrictions in both the United States and Canada. The 'immigration problem,' as it was known, had, however, been a subject of broad discussion for several decades by then. This pondering factored significantly into the writings of both Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin. Indeed, Frontier College was partly conceived as a solution to precisely this problem. This discourse followed the pattern of classifying immigrants in a hierarchy of racial desirability; promoting certain ethnicities and excluding others altogether.

Hygiene concerns featured prominently in immigration discourses at the time. I maintain that the positions taken by Fitzpatrick and Bradwin regarding immigration from this time period are part and parcel of the hygiene narrative I am describing. Indeed, immigrants considered undesirable by them are frequently described as dirty. This thesis will show the similarity of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's immigration / hygiene discourse to that of J. S. Woodsworth, an avowed eugenicist. Both McLaren (1990) and Baron (2007) have shown how xenophobic immigration restrictions were one of the central goals of eugenics movements throughout the western world.

Fitzpatrick's postwar change in political direction is plainly evident in *The University in Overalls,* which was written in 1920. This is immediately following the end of the First World War, the Russian revolutionary wars were ongoing, and it was contemporary with the wave of labour unrest which swept the western world following the war. In the United States this was known as the red scare. The Canadian manifestation of this movement included most famously the Winnipeg general strike of 1919. The same year, however, saw unrest all over the country. Another example of such near revolutionary action in the type of community with which Fitzpatrick was most concerned is in the northern Ontario silver mining town of Cobalt. Here a concerted effort over many weeks to establish a miners' union and an eight-hour day with higher

wages was ultimately and bitterly defeated. (Hogan, 1978)

The University in Overalls can be seen as a mature version of what Fitzpatrick had been calling for for years. Much of the better material that he wrote in 1920 reflected material from the various Annual Reports he had written over the previous two decades. It also significantly reflects, however, the growing nationalism and xenophobia which so marked this period of history. Notably, Fitzpatrick's hygiene narrative did not begin in 1920, but in the years following the war, it was increasingly validated by the tremendous popularization of social and racial hygiene narratives. These theories may have first been developed decades before, but after the war they gained broad coverage and appeal.

While the primary goal of *The University in Overalls* is undoubtedly Fitzpatrick's (1920) call to arms for university students to get out into the bush to both share in the work that their labouring comrades might be spared a little time to study, as well as to actively engage in instructing those workers. This book is also however a call for a vast communal, colonial mobilization, “a definite and systematic policy of development” (p. 47) to tame the last frontier in northern Canada and put its resources to productive use. Reading *The University in Overalls,* one is struck that the most urgent motivation behind Fitzpatrick’s desire for social reform was the preservation of the existing, British, Anglo-Canadian social order against dangerous foreign radicals. Only by addressing some of the more glaring social problems which existed under the stewardship of that social order could it be maintained. Throughout this narrative, there is a seeming equation of physical germs arising in filth, and dangerously infectious thoughts and habits arising from moral filth. Awful living conditions in far-flung locations where frequently illiterate new immigrants worked long hours for low pay seemed to Fitzpatrick to be obvious breeding grounds for political radicalism and soul destroying immorality.

Fitzpatrick and Bradwin on Immigration

While it was not absent before, *The University in Overalls* shows an enhanced mistrust of foreigners in Fitzpatrick's thinking, and almost a lament that their importation was necessitated by there not being enough Englishmen to populate Canada's vast spaces:

> thirty years ago you might as well have looked for a needle in a haystack as for a foreigner in our frontier camps… But our neglect of the frontiersman has driven the English-speaking men back from the first line to a seemingly more favoured position. They have retreated to the older settlements where they find better sanitary conditions, and more opportunities for giving schooling to a family. European races, men with an alien tongue have taken their place in the camps… one great problem for Canada to-day is how to assimilate this diverse foreign population… we must meet the foreigner at his first point of contact with our civilization. We must educate him to our standards both at the frontier and on the homestead or one of two alternatives confront us: either we shall see him go back to Europe taking with him money that had better be put into use here; or worse, drift into the hovels and overcrowded tenements of our towns and cities. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, pp. 128-129)

It is telling that Fitzpatrick associates foreigners with unsanitary conditions. English speakers have retreated to more sanitary locations, while the foreigners take their place on the frontier. The unassimilated foreigner who remains in Canada ends up in an urban hovel.

Since the importation of these barely desirables is a necessary evil, they must at least learn English, Canadian civics and:

> they must know what are the Canadian's ideals, in this western continent. They must be shown that Canada is in a real sense a democracy… [not a] plutocracy or mobocracy… [they must] subject their appetites, their passions, their prejudices, their self-interests, to their reason, their conscience and their will. Men and women who cannot govern themselves cannot maintain a self-governing community… we must have a common union of all races in the

> building up of Canada. We do not want a second "Balkans" here north of the great lakes. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 130)

However, "even after being granted citizenship, under present conditions many a foreign born voter requires careful supervision" (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 134). British- Canadian institutions such as:

> representative government are supreme. They are being secretly and openly assailed by insidious propaganda. Patriotism must be imparted. Free speech should not be crushed, but the loose talk of demagogues must be matched with the trained thought of the schools. Surely, this in itself merits the support of every thinking man and woman who holds the interest and good name of our country at heart, and to whom the present menace of unrest is more than a passing cloud. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 137)

Unassimilated foreigners would be unable to participate in a civil society, they would import the worst of their habits from their own countries and thus degrade Canada into some thuggish despotism.

Following the First World War Fitzpatrick sold Frontier College as a reformist institution with its foremost goal being to prevent revolution:

> the problem of the camps and bunkhouses today throughout the dominion does not concern the foreigner alone. Some mines are 90 percent English speaking and yet one finds the greatest amount of grouch, unrest, and discontent, which bides only some trivial thing, to break forth in demands and threats… for years back, especially in the mines and camps of the west, all kinds of loose talk from agitators on economic subjects has gone unchecked among the masses of workers. Leaders with ability among both the English speaking and foreign workers, unchallenged, have exaggerated and perverted facts basic in economic truth… lurid and grotesque… half-truths. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 138)

Reading, writing, patriotism and an understanding of real economics would provide the necessary intellectual fodder to counteract radicalism among new Canadians. Better

opportunities afforded by education would help too.

It must be said that G. Cook and Robinson postulated that Fitzpatrick's anti-Communist campaign in the years following the First World War, may well have been a tactic to win favour from those in power in Ottawa for funding and for Frontier College's coveted federal charter. At times, Fitzpatrick waxed almost socialist. Throughout his life, he showed a clear concern for Canada's downtrodden and a deep desire for economic fairness and yet he came out a staunch pro-establishment crusader. Fitzpatrick's true devotion was perhaps to Frontier College. If the college was politically useful, it conceivably would gain support among those with the power to secure its mandate. If its work could be seen as a matter vital to national security, better still. It seems entirely possible that Fitzpatrick would have made this calculation regardless of his personal views. The sum of views he expressed on many subjects, such as the relative worth of immigrants or non-white races, or the religious motivation for his work, is deeply ambiguous. (G. Cook & Robinson, 1990) We can judge him on what he wrote, but it is a valid possibility that he was taking positions that flowed more with the current of his times than from his own wellspring of conviction.

Regardless of his merits, and whatever the reasons behind what they wrote, both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin subscribed to a racial view of the world. Immigrants were judged primarily upon their perceived ability to assimilate into Canadian society. Bradwin (1972) began by describing how the overall classification was into two categories, “whites” and “foreigners” (pp. 94-95) although many people born in countries foreign to either Canada or the British Empire fell into the first category. Similarly, many born within Canada or the British Empire were classified as foreigners as well. The placement of any given group into one or the other categories was objectively arbitrary, although broadly agreed upon at the time by those who

ascribed to this worldview.

Among the "whites" Bradwin (1972) counted "Canadian- born both French-speaking and English speaking, as well as the new arrivals from the British Isles, and Americans... included with the whites are usually the Scandinavians and sometimes the Finns" (p. 92). These were the upper class among the workers, the ones allowed to hold clerical jobs and to become foremen or skilled workers. Within the white group, Bradwin's clear favourites were, of course, English Canadians who he described as manly, virile, literate and coming from good homes. Despite this, they could be prone to shiftlessness and could fall for radical ideas. French Canadians were apparently more used to frontier life due to the voyageur spirit that still burned strong within them. Bradwin found they were illiterate, but big strong men who were skilled with canoes and axes and thrilled to be in the wilderness vanguard of any project.

Next on the list in terms of desirability; "there are no finer types among the navvies on railway construction than the Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Icelanders, and, to a lesser extent, the Finns." These people were possessed of a "splendid physique... nothing suggesting effeminacy." Similarly, their "frugality, initiative and self-reliance" not to mention their education showed that they did not come from slums, but were healthily reared like men from the "well-kept homes of Old Ontario and the Maritime provinces" (Bradwin, 1972, pp. 100-102). Their long traditions of representative government meant that such men would not submit to Czarism, although like Canadians they could be drinkers and grouches. The Finns were similarly Nordic and virile, but as their people had suffered from despotism, Bradwin felt that they were particularly prone to radical ideas. The descriptions of these desirable sorts of men have them as clean, healthy, manly, virile and coming from good homes. Notwithstanding their occasional drunkenness or complaints, these are people who were seen as hygienic, and it had little to do with how often

they bathed. There is often a strong racial connotation to hygiene narratives, and this is no exception. It is coded language.

As some who Bradwin called whites were in fact from foreign countries, the term foreign was more accurately used as a term for assorted lowly workers who were not considered "white." In the particular railroad camps of northern Canada described by Bradwin, the label "foreign" was primarily given to Slavs:

> As workers on construction they display definite characteristics; slow and immobile, lacking initiative; rather careless of personal appearance; with but limited mechanical ability; not quarrelsome except when liquor is about; easily brow beaten, for the foot of despotism has cowed their spirit; just plodders in the day's work- withal, that pliant type that provides the human material for a camp boss to drive. When seen to advantage the Slav as a campman is of medium stature, thick set... not graceful in motion, and with something of a sullen expression on his broad face. There are other things that impress one when first meeting him in the mud cut on the grade; cowhide boots smeared with gumbo reaching to the knees, a peaked cap that bespeaks the barrack life not far removed, uncouth trousers and coat with old-land fastenings, unshaven face – with the dull resentment of the hard-heel showing from eyes, joyless-looking and suspicious... such men herd together in shacks... [and differences among them] are not always apparent. (Bradwin, 1972, p. 105)

As opposed to the lively, clean, manly whites who hail from good homes, the foreigners are dirty, unshaven, dull, sullen and lack initiative. Indeed, they are much more like livestock than humans. This juxtaposition where whole classes of people are viewed as sub-human is exactly the sort of narrative which led Europe down the road to hell in the 1930's and 1940's.

As some "whites" were more desirable than others so it was among the foreigners. While Bradwin allowed that some Slavs in their own countries were artful and had culture, literature and music; in Canada Bradwin did not see it. He singled out the "southern Slavs, including Serbs, Croatians, and other mountain races, now known as the Jugo-Slavs" as:

> a darker people than those already noted among the other Slav Divisions. Discords are in evidence among them springing from rivalries of race and accidents of geography. While they are industrious plodding workers and aggressive, they suffer from a lack of English, a working knowledge of which they are not always willing to acquire. There are men of middle age among them, more accustomed to the use of arms than of tools for useful pursuits. (Bradwin, 1972, p. 107)

The southern Slavs were apparently obsessed with events at home, this being the time of the Balkan wars when many countries there were gaining independence from the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Apparently all Jugo-Slavs "nurse resentments" which even in Canada would lead to "violence on a railway work." Indeed "All their emotions find expression in their primitive tunes and dances... of the age long struggle against the Turk" (Bradwin, 1972, p. 108). It is especially notable that these "darker" people are the worst of the lot and violence accompanies the plodding and filth of all Slavs.

Canadian native people constituted an awkwardly non-foreign group who nonetheless required description by Bradwin (1972), as they too laboured in frontier camps. "It is not every foreman who can handle the Indian to best advantage. Moody in disposition, he has to be studied. While wiry, tenacious and strong, the Indian not infrequently displays indolence. He leaves much to be desired, too, in matters of personal cleanliness" (p. 102). When natives did work Bradwin felt their incentive was "through a desire for new clothes or some ambition to gratify in the purchase of jewelry for personal adornment" (p. 102). When eating native workers would "satisfy their wants with child-like avidity" (p.103). As a race they had brushed aside all opportunity and spurned wisdom:

> The Indian is not even an imitator. With little desire to improve, he has stood still for three centuries... How different from that other race, also a dependent people, whose colour makes of them an Ishmael even in a bunkhouse but who with opportunity at length to hand, have fared so promisingly in spite of an ignoble beginning. (Bradwin, 1972, p. 103)

This latter group is of course the foreigners, who Bradwin felt at least showed some ambition. Again notice that natives, like foreigners, are denounced for being dirty. Honestly I think that it is quite likely that everybody who worked in railroad building camps in the early twentieth century was dirty much of the time. The fact that certain groups are denounced for it while "whites" are described as clean, shows that this narrative is not really about cleanliness as we understand it. This is coded language for a racialized worldview that went much further than rural Canada. There are a series of appendices at the end of Bradwin's (1972) *The Bunkhouse Man* showing immigration statistics to demonstrate the scale of the 'problem.'

While less comprehensive than in Bradwin's work, Fitzpatrick's (1919) *Handbook for New Canadians* clearly describes essentially the same racial hierarchy. The same reverence for Scandinavians is there, holding them a close second to British and American immigrants. Their good physique, small modern farms, traditions of representative government and white skin make them easily assimilated into Canadian society and therefore desirable. The distinction of the Finns as slightly less desirable than their Scandinavian neighbours is the same as well; "The long struggle with Russia for autonomy has embittered the people. It has led to extreme socialism, which seems inherent in the people" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 205).

Fitzpatrick (1920) was quoted above stating "We do not want a second "Balkans" here north of the great lakes" (p. 130), which indicates he shared much of Bradwin's anxiety about the primitive violence inherent to the southern Slavs. Further to this he held that "Unlearned masses of non-English-speaking races are fertile soil for future trouble... Canada is a young country. It must not become the Babel of the nations" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 2). Like Bradwin, Fitzpatrick (1919) praised the Slavs at least because "they have played their part in saving Europe from the hordes of Asia" (p. 210) in their very own "struggle against the Turk" (p. 218). Immigrants were

viewed as likely to import the violence and despotism of their own countries by their very presence. The prevailing attitude at the time was that these characteristics were racially inbred.

The scale of immigration at this time played a large role in creating the climate of anxiety among white middle class Canadians. Whereas small, dispersed numbers of immigrants would blend into the existing society, large concentrated numbers may play a role in changing it.

> We allow newcomers to live in settlements on the prairies or, what is worse, to form colonies in large urban and industrial centres. There, their racial characteristics are continued and encouraged by native societies and leagues, forming unassimilated groups, which are a menace to Canadian unity. Already there are whole sections of alien races in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Vancouver and other centres. (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 1)

Fitzpatrick felt that it was imperative that these people be assimilated and that future numbers of immigrants be selected based on how well their previously landed compatriots have succeeded in assimilating. Fitzpatrick (1919) included in his *Handbook for New Canadians* a series of statistical charts demonstrating the scale of immigration and the countries of origin of people arriving. This is remarkably similar to the information included in Bradwin's appendices.

While it is to his credit that in parts of his *Handbook for New Canadians* Fitzpatrick is willing to offer praise to some of even the reviled “oriental” races, he also reports conventional racial beliefs of the time. While he states that "gambling seems to be a besetting vice of Chinese" he continues that it is "probably due to their social isolation." Fitzpatrick states the perceived racial characteristic, but also offers an explanation. He goes on to state the opinion that the Chinese are "industrious, inoffensive and well behaved" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 221). This is another example of the deep ambiguity of this man and exactly what he believed.

Fitzpatrick (1919) reported that the opinion of most Canadians regarding immigrants from Asia could be summed up with the phrase “They shall not pass.” Apparently “the fear of

unfair competition, due to lower standards of living, has united labour throughout Canada in solid formation against eastern immigration. There lies, too, back of it all, racial instincts, a desire to have no large settlements of the yellow races in Canada. A white man's country" (p. 221). The fear of a lower standard of living seems to suggest that Asian immigrants lived in housing which white Canadians deemed unsuitable for human habitation, and on incomes they could not live decently upon. This is very familiar to Bradwin's reported treatment of Slavic labourers on railway construction.

I hardly need to point out that Asian immigrants had little choice but to live at a lower standard as they were typically paid lower wages than white workers and were ghettoized due to extreme racism (Munro, 1971). In a fashion quite typical of the day, Asian immigrants were blamed for their poverty as though it was a racial characteristic, when actually it was their social exclusion and low wages which prevented them from living decently. The idea that low living standards were inherently Asian was a cynical self-fulfilling prophecy. Had they been paid as much as anybody else, and not been excluded from living where they pleased, then surely they would have lived at more or less the same standard as everybody else.

I suspect that in his travels among labour camps as founder of Frontier College, Alfred Fitzpatrick had actually encountered numbers of "Oriental" people, unlike many of his contemporary social gospelites who may have written about them without ever meeting any. Prejudice is rarely borne out by reality. Fitzpatrick says nothing explicit to suggest that he challenged or questioned the prevailing attitudes of the day. His own words, at least in his *Handbook for New Canadians,* are not always consistent with the theories he describes although the fact that he repeats them suggests a great ambiguity.

Fitzpatrick's (1919) only mention of native people in any of the works of his that I read

was in his *Handbook for New Canadians*. He described them as "keen of sight, cruel to their foes, and used to hardships... The men hunted and fished or idled when not at war" (p. 233). This is less to go on than Bradwin gave us, although it is not particularly different. They are cruel and warlike, live hard lives and are idle whenever they can be. He makes no mention of their sanitary habits in relation to this statement, but it is nonetheless consistent with the hygiene narrative I am describing.

However, Alfred Fitzpatrick's opinions of individual races varied through time or differed from certain contemporaries, race formed an integral part of his worldview. Races had certain group characteristics which typically presented themselves in individuals. Individuals could thus be judged according to racial expectations. This was concurrent with and informed by the racial hygiene narrative that pervaded scientific thought at the time. Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's ascribing to a racial hierarchy is part of their hygiene narrative. The similarity of much of what they said on the topic to what was written by avowed eugenicists has not previously been pointed out. I now turn to the work of such a eugenicist to provide the comparison.

J. S. Woodsworth, the Eugenicist, on Immigration

J.S. Woodsworth's (1909) *Strangers Within our Gates* is one of the purest examples of the type of literature dealing with the so called immigration problem in Canada which I have seen. Woodsworth is one of the classic examples of a Canadian social gospel priest who faded out of the clergy and occupied himself with what would now mostly be considered social work. He was also well known to have been a serious supporter of eugenics. To his credit, Woodsworth disavowed eugenics entirely later in life because he came to see how it was used as a bludgeon against the working class (McLaren, 1990). As his life went on Woodsworth became a more and

more convinced socialist. That the works of Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin compare very well with much of what Woodsworth said in *Strangers Within our Gates* indicates a tremendous influence of eugenics on each of their thinking. If they weren't explicit eugenicists, then they at least came from a very similar school of thought and progressive, Protestant milieu.

The powerfully anxious language in *Strangers Within our Gates* about the dire consequences of not 'solving' the 'immigration problem' could almost pass as parody from a Monty Python skit. Woodsworth looked upon the immigrant poor with a sort of horror. In them he saw a grim prophecy for the future of Canada if drastic measures were not taken to control them. *Stranger's Within our Gates* is a sort of guide for anybody trying to grapple with the immigration problem as a whole. Woodsworth described a hierarchy of perceived value of immigrants based on their ability and willingness to work and assimilate to Canadian society that is remarkably similar to what Fitzpatrick and Bradwin wrote about. He did it in greater detail and thus touches upon further aspects of the contemporary discourse surrounding immigration and hygiene.

An interesting example of the further detail Woodsworth delved into is his dissection of the worth of various classes of English immigrants. Woodsworth (1909) divided the English lower classes into four categories: category A consisted of the bottom 1-4% of the total population who were “urban savages” (p. 56), people so dissipated, incompetent and violent that their defining characteristic was that they destroyed rather than created wealth. Category B, 11-12% of the population consisted of the broken down, ineffective wreckage of city life who were incapable of regular work and were as such a burden on other classes. Category C, the next 8% suffered serious moral and physical degradation and at best only ever had irregular employment. Category D were at least perhaps skilled and employable. Even among a desirable race,

Woodsworth considered as much as a quarter of the population to be irredeemably worthless. This is a good example of how hygiene concerns went further than race and included analogous class prejudices as well.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of them were of poor quality, Woodsworth (1909) believed that English immigrants were necessary for the maintenance of Canada's British character; “In India it is said that English regiments are needed to 'stiffen' the native army. We need more of our own blood to assist us to maintain in Canada our British traditions and to mould the incoming armies of foreigners into loyal British subjects” (p. 54). This was one of Fitzpatrick's preoccupations as well. Despite their necessity, Woodsworth was critical of the quality of English immigrants arriving in Canada, believing that they were mostly those who were failures at home or even convict deportees. A recurrent fear among new world eugenicists was that their fresh, clean, new countries were becoming the dumping ground for those unwanted by European governments. Woodsworth seems to have believed that most English immigrants were not adaptable to the type of farm or frontier labour which was required here. Many of them reportedly drifted back to the cities where they caused a serious problem and where "the saloon gains most largely by their presence" (p. 54).

American immigrants, on the other hand, were generally considered to be of high quality. A close second in this now familiar hierarchy. Woodsworth (1909) liked that Americans tended to be white, speak English and to arrive with considerable capital. They could fit in right away to Canadian life. There were of course exceptions; Woodsworth spent several pages denouncing Mormons in a manner very reminiscent of anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Allegedly the Mormons had a systematic plan in mind to politically dominate first the state of Utah, then neighbouring states, the USA and then the world. Their implantation of colonies in B.C. and

Alberta was just their latest expansion. Woodsworth even included a plate showing "the octopus of Mormonism" (p. 78).

True to form, the next on Woodsworth's (1909) list were the Scandinavians who he spoke of in the most glowing terms; "through their alertness and intelligence they soon occupy the better positions such as foreman, timekeepers, etc.... They easily assimilate with the Anglo-Saxon peoples and readily intermarry, so that they do not form isolated colonies as do other European immigrants" (p. 89). This closely recalls both Bradwin's description of Scandinavians as occupying jobs available to white workers, as well as Fitzpatrick's (1919) concerns about "unassimilated groups" being a "menace to Canadian unity" (p.1). Woodsworth (1909) further noted that Scandinavians are "accustomed to the rigours of a northern climate, clean-blooded, thrifty, ambitious and hard working they will be certain of success in this pioneer country where the strong, not the weak are wanted" (p. 92). His use of the term "clean-blooded" speaks volumes about the expansive definition of hygiene that was current in his day.

Woodsworth's (1909) detailed hierarchy continued into the grey area between white and foreign; "even those who detest foreigners make an exception of Germans whom they classify as 'white people like ourselves.' The German is a hard working successful farmer [who is] easily assimilated" (p. 100). The obviously inaccurate and arbitrary dichotomy between 'whites' and 'foreigners' discussed at length by Bradwin is mentioned here by Woodsworth. He almost seems to suggest that it is because Germans are hardworking and easily assimilated that they manage to squeak into the 'white' category which is denied to their immediate European neighbours the Slavs. The notion that there was an actual racial difference between Germans and Slavs is absurd. Another implication of this statement is that 'foreigners' are lazy.

Woodsworth (1909) continued his tour of the European racial grey zone. He found the

French to be "thrifty and successful" although their farming operations tended to be "on a rather small scale and [their] methods are often decidedly primitive; but there is a tendency to adopt the habits of their Canadian neighbours" (p. 109). However, "French priests exercise almost unlimited authority... this paternal relationship, so charming in theory and art, has its disadvantages, as the people are less apt to learn to think and act for themselves" (p. 110) Immigrants from France were somewhere in between, neither wholly desirable nor particularly odious.

Next, Woodsworth (1909) moved on to describe those races that he deemed to be dangerously undesirable. South-Eastern Europe was to him an inscrutable “Terra Incognita;” he despaired of even categorizing people from this "apparently inextricable tangle of nations, races, languages and religions" (p. 111). Their principal redeeming quality was that the people of the Balkans had, over the centuries, served as “the buffer between Europe and Asia with its westward sweeping hordes” (p. 145). Fitzpatrick is quoted above as saying almost exactly this, and Bradwin (1972) spoke very similarly of these people's “struggle against the Turk” (p. 108).

Among them are the lowly Galicians, "crowding to our shores... their unpronounceable names appear so often in police court news, they figure so frequently in crimes of violence.” (Woodsworth, 1909, p. 134) Woodsworth held a very similar view of Polish people; “Poles and police courts seem to be invariably connected in this country, and it is difficult for us to think of this nationality other than in that vague class of undesirable citizens” (p. 139). The association of ‘non-white’ foreigners with violence is familiar from what Bradwin is quoted to have said above.

Woodsworth (1909) noted that tens of thousands of these people were settling in western Canada in particular, although even he could find a ray of hope in the situation. “The grimy, stolid Galicians... are not all to be found herded together in the cities or working in contract

gangs; an astonishingly large number have taken to the land" (p. 135). This resembles very much the type of description Bradwin made of Slavic people where they are they are dirty and resemble livestock. The fact that they were settling land though pleased Woodsworth who also noted "the flowers of courtesy and refinement are not abundant in the first generation of immigrants. But he is a patient and industrious workman. He is ambitious. He is eager to become Canadianized. He does not cling to a language which is rich in words that express sorrow and desponding and misery, and meager in those that express aspiration and joy and hope" (pp. 136-7). This work of guided Canadianization was precisely what Frontier College was designed to do.

Another good example of the distinction among 'whites' and 'foreigners;' Woodsworth (1909) described how some immigrant ships would only carry "the better class of immigrants," that is Germans, Scandinavians and English. "Others take all classes and conditions. What a mixed multitude! Watch them lying about the decks- propped against a sheltering wall – lounging on the great cables – gambling on the hatchways – the children rolling in the litter of the decks. What a filthy lot!" (p. 32) While the better classes are just that, the meaner classes of immigrants are idle, listless, dirty gamblers.

Again discussing people from the Balkans, Woodsworth (1909) worried that with the United States enacting immigration restrictions, many undesirable immigrants who would have otherwise gone there would now be coming to Canada. "There have been many stories far from creditable regarding them. They are said to refuse work, and to prefer to starve rather than labour... Naturally suspicious and ignorant they are a simple sluggish people who have been oppressed and downtrodden for ages; therefore it can scarcely be expected that they can land in this country, and at once fall in with our peculiar ways, and understand or appreciate our

institutions" (p. 145). This last passage recalls what Fitzpatrick (1920) wrote in *The University in Overalls* concerning the need to educate foreigners to avoid a second Balkans north of the great lakes.

Somewhat surprisingly, Woodsworth (1909) seems not to have been especially anti-Semitic. In fact, he praised the Jews for their, industry, self-reliance, mutual aid and survival skills. "They are often housed in crowded tenements, and yet observe certain sanitary precautions that save them from many of the diseases that attack others." He also repeated some of the classic untruths; "It is a far cry from the Jewish peddlers or sweat shop tailors to the money-barons who control the world's finances, yet the same keen business instincts are common to both" (p. 156). This recalls Fitzpatrick's willingness to report exceptions to racial discourse based on personal opinions of individual races like the Chinese. In neither case, however, did such exceptions serve to alter the fundamentally racial framework of their worldviews; they are exceptions that prove the rule.

Woodsworth (1909) held a particularly dim view of Italians; "the organ grinder with his monkey. That was the impression we first received, and it is difficult to substitute another. Italian immigrants! The figure of the organ man fades away, and someone whispers, 'the mafia – the black hand.' Dirty dagos" (p. 160). Here again, an undesirable race is characterized as dirty. "Many Italians, unaccustomed to city life, do not know how to make the most of the poor accommodations that they have; so there come filth, disease and crime [which] keeps the stale beer dives" (pp. 164-165). Filth, disease, crime and alcohol; here we have a very good example of the conflation of a variety of prejudices with hygienic concerns.

Woodsworth (1909) believed that with immigration restrictions in the United States coming into force, Italians will "crowd more and more into Canada." Among them he

distinguished northern Italians as being the more intelligent and purposeful, whereas southern Italians are “very dark in complexion,” destitute, illiterate and purposeless. “Dishonesty is the prevailing feature of the Neapolitan zone. Most of the diseased and criminal Italians [come from there]” (p. 161). Here again we see the association of darker colour with a host of other negative attributes. Italians as a race are associated with filth, disease, crime and alcoholism as though these were inherent to them as a people. This is eugenics, and while Woodsworth was more vehement and comprehensive, what he wrote bears a close comparison to statements made by both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin.

Even further down Woodsworth's hierarchy, were the Levantine races who constituted:

> one of the least desirable classes of our immigrants... [with a] general prevalence of contagious and loathsome diseases. Centuries of subjection, where existence was only possible through intrigue, deceit, and servility, have left their mark, and, through force of habit, they lie most naturally and by preference, and only tell the truth when it will serve their purpose best. Their wits are sharpened by generations of commercial dealing, and their business acumen is marvelous. With all due admiration for the mental qualities and trading skill of these parasites from the near east, it cannot be said that they are anything in the vocations they follow but detrimental and burdensome. These people, in addition, because of their miserable physique and tendency to communicable disease, are a distinct menace in their crowded, unsanitary quarters, to the health of the community. (Woodsworth, 1909, pp. 167-168)

Each level lower down the scale of racial acceptability the language used becomes more vehement and the picture of this racial hygiene perspective more complete. These people wallow in filth and disease because of what race they are a part of. The diseases they carry are a menace to clean, healthy, white society and so these people must be prevented from immigrating to Canada.

There is a powerful imperative to this narrative because it was felt that given the scale of immigration, if something drastic was not done and soon then the country would be irredeemably

lost. Woodsworth (1909) reported how British Columbia had “peculiar immigration problem... the oriental question... it is not to be wondered at that the people of that province, especially white labour, took alarm at the hordes pouring in by the steamer load.” This “oriental problem [will] swamp the country west of the mountains” (p. 170). Hordes pouring or rampaging out of Asia is a longtime member of the western canon of fears, immigrants are thus likened to the barbarians who sacked Rome or the horsemen of the Mongol Khans. It was certainly hyperbolic language, but it touched a nerve and had a wide currency.

In perhaps the most damning chapter of his entire book from the perspective of Canadian history, Woodsworth's chapter XVI discusses “THE NEGRO AND THE INDIAN” which begins:

> Neither the negro nor the Indian are immigrants, and yet they are so entirely different from the ordinary white population that some mention of them is necessary if we would understand the complexity of our problems. We group them merely because both stand out entirely by themselves. (Woodsworth, 1909, p. 190)

Woodsworth describes the condition of the estimated twenty thousand Negroes then living in Canada. “In the cities they often crowd together and form a 'quarter,' where sanitary and moral conditions are most prejudicial to the public welfare. Blood, rather than language or religion, is the chief barrier that separates them from the rest of the community” (p.190). This sounds to me like de facto segregation; had these people been treated equally, felt secure, had the same opportunities as whites and actually been allowed to live where they wanted to, then they likely would not have all ended up in the same part of town. Blaming them for their living conditions when those conditions were in fact imposed upon them by the racism of people like Woodsworth puts the cart before the horse. This was a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is telling that their sanitary and moral condition are viewed as stemming from the fact of their race.

Woodsworth elaborated by quoting:

> John R. Commons writing in the *Chautauquan*... In Africa the people are unstable, indifferent to suffering and easily aroused to ferocity by the sight of blood or under great fear. They exhibit certain qualities which are associated with their descendants in this country [the United States], namely aversion to silence and solitude, love of rhythm, excitability and lack of reserve. All travelers speak of their impulsiveness, strong sexual passion, and lack of willpower. (Woodsworth, 1909, pp. 190-191)

This is straight out of the Jim Crow south. Savagery, heathenism, and a child-like incapacity to care for themselves or to make wise decisions were used as after the fact justifications for enslaving Africans during the centuries of the Atlantic slave trade. After emancipation, the same reasons were used in the creation of the Jim Crow system (Genovese, 1974). Crowded, unsanitary living conditions, immorality, blood (meaning either bloodline or blood-lust) and its manifest behaviours, violent crime and sexual passion are here listed all together. This is the language of white supremacist eugenics, and it is repeated as an integral part of the immigration discussion here in Canada.

Woodsworth (1909) concluded his discussion of Negroes by saying, "we may be thankful we have no negro problem here in Canada" (p. 191). He did however consider us to have an 'Indian problem.' Listed alongside Negroes, Natives were lazy, drunken, entitled bums:

> The Indian is growing up with the idea firmly fixed in his head that the government owes him a living, and his happiness and prosperity depend in no degree upon his individual effort... Strong and able-bodied Indians hang around for rations and treaty... Both church and state should have, as a final goal, the destruction and end of treaty and reservation life. Mr. Ferrier thinks that the main hope lies in giving the younger generation a good practical training in specially organized industrial schools. (Woodsworth, 1909, p. 193)

Mr. Ferrier was the Rev. Thompson Ferrier, a Methodist Minister who wrote the book *Our Indians and Their Training for Citizenship* (1913), in addition to the article "Indian Education in

the North-West" (1906) which was quoted by Woodsworth. Both Bradwin and Fitzpatrick stated similar views of native people; like Woodsworth and Ferrier and almost everybody else who wrote about them at this time, both of them held Natives in contempt. This is the discussion and the worldview and the time period which led to the creation of Canada's residential school system; nothing short of a concerted effort to 'clean up' a 'dirty' race by assimilating them to white society. This is Canada's dirty laundry and it deserves to be aired. The best that could be said of these people is that they were well-meaning. That is, of course, a very poor excuse, considering the genocidal damage they did to hundreds of cultures and thousands of people.

As both Bradwin and Fitzpatrick did in their respective books' appendices, Woodsworth included a series of charts and tables of various immigration related statistics towards the back of *Strangers Within Our Gates*. Woodsworth offered a lot more information as immigration concerns were more explicitly his subject. Again, the form and content of the material he provides, as well as the position in the book, is very similar to that given by Fitzpatrick and Bradwin. The information given says a lot about the value structure behind the immigration system in place at the time, and about the author who included them in his book. One group of charts described the people to whom entry visas were denied in Canada in 1906 and 1907. Hygiene in its various manifestations quite obviously played a major role in deciding who got to stay in Canada and who was deported.

Arguably for good reason, people afflicted with diseases like tuberculosis and pneumonia were detained at their port of entry into Canada. We also see however that the one alcoholic who was detained was later released into Canada, although all three people suffering from delirium tremens were deported. Four "feeble minded" immigrants were allowed to stay and four others sent home. Both syphilitics were kicked out, while the one person held back because of eczema

was still in hospital when the statistics were published. Nine of eleven "criminals" stayed on their various boats for the return journey, along with all eight "prostitutes" and one "procurer." The man who ran away from his wife was deported as well as two people who ran away from their fathers and both elopees (Woodsworth, 1909, pp. 237-243).

Three “degenerates,” three “opium fiends” and twenty-nine out of thirty people of "bad character" were sent back to the old country. One of the largest groups denied entry were those deemed "likely to become a public charge," ninety were sent away and, curiously, sixty-nine were allowed to stay. Similarly, for the same year, those who were admitted previously and then later deported included several more of those "likely to become a public charge," criminals, the insane, alcoholics. Several women who got pregnant while in Canada (presumably single mothers) were deported, as well as one of "bad character” and another who was deemed "immoral." An English man was deported for getting frostbite, and one of his fellow countrymen and a French companion were deported for having varicose veins. Several of these reasons are laughable today; however, the moral tone of these statistics is clear. (Woodsworth, 1909, pp. 237-243)

Even in cases where people were allowed to enter Canada, as with the sixty-nine deemed "likely to become a public charge," the fact that they are listed in these statistics shows that they were seen to be problematic. Woodsworth's *Strangers Within Our Gates* advocated much stricter controls on immigration, which would have meant deporting many more of these questionable cases. McLaren (1990) reported in his *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* that there was a significant tension regarding Canada's immigration policies between nativists and eugenicists, and the powerful interests of shipping and railway companies who profited from the passenger traffic.

> Opposition to the great wave of non-Anglo-Saxon immigration of the 1890's quickly surfaced. A virulent mix of nativism, racism, anti-radicalism, and anti-Semitism coloured most of the opposition to the arrival of the new Canadians. English Canadians paraded their concern for protecting "democratic institutions" and maintaining an Anglo-Saxon civilization. Such sentiments could manifest themselves in a variety of ways, ranging from humanitarian concerns to "Canadianize" and assimilate newcomers "for their own good" to the desire to shut Canada's borders and repatriate or deport troublemakers. (McLaren, 1990, p. 48)

Frontier College was just such a vehicle of Canadianization.

The First World War slowed this immigration almost to a halt, although it resumed in the 1920's, under pressure from shipping and railroad companies. Huge profits were to be made from having passengers on their ships, settlers to buy their land, and wage savings from having lots of pliant new arrivals to employ building their railways. Concurrently, there developed a much more mature and effective resistance to "non-white" immigration. While some immigration restrictions were halfheartedly enacted by the McKenzie-King government, this second wave was only substantially halted by the Great Depression beginning in 1929 (McLaren, 1990). Frontier College was a creature of these times. It was a mostly positive and helpful organization that sought to improve the lives of immigrants. There were certainly many more groups and organizations in Canada in these times that were far more nativist and racist. Nonetheless, Frontier College sought to aid people by scrubbing the figurative dirt off of them and remaking their identities according to a middle-class, protestant, Anglo-Saxon ideal.

Chapter 5: Filth and Fantasy

Having demonstrated the aspect of this thesis that has to do with immigration, I will now turn to the material that forms the other, overlapping, aspect of the hygiene narrative I am

examining. In a fashion very similar to the discourse about immigration, the opinions of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin closely resembled that of their eugenicist contemporary J.S. Woodsworth when it came to a variety of other moral issues as well. This chapter will first describe the very real situation in Canadian work camps at the turn of the last century. Fitzpatrick and Bradwin were not merely stoking a moral panic or a racist fantasy; conditions in camps were often very primitive. That being said however, their reactions to these conditions were substantially moralistic in nature and conflated the dirt they saw with a variety of other perceived wrongs; this constitutes the second part of the chapter. Next I draw comparisons to broadly similar conflations among racial and class categories mixed in with dirt. With this conflation demonstrated I return to the issue of libraries as a means of sanitation.

Conditions in the Camps

It must be said that the deep concern about poor sanitary conditions in work camps did have a basis in fact. This was not a mere invention of crazed moralists desperately seeking grounds to denounce the lifestyle of those beneath them on the social ladder. Indeed, by any standards, life in frontier work camps at the turn of the last century was squalid. The social gospel reformers who denounced these conditions certainly viewed them though a moral lens which saw squalor as indivisible from moral failure, but they were telling the truth about what they saw. Edmund Bradwin's (1972) work, *The Bunkhouse Man,* is loaded with commentary showing concern that goes beyond physical cleanliness and prevalence of disease, much like Fitzpatrick's (1920) *The University in Overalls*. However, both works also have a lot of straightforward description of the very poor conditions witnessed in labour camps, in Bradwin's case particularly during the building of the Canadian National transcontinental railroad. Just

because they equated perceived moral failings with other sanitary shortcomings does not mean that sanitary conditions were not dire.

In the best case scenario at this time, workers would work long hours six days of the week. When they were not working there was a dining 'camp' where they would eat and one or more bunkhouses where they slept. On Sundays or on rainy days when no work took place, they had nowhere really to go, and so they would remain in their bunkhouses. These accommodations varied in size and detail from camp to camp, but were broadly similar all over the country. A large rectangular log cabin with a tarpaper roof, lined with communal two or three tiered bunks and a woodstove would have been accommodation for hundreds of men.

Typically, bunkhouses were windowless, or had one small window in the gable end opposite the door. They often had earth heaped around them it to improve insulation, making them seem subterranean. With such poor ventilation, hundreds of occupants, damp, dirty clothing hanging over the woodstove and nothing but a few oil lamps for light, one can see how Fitzpatrick (1920) would have observed “a rancid smell” in the “oft breathed air… If ever a man smelt fever and dysentery it was in that abominable anchorage” (pp. 5-6).

The fact that any bunkhouse was a temporary structure was continually used as a reason not to make repairs. Eventually the timber near a logging camp would all be cut or the section of railroad under construction would be completed, and work camps would move to new locations. The service life of older bunkhouses would be stretched because the camp would be moving the next season and employers did not want to go to the expense of building new ones only to abandon them. Often the tar-paper roofs would leak; “livable perhaps for the man newly arrived from the Balkans, but hardly a wholesome environment for the shaping of a future citizen of Canada” (Bradwin, 1972, p. 80).

If camps were located on a lake or river, they could have a decent water supply and place to wash, at least until freeze up, but frequently they were located without any such amenities nearby. Even well sited camps could have serious shortcomings where contractors had cut corners and built accommodations thoughtlessly or too quickly. Bradwin reported routinely seeing camps where poorly sited or overflowing privies or stables were located upstream from water supplies leading to contamination and diseases such as dysentery. While ubiquitous throughout the north, swampy locations ensured worse infestations of blackflies and mosquitoes and no provision for screens or bed nets was made. Even the best built bunkhouses were fire hazards with a single entrance, oil lamps and hundreds of men drying clothing over a woodstove (Bradwin, 1972).

Government regulations which had been strengthened on paper to require clean and sanitary living conditions over the first few decades of the twentieth century were scarcely enforced. Government inspectors were laughably few given the huge numbers of camps there were scattered over vast distances of wilderness. Most of those who did get around to doing their jobs were apparently easily, even willingly, managed by company agents. Easily accessible model facilities, which did not represent the norm, existed expressly for inspectors to perform their less than rigorous inspections. Bradwin repeatedly stated that even making the effort to enforce existing regulations would go a long way towards improving conditions (Bradwin, 1972).

In his pamphlet of 1901, Fitzpatrick described a great example of the kind of cynical neglect imposed upon workers which was a major source of discontent. Workers had $1-$1.25 deducted from their wages (which might be $1.75 per day before camp costs were deducted) monthly to pay for medical services, although their provision was very spotty. Many workers

seldom ever saw a doctor in their camp, and regular visits were much rarer. Even if medical care was available for sickness, doctors were, according to Bradwin (1972), either "glaringly careless or purposely negligent" (p.148) of sanitary arrangements in camps.

There were frequent outbreaks of dysentery, typhoid fever and smallpox which arose in camps and were then spread to surrounding areas by men leaving to seek medical attention or to escape falling ill. Bradwin insisted that if men were given treatment onsite and in a timely fashion a lot of epidemics would be halted before they began. Quite contrary to the public benefit, disease was often underreported by companies wishing to not draw attention to the squalour of their employees (Bradwin, 1972). Fitzpatrick (1920) mused that the only reason anybody outside the camps thought twice about the health of the workers was for fear of epidemics reaching the cities. “Bunkhouse men might go to the devil for all the interest a large section of the people takes in the housing and sanitation of the camps” (p. 8).

Apparently, after WWI, sanitation improved. According to Bradwin (1972), returning soldiers would no longer tolerate such poor accommodations, as military life had been much stricter about sanitation. This runs counter to my prior understanding of the conditions endured on the western front, although it may in fact indicate that living conditions in bush camps had been in some ways worse. Indeed, Bradwin stated that since prisons had been reformed, prisoners, who deserved them least, had better living conditions than future citizens labouring on the frontiers who are "herded unhealthily in filthy shacks" (p. 213). Here immigrant labourers are likened to livestock.

Apart from work, there was very little available for the men to do in frontier work camps. Boredom, isolation, monotony, solitude and idleness could create ennui on the one hand and could also stoke rage over petty injustices inflicted like unfair pay deductions over which men

had no real recourse. “Come with me in imagination to the camp fires of 500 frontier camps of this province and I will show you over 50,000 able bodied woodsmen and miners who between the hours of seven and nine o'clock nearly every evening and on rainy days, public holidays and Sundays, are absolutely idle. That such an army of men should spend so much time in idleness is a menace to civilization” (Fitzpatrick, 1902, p. 19).

The only real recourse workmen had to overcome these depressing conditions was for them to leave. They would drift on to another camp someplace else in the hopes that if things were not better, they might at least be somehow different. This practice of voting with their feet became known as jumping, and it apparently turned legions of men into listless wanderers with neither a destination nor any realistic hope of improving their condition in life (Bradwin, 1972). In the decades leading up to and following the First World War, the men affected by this lifestyle in Canada were increasingly immigrants, and immigration was increasingly viewed as a problem. A significant part of the hygiene narrative I am examining had to do with a highly racialized, nativist, anti-immigrant discourse that was widespread during this time period.

The development of Frontier College up to this point was set against the backdrop of an unprecedented surge in immigration into Canada. The massive expansion in Canadian railroad, mining, forestry and industrial development at the time required huge numbers of workers. The very poor working conditions and wages on offer could only appeal to the economically desperate. Native born Canadians with any other options quickly lost interest in doing this kind of work. The liberal business interests who strongly influenced Canada's immigration policy sought therefore to import vast numbers of impoverished foreigners.

Moral Reaction: Hygiene Narratives

As seen above, the living conditions for many workers in camps on the Canadian frontier, were objectively somewhere between primitive and dire. I fully believe that what Bradwin and Fitzpatrick reported had merit. Their reaction to these conditions on the other hand is worthy of considerable comment. There is a strong moral abhorrence of the filth these men witnessed throughout their writings, and the remedies they sought were substantially moral in nature. “Why should young lads with comparatively clean minds be tumbled promiscuously into bunks with filthy minded men” (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 9).

The only way that access to reading material can be deemed to be a sanitary improvement in men's lives is if you have a broader notion of what constitutes sanitation than we typically do nowadays. There exists a broad conflation in their writings between dirt, race, poverty, sexual immorality, alcohol, gambling, idleness and the reading of what they considered to be low quality literature. In attacking this last vice head on with the creation of Frontier College, they hoped that through washing minds of filthy thoughts they could have positive results across the board.

Among his descriptions of bunkhouse conditions quoted earlier in this paper, Bradwin described how the communal bunks in bunkhouses were bedded with hay and heavy blankets which:

> may be clean for a few weeks when first put in... [but soon] smell heavy and musty, and, even though one changes underwear every week, it is impossible to keep clean, for lice and nits are in the bedding. There is danger too, in using camp blankets of contracting some abominable skin disease, carried by unclean men, for vice is not far distant from construction, and immorality lurks in frontier towns as well as in the congested centres. (Bradwin, 1972, p. 77)

This is a perfect example of the kind of thinking that I am talking about. A concern about hygiene is the ostensible purpose of the statement. It seems also to be an honest account of

widespread conditions which can certainly be described as unhygienic. There is, however, a clear conflation, if not confusion, between physical cleanliness, which is a perfectly sound way of promoting health, and morality. Vermin spread disease, but the worst outcome would be an abominable skin disease, which is not caused by the vermin, but by vice of unclean men. It occurs to me that the lurking, immoral vice of unclean men may in fact refer to homosexuality, which must have had some presence in bush-camps populated entirely by men, although if so it is indistinct. It is clear however, that whatever the particularities, for the likes of Edmund Bradwin vice and vermin are the same problem.

Later in the same text Bradwin again waxes eloquent regarding the frontier towns he mentioned above as dens of immorality:

> What are the social outcroppings? Time spent around any of the frontier towns reveals this in all its crudeness. The situation is simple. Men, both English speaking and foreign born, are deprived during months at a stretch of the companionship of women, of home ties, and all that elevates life in a man; they are starved by isolation and monotony. When they again reach the outskirts of civilization the frontier town with its 'aurer' lights, its music and noisy hilarity entices them from their deepest resolves. Vice too frequently pervades such places and, in divers haunts, drugged potions aid in 'rolling' the victim. The all night orgies, the drunken sprees lasting for days in some top room of a hotel or lodging house; the busy rigs with their pimpish outriders who ply their ghoulish trade, the snake-room with half a dozen forms crouched upon the cot or dirty floor, spuming and snoring off the poisons of a protracted drunk; and then the group, silent, sore, sick and seamed with debauch rounded by a 'pilot,' who gather in the zero weather late of a December night to catch the train en route for months more of life at camp, such is the vicious circle in which these men are held helpless... produces a shudder; the curse of hardness overspreads it, and the price of harness is hideousness. (Bradwin, 1972, p. 137)

The moral sentimentality of this passage is clear. Music and noise, drunkenness and a powerfully indistinct sexual immorality involving prostitution and even group sex all co-exist inextricably with dirt. Unstimulating frontier occupations lead to low morale and a lack of culture and self-

worth rendering men powerless to resist the temptation to go on a spree as soon as they finish work or to be drawn to the "gaming spirit... the luring smile of chance" (Bradwin, 1972, p. 180). Dirt and boredom beget drinking and gambling. Gambling itself strongly resembles a prostitute.

In a very similar passage, Fitzpatrick likewise laments how workmen spend their free time:

> When good amusements fail, bad ones inevitably arise, and amusements of a people have more to do with their morals and their efficiency than most of us think. The monotony of life, especially among young people, causes more crime than does original sin. Men whose spare time is occupied in gambling, drinking, listening to or partaking in the low jest song and story, soon become depraved. They are then ready to "jump camp" at any suggestion, no matter how vulgar, that promises even temporary relief from such environment.
>
> They are subject, too, to all the diseases peculiar to unsanitary conditions, in the undeveloped districts. While there are plenty of sanitary regulations, there is only a lackadaisical government inspection to enforce them. In the light of modern scientific discovery this neglect is criminal. That persistent rheumatism, those prematurely grey hairs, that old expression on many young and kindly faces, tell plainly that life in the forest is a warfare from whose battles few return unscathed. If uninjured in body they will probably bear scars on their souls, for they are invariably weakened morally by the isolation and neglect. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, p. 6)

Without healthy literature to edify their minds, workers are stuck talking to each other, and only low-brow conversation and dirty stories will come of that; the road to depravity. Jumping camp meant quitting your job and seeking another elsewhere, which was viewed as problematic by employers who needed their workers to remain disciplined and in place. Gambling, drinking and poor company lead to disease, and while there are sanitary regulations to prevent this they are not enforced. While Fitzpatrick invokes scientific discovery, he does so to support a very unscientific sentimentality that fears for scarred souls and moral weakening.

This invoking of science in a decidedly unscientific way is characteristic of the social

gospel attempt to graft new legitimacy onto old middle class Protestant morality. The eugenicists attempted exactly the same thing. According to McLaren, Dr. Charles Hastings, the Toronto medical health officer said "psychologists assure us that mental, moral and physical degeneration go hand in hand. This is well attested by observations made in the children's courts in the various cities. Insufficient and improper feeding, badly ventilated homes, environments of filth and dirt constitute the very hot-beds in which criminals are bred" (McLaren, 1990, p. 36). This similarity does not make Fitzpatrick a eugenicist. He did, however, come from the same milieu and have enough in common with them to bear close comparison.

A similar passage of Fitzpatrick's repeats some familiar claims but also begins to touch on what he saw to be the solution to these medico-moral emergencies he bore witness to:

> There are other dangers that arise from housing men in cramped and filthy quarters. Moral diseases, which, alas, are also infectious and contagious, and which are the result of this lack of social and religious restraint, are of a much more serious character. No one knows these evils better than those who suffer from them, but their characters are so weakened by solitude, by neglect, by *ennui*, by idle, sensual and vicious thoughts, that they lose their self-respect; they sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. To use an expression of George Adam Smith: "Their characters are unfenced."
>
> To neglect the opportunity to surround these men with home-like influences, and with the tools with which to mould and fashion their characters, is to leave them open to every evil influence. It is to allow their minds to be full of thoughts that sap their manhood. It begets the spirit of Herod, the spirit that massacred the innocents. It makes such men reckless of the responsibilities of home and they long only for evanescent pleasures without the sanctity, the joys, and sorrows that make home worth while. Their minds become the charnel houses of thoughts that eat out the vitals of their better selves. Instead, give place in their lives to the visions and dreams suggested by a perusal of the works of our great authors, Isaiah, Paul, Shakespeare, Carlyle, and Emerson. (Fitzpatrick, 1920, 8-9)

Here Fitzpatrick claims that the moral aspect of the diseases these men suffered were more serious than their physical counterparts. The solutions he suggests are entirely moral as well.

Home-like influences and canonical literature were precisely what Frontier College set out to provide.

Alfred Fitzpatrick's *Handbook for New Canadians* was literally intended as a textbook to help solve the moral problems of the frontier. It contains a lot of instructional material designed to integrate immigrants into the Canadian society that Fitzpatrick sought to construct. Unsurprisingly, there was a great deal of value loaded material in it which says a lot about the worldview of Fitzpatrick. Probably the best single passage which sums this worldview up is this: "The good citizen loves god, loves the empire, loves Canada, loves his own family, protects women and children, works hard, does his work well, helps his neighbour, is truthful, is just, is honest, is brave, keeps his promise, his body is clean, he is every inch a man" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 56). A good citizen is a clean citizen, and has good, clean, manly intentions.

Such imprecations to hygiene are sprinkled throughout *Handbook for New Canadians*. This is not to say that this book was a hygiene manual, however; physical hygiene is mixed in with patriotism and the middle class values that new immigrants ought to aspire to. The assumption that immigrants are by definition childlike and unhygienic is repeatedly implied. The handbook is partly a practical manual to suggest subjects for discussion and relevant vocabulary to teach. All of the racial hand wringing in it suggests that new Canadians themselves were not expected to read it. It is more like a manual for instructors, like Frontier College Labourer-teachers, to use.

The new Canadian is instructed to keep his home "neat and tidy" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 51). Correct table manners are to be stressed, lest a foreign manner of eating be imported into Canada; "I must cut with my knife and use my fork for eating, not grab with my hands. It is wrong to grab with one's hands or eat with one's knife" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 61). New

Canadians are advised to buy only "good food," a statement accompanied with a photograph of vegetables (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 82). While I would say that this is objectively good advice to give to anybody, the assumption behind it is that whatever it was that immigrants used to eat, it was different, and not good. Presumably new arrivals knew how to eat. They did not however know how to eat in a manner that was up to Fitzpatrick's standards.

Similar to the idea that immigrants' culinary customs were sub-standard is the insinuation that people coming from foreign cultures did not know how to clean themselves. A picture entitled "View of a Sanitary Bathroom" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 85) shows a western style toilet, sink and bathtub with a tiled floor. This level of installation was still relatively rare in 1919 and would likely have been out of reach for many new immigrants. This was an entirely middle class aspiration. In any case, such amenities did not exist in frontier work camps.

While much more basic than a porcelain three piece, Bradwin (1972) reported that the provision of soap, water and washbasins was fairly standard in work camps on the frontier. Often, camps employed a "chore boy" (p. 77) to see that these amenities were provided with clean water on a regular basis as well as sweep and minimally clean out bunkhouses. This would have been the sort of facility Fitzpatrick advocated using in his *Handbook for New Canadians* when he encouraged new Canadians to wash. "Listen there is the whistle! It is noon and now we shall go to dinner. Let us wash ourselves at the bunkhouse before we go to the cook camp" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 62). That he felt it necessary to stress this implies that he believed that new Canadians would not wash themselves without being instructed to do so.

Later he hammered his point home. Under the caption:

> Personal Cleanliness: The bath is a necessity. Bathe frequently. Use plenty of warm water and soap. Wash the hands with a brush and use a cloth to cleanse the body. Dry yourself thoroughly with a good clean towel. Take a bath every day – it is not too often. You will look better,

> you will feel better; bathing helps to keep you well. Clean healthy men are always good citizens. Doctors advise a good sponge bath greatly lessens the doctor's bills, and at the same time increases ones earning power by keeping him well. A hot bath should be taken at least once a week, just before going to bed. (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 85)

There is a good deal of truth in what Fitzpatrick says here; however, it is also loaded with value judgments. If clean men are always good citizens, then by extension those who don't have access to such amenities are not. Different cultural hygiene practices are implied to be lesser and immigrants are implied to be ignorant of personal cleanliness. Fitzpatrick assumes that immigrants are dirty because of the races they come from. If they clean off the physical dirt, perhaps the metaphorical dirt of their foreign identities will wash away as well.

Fitzpatrick summarizes his advice to new arrivals under the caption "The Low Cost of Health." Among the statement "It costs nothing to stand up and walk and breathe properly" and "It costs nothing to clean the teeth every day" is "It costs no more to read good books than trashy literature." Here is another example of the expansive view of hygiene that Fitzpatrick had. He seems to have literally thought that the type of books you read impacted your health. He continued; "germs cause disease, keep clean, breathe pure air, eat good food, be temperate, take plenty of exercise" (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 83). Clean healthy thoughts go along with clean healthy teeth and a temperate lifestyle.

Following the chapter on health, there is a short chapter on cleanliness. Under a photograph showing an urban alleyway is the description:

> what a dirty yard! There are piles of rubbish, ashes and filth of all kinds. We must keep the backyards and basements clean. The drains and gutters must not be blocked. Soon the flies will come. They carry disease-germs to the cooking, and to the milk and other eatables. We should burn or remove all refuse. The fly's birthplace is in filth. Open the windows; let in the sun and light to our rooms. Then we shall not become sick, and baby will be healthy and we shall not need the doctor." (Fitzpatrick, 1919, p. 84)

Perhaps one of the most insidious aspects of this narrative is that there is truth to it. Living with the availability of modern antiseptics, water treatment, antibiotics and vaccines, and an excellent societal (if not necessarily individual) understanding of infection, it is a very easy and comfortable place from which to criticize the past. In 1919, we were starting to know how many of these things work, although this was a time period before the comprehensive creation of modern waste disposal, sewer systems and antibiotics. Large areas of cities would have been filled with refuse and this realistically could have spread disease.

This being said, the assumption was that immigrants would not have any understanding of such things, whereas Fitzpatrick did. The conflation of different social practices with filth and disease was a narrative that ran rampant in the mid twentieth century, and eugenics was a central pillar of this narrative. It was an awkward masking of nineteenth century morality and prejudice with a bit of twentieth century scientific language. This conflation of categories fits into a much larger narrative which has been examined from a variety of angles by a great variety of scholars. It would be a major task to be comprehensive in this regard. Honestly, I can only begin to allude to it in this paper, although I must say I know that it was a major presence.

Eugene Genovese touched upon this broad conflation of racial and social status it in his magisterial *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made*:

> The notion that black slaves, being intrinsically lazy, would work only under compulsion did not arise from some timeless racist bias; rather, it reinforced a developing Euro-American racism, the roots of which lay in centuries of ruling-class European attitudes towards their own labouring poor. When slaveholders insisted that blacks would work only long enough to provide for elementary needs and occasional debauchery, they were associating themselves with a theory generally held by English manufacturers, not to mention the clergy, about the labouring poor. Northern and English travelers to the South repeatedly compared the slaves to the Irish, often to the detriment of the latter,

> and hardly a racial stereotype of the blacks poured forth without its being a modest modification of familiar descriptions of the Irish... Fanny Kemble expressed amazement when she heard blacks spoken of as incapable, lazy, or stupid. "In my own country," she protested, referring to England, "the very same order of language is perpetually applied to these very Irish, here spoken of as a sort of race of demigods by negro comparison. And it is most true that in Ireland nothing can be more savage, brutish, filthy, idle, and incorrigibly and hopelessly helpless and incapable than the Irish appear." (Genovese, 1971, pp. 298-299)

This is the same series of vices worried about by Bradwin, Fitzpatrick and Woodsworth. Irish people were apparently known to some as "niggers turned inside out" and black people as "smoked Irish." Charles Kingsley traveled to Ireland in 1860, where he was "haunted by the human chimpanzees" he saw along the highway. "To see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours" (Baron, 2007, pp. 45-46).

There is a confusion and conflation here. Racism is certainly part of it, and seems to provide the framework for understanding and expressing disgust or fear, but it is inconsistent. The horror in the case of the Irish is of their poverty, their class difference, the potential danger of violent resentment; and the only way Kingsley can think to describe it is in racist terms which are familiar to him. If black people are naturally degenerate, then white people who are also degenerate must be a sort of anomalous black people who happen to be white. Racism is how he understands the difference, but the difference is not racial.

Similar conflations of lowly class status with lowly racial status were made regarding chimney sweeps in England. The chimney sweep business in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was most often conducted under a sort of apprentice system. A master sweep would be an adult who had survived his childhood as an apprentice. He would be hired by householders to sweep soot out of their chimneys. Since many chimneys had a lot of small nooks and crannies,

young children were employed as apprentices; almost invariably children of the lowest social status. If not helpless orphans, children were apparently sold to master sweeps by parents in desperate economic conditions (Jackson, 2014).

Master chimney sweeps were notorious for their crudeness and brutality; their apprentices were frequently beaten to compel them to work in their dangerous occupation. Most chimney sweeps lived miserable short lives. The similarity of this situation to the African slave trade was not lost on contemporaries. The literal blackness of chimney sweeps due to their being covered in soot further enabled this specific comparison. Low status, being sold into something analogous to slavery, and being filthy could make white children black in nineteenth century England (Jackson, 218). There is a tremendous amount of material that shows this kind of conflation from this time period. It can seem very confusing for somebody who reads it at face value. Racism is reprehensible, but one can at least understand what it is. To read the words of white people making racist comments about other white people seems very confusing unless you realize that racism from a hundred years ago existed among a broad conflation of other categories. Only in this way is it possible to conflate libraries with sanitation as Alfred Fitzpatrick did.

Libraries as Sanitation

I think that at times this conflation of racial, social and hygiene categories could confuse even those who wrote about them. Alfred Fitzpatrick's (1902) pamphlet titled *Library Extension in Ontario... Reading Camps and Club Houses. With Second Annual Report of Canadian Reading Camp Movement 1901-1902*, from which came the quote right at the beginning of this thesis, provides a great example of this. The pamphlet is rambling, seeming at times very

confused, as though the author is struggling to say something he never quite succeeds in articulating. Education and sanitation are more than linked, they are interchangeable, but Fitzpatrick cannot quite say why. For example:

> were the sanitary condition of the camps all that could be desired, the traveling library would fulfill its ordinary mission in this direction as well. Experience, however, as well as the members of the provincial board of health have led us to believe that permanent libraries ought to be encouraged, even in the lumber and mining camps, and sawmill and mining towns. Books in cheap binding, as Dr. Bryce suggests, would cost less, and the expense of transportation would not be incurred.
>
> POSSIBILITY OF CONTAGION
>
> Not only the Board of Health, but at least one employer has decided to have nothing to do with the traveling library on this ground. For example, Mr. Turnbull, of the Huntsville Lumber Co. Thinks there is a real danger. He has complied with the regulations of the Board of Health, has introduced the bath tub into his camps, and intends taking all necessary precautions to ward off disease. (Fitzpatrick, 1902, p. 3)

Almost in one breath Fitzpatrick has advocated that libraries will improve sanitary conditions, reported the criticism that they could be a vector for disease and praised an employer for installing bathtubs for his workers to use. Hygiene is clearly a major preoccupation, but there are multiple, competing and contradictory types of hygiene at play in this situation. This passage dates from the early days of the reading camp association, when Fitzpatrick was still struggling to get established against the considerable inertia of working conditions at the turn of the last century.

Library Extension in Ontario... Reading Camps and Club Houses. With Second Annual Report of Canadian Reading Camp Movement 1901-1902 goes on to report a jumble of information about smallpox, diphtheria and typhoid outbreaks in Ontario that year and the less than perfect efforts at quarantine. Fitzpatrick (1902) suggests that rather than not have reading camps, books be disinfected before moving on to another camp. He reports the parlous lack of

enforcement of medical regulations in camps; specifically, the unavailability of doctors whose fees were nevertheless deducted from each labourer's pay. He reports wounds being stitched by camp foremen “without antiseptic precautions” (p. 7) because doctors are several days’ journey away and discusses the large numbers of workers who miss days of work or are invalided because of disease.

Fitzpatrick cannot properly articulate why libraries will improve sanitation and he has not yet found a way to ensure they won’t spread disease. He is determined, however, that quality books will improve health. The reason is, of course, that he took a broader view of hygiene than merely the prevention of the physical spread of smallpox viruses. Hygiene to Alfred Fitzpatrick, and to many of his contemporaries, included what you thought about, how you spent your leisure time, the food you ate, your sexual behaviour, the ethnic group you came from, your political affiliations, whether you were a productive or lazy worker and of course the types of books you read. I think that something about the apparent ridiculousness and contemporary strangeness of these underlying assumptions can explain why he comes across as so confused.

Notwithstanding his inability to explain, Fitzpatrick was not alone in feeling this way, and he published a series of letters from supporters to bolster his own position. We have already seen part of Fitzpatrick's letter from N. Burwash of Victoria University, Toronto:

> what our noble, hardy men of the woods require first of all is salvation from the deteriorating influences of their peculiar isolated life; and that influence is most of all felt in their idle moments. By giving them good, interesting, healthy books, you will give them healthy thoughts, and so purer conversation and better moral foundations; and upon these alone can a true and abiding religious life be built. The work is one which comes legitimately within the range of government support and it deserves the most serious and liberal consideration of every lover of his country. (Fitzpatrick, 1901, p. 30)

Very similarly, the Reverend Jas. Robertson, D.D. Of Toronto wrote to Fitzpatrick to say:

> I have no hesitation in giving the scheme my cordial approval. When one considers the very large numbers of men found in these camps, that many of them have wives and children, that the young men among them are easily led astray, and that unless the mind is occupied with what is pure and elevating, the camp is apt to come under influences that tend only to pollute and degrade, it is easily understood how much may be done through wholesome literature. (Fitzpatrick, 1901, p. 29)

Neither last nor least, the Toronto conference of the Methodist Church of 1901 passed a resolution stating "the establishment of reading rooms and libraries has been found largely preventative of dissipation, gambling, drinking and Sabbath-breaking which sometimes obtain in these camps" (Fitzpatrick, 1902, p. 41).

Ensuring that the reading material these camps contained was in fact wholesome literature naturally required a watchful curation. Fitzpatrick (1901) published a letter from R. Harcourt of the Ontario Education Department who offered his support. "I am presuming, of course, that the books will be carefully selected and that they will not belong to that class of books which are known in England as 'shilling shockers'" (p. 36). Doubtless, such trash was unwelcome in any of Fitzpatrick's tents, however much it may have circulated outside of them. To this same end the Women's Christian Temperance Union chapter in Nairn Centre distributed "comfort bags" to men in surrounding work camps which contained spiritual literature. (Fitzpatrick, 1901, pg. 36) This interfering, moralizing, Victorianism seems to have been driven by a genuine belief that reading trashy literature was part and parcel of a sinful, unhygienic life, and that fighting this degeneracy required the dissemination of literature of a better quality.

Despite the moralizing conversation that was being had about them, there is some evidence that camp workers were pleased to have library facilities provided for them. Their own voices are silent, as Catherine Brunet (2007) has commented upon, but some of their bosses are quoted by Fitzpatrick as being pleased with the results. Felix Bigelow, the foreman at E. Hall's

camp 8 in Nairn Centre Ontario reported that there was “less swearing, gambling, 'jumping' and running to the saloons” (Fitzpatrick, 1901, pg. 33) since the reading camp's installation. Similarly R. Jackson, Agt. For the Victoria Harbour Lumber Co. wrote:

> I take great pleasure in testifying to its usefulness in camp life. The majority of our men took advantage of it, and appreciated its privileges. I think it is not too much to say that the health of our camp has been improved, the sleeping camp being less crowded evenings, and Sundays, and there has been less jumping and fewer visits to the saloons. More men have written to their friends, and in general, the moral tone of the camp has been raised. (Fitzpatrick, 1902, pg. 30-31)

Further, Thos. Shaw, the foreman at camp 2 of the Victoria Harbour Company in Nairn Centre Ontario reported that “our men appreciate their privilege, are steadier and more reconciled to their lot. The change I am strongly inclined to attribute to this homelike influence” (Fitzpatrick, 1901, pg. 34). Having libraries in camp was a welcome addition to the monotony of life there, and perhaps even helped stabilize the social order some. It is perhaps a stretch to equate accepting your lot to an improvement in your life, but it sounds like this effect was pleasing to Mr. Shaw.

It is probably impossible to say for sure whether reading camps truly improved the moral lives of workers. Likely enough, men were not drinking, gambling, telling lewd jokes or visiting prostitutes during the time that they were sitting and reading. In that way, vice was kept from their lives at least temporarily. Whether or not their time reading exerted the desired influence later that week or year seems much harder to know. I suspect that reading camps were a welcome addition to lots of men’s lives, but those who wanted to went ahead and sinned just the same regardless of the ‘quality’ of material they might have been reading. I think that in this way Frontier College is a classic example of a social gospel institution. Fitzpatrick had moral and religious motivations and intentions in founding the college. He assumed that by educating

people they would be drawn inexorably towards the obvious truth of Christian middle class morality. His assumptions were faulty, and his actions instead had unintended consequences. The people he was dealing with were less pliant than he hoped. Many doubtlessly took what they wanted from what Frontier College had to offer and left the rest.

Chapter 6—Conclusion: Hygiene, Racial and Otherwise, and its Contemporary Echoes

This chapter briefly describes the eugenics movement in Canada as it existed in the early twentieth century and places it in its global context within the British Empire and the Western world. Next I discuss the persistent recurrence of these same old stories in today's world, often with strikingly similar language. My closing thoughts review the story of Canadian immigration that we like to believe, and suggest that the rosy hue of this tale requires an all too familiar collective amnesia.

Eugenics in Canada

In researching for this project, I was transported into a world I had never previously visited. This took me back to a time when what would now be called scientific racism was still considered unabashedly to be scientific. Eugenics, or race hygiene, was tremendously popular, and what a vast discussion there was in the unlikeliest of places. The idea that certain races had certain characteristics was almost universally accepted. That some races were inherently better than others likewise went almost without question. A scientific program of guided (or curtailed) human reproduction, to gradually eliminate so-called degeneracy seemed like a wonderful idea for decades before the Second World War. Hygiene was an inextricable part of this narrative:

> Even the cockroach, which lives on what we call filth, spends the greater part of its time in the cultivation of personal cleanliness. And all social hygiene, in its fullest sense, is but an increasingly complex and extended method of purification – the purification of the conditions of life by sound legislation, the purification of our own minds by better knowledge, the purification of our hearts by a growing sense of responsibility, the purification of the race itself by an enlightened eugenics, consciously aiding nature in her manifest effort to embody new ideals of life. (Ellis, 1912, p. vi)

To give an idea of how widespread these ideas were, even in Canada, Angus McLaren (1990) stated the following; “The average English Canadian was schooled to be as accepting of the notion of 'race improvement' as of the idea that Canada was a Christian country” (p. 167). One of the central pillars of eugenics programs anywhere was restriction of immigration. Consequently, almost anyone talking about immigration in the first decades of the twentieth century likely accepted some aspects of what is today easily recognized as eugenics. Fitzpatrick and Bradwin were right in the thick of this debate.

In their defense, neither Alfred Fitzpatrick nor Edmund Bradwin were particularly racist given the standards of their day. Fitzpatrick was a deeply ambiguous character, both emulating and advocating the racial tropes of the time, while at times seeming open to questioning them. I think that Fitzpatrick really liked people. All people. He devoted his entire life to educating some of the poorest and most marginalized people in this country at that time. If a few more of us could bring ourselves to do a fraction of what he did then the world would certainly be a better place. Fitzpatrick did not write books advocating eugenics, I never found him to have written the word, or “race hygiene” or anything else like that. I think he was profoundly influenced by racial scientific narratives, but I don't believe he felt very strongly about them personally. In a way it seems unfair to blame him for accepting the intellectual undercurrents of his own time. Somebody a hundred years from now could just as easily nitpick me for believing in global

warming or being against genetic engineering. That a man was the product of his time should hardly be surprising. From all accounts, Fitzpatrick was a quirky eccentric. I can't help but think of him as likable. I certainly do not wish to impugn his character in writing this.

However, Fitzpatrick also provides a window into an aspect of his time which is not well enough understood, and which is still pertinent today. He is not the most obvious vantage point for discussing eugenics, however, that he is nonetheless a vantage point for it goes a long way towards showing how pervasive this kind of thinking was. This is the story. The fact that a good man, from Canada, who was devoted to helping others, advocated an imagined racial superiority of the British branch of the Anglo-Saxon race, and sought to do something about it is really interesting. Pierre Walter (2003b) has brought this to light in his *Literacy, Imagined Nations, and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada, 1899-1933.* That Fitzpatrick discussed topics in common with, and using a lot of the same language as eugenicists, and that he had an obvious preoccupation with hygiene, has not previously been pointed out and cries out all kinds of linkages to some of the worst history we have.

Whatever his intentions, Fitzpatrick advanced the worldview which created the apartheid regime in South Africa, The Jim Crow system in the southern United States, the White Australia Policy, the residential school system in this country, and in its most extreme form the Nazi regime in Germany. Does this make him a Nazi? Certainly not. He did, however, firmly believe in the White Man's Burden, and the institution he founded was clearly intended to help deal with this perceived problem. Fitzpatrick was part of a much larger conversation, where many others went much further than he did, although the pervasiveness of this topic has been forgotten. It is important to realize that this kind of thinking was far less isolated than we like to think, because this narrative is alive and well today if we care to see it for what it is (see below). Immigration

was an integral aspect of most of what Fitzpatrick did and what he wrote about. He did so in language that I at first found very odd. It was a revelation for me to discover the tremendous similarity of what he was saying to that of the eugenicists.

Far too often, the most extreme form of scientific racism is all that we remember about it. The final solution to exterminate Europe's Jews was without question the most evil thing the Nazis did. In hindsight, nobody in their right mind would want to have any association with such a thing. Something so evil seems like it could only have been an aberration unique in history. While this may have been the case for the extreme scale of action the Nazis took, the thinking behind their actions had a long pedigree in many countries. Angus McLaren put it very well when he said of Nazi Germany:

> racial hygiene policies carried out after 1933 did not suddenly spring full-blown from the minds of madmen; they had been planned and discussed in Weimar Germany by respectable doctors and scientists. Under Hitler many of these same eugenicists were willing to administer these programs. Germany provided a salutary lesson of what could happen to a society that embraced the dangerous notion that the social and economic challenges of the twentieth century could be solved by recourse to a biological solution. (McLaren, 1990, p. 169)

It was not only in Weimar Germany that the respectable doctors and scientists were talking about this. Jeremy Hugh Baron (2007) went further in identifying every intellectual aspect of Nazi eugenics to have had precedence in Britain and the United States. Indeed, the Nazis modeled many of their eugenic laws and programs upon sterilization and miscegenation laws and efforts already underway in the United States. Even the gas chamber was proposed as early as 1900 by eugenicist Dr. Duncan McKim of New York, among others, although they were certainly outliers.

Similarly, while certainly the worst genocide of all time, the final solution was far from

the only one. Several other genocides occurred in the decades leading up to the Second World War, some of them within the British Empire which Fitzpatrick worked so hard to promote. For example, the aboriginal people on Tasmania were systematically hunted down and murdered by white settlers. The last remnant of the native population was deported to Flinders Island where they gradually died off. This can be taken as an example of the sort of thing that was happening to Aboriginal people throughout Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only the vastness of the Australian landmass giving enough of them enough places to hide ensured that some survived (Madley, 2008). In my own travels in Australia I encountered several people who said aloud that they wished they had "finished the job."

We Anglophone westerners never cease to congratulate ourselves for our grandfathers' defeat of the Nazis. There's an ingrained and I think intellectually lazy assumption in this favoured view of history that since we fought the Nazis, we must have been fighting what they stood for. Everybody knows that the Nazis stood for racial hygiene, so therefore that's what we were fighting against. If we fought against it, then nobody here apart from a few cranks could have ever believed in it. Besides, fighting the Nazis more than excuses whatever eugenic peccadilloes were engaged in by a few individuals in our own countries. The widespread profundity of this narrative's existence far beyond Germany has been willfully and quickly forgotten.

In Canada, there is already a prevailing sense that historically we did a better job than most of our neighbours. We managed to avoid the severe racism and genocide which were inflicted upon African and Native Americans in the United States. Instead of slavery, Canada was the welcoming destination at the end of the underground railroad. Instead of sending in the cavalry, we merely swindled our natives with treaties. Similarly, we founded a society much less

afflicted by the ossified class struggles of Great Britain. This is the canonical story of Canada. The nice country. While there may be some truth to it, our self-congratulatory feelings about coming from a better country are not based upon a profound knowledge of what did happen here. Indeed, Canada's racism and genocide were conducted more on a scale appropriate to our size. They did happen, but we mostly don't know about it and we allow our absence of knowledge to be filled with a sort of positive, imaginary glaze. No news is good news.

Canada never produced a great theorist of eugenics, like Britain's Francis Galton or America's Charles Davenport. We are accordingly hardly ever mentioned in histories of eugenics, which like so many aspects of Canadian history, almost invariably come from elsewhere (McLaren, 1990). Therefore, it is easy and natural for a people who are used to knowing more about other places than their own to assume that nothing of the sort ever happened here. Such assumptions are untrue, and indeed considerable evidence of an extensive Canadian interest in eugenics is immediately available with the most cursory of searches. Some of our most revered historical figures were profoundly involved in this movement. A prime example straight out of social gospel milieux is Tommy Douglas. The later Premier of Saskatchewan for twenty years and federal NDP leader who is nationally lauded as the father of socialized healthcare, wrote his master's thesis on *The Problems of the Subnormal Family*. In it Douglas advocated comprehensive sterilization of the so called "mentally and physically defective" (1933, p. 25).

British Columbia and Alberta both enacted eugenics legislation in the 1930's and performed thousands of sterilization operations on people deemed 'feeble minded.' These laws long outlasted the Second World War with both being rescinded only after respective defeats of Social Credit provincial governments in 1972. The laws were actively used in both provinces up

until that time. Similar legislation was tabled in the provincial parliaments in both Ontario and Manitoba, although was defeated in both cases thanks to significant opposition among each province's sizable Catholic minority. Catholicism was viscerally opposed to any interference with human reproduction, and frankly realized that many of its French Canadian adherents would rate poorly in eugenic categories. Eugenics in western Canada was in no small part successful due to a much smaller Catholic population in those provinces at the time (McLaren, 1990).

Despite never successfully enacting eugenics legislation, there was widespread and very active and vocal support for it in Ontario among liberal, progressive, Anglophone Protestants. Two provincial Royal Commissions were held on the topic. The *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-Minded* published in 1919 recommended a series of mental testing and categorization for Ontario's youth and immigrants, the construction of new asylums, and a series of marriage restriction laws (McLaren, 1990, p. 108). The *Royal Commission on Public Welfare* of 1929 concluded that feeble-mindedness was congenital and led inexorably to crime and prostitution. Compulsory sterilization to "lessen the amount of evil which is certainly promoted by unchecked sexual freedom of criminals or defectives who have a record of immorality" (McLaren, 1990, p. 112). This is a prime example of the kinds of concerns which were really behind eugenic pseudo-science. It was substantially Victorian morality masquerading as science in an attempt to retain legitimacy in a world where the foundations of that morality had shifted.

Similarly, Ontario Lieutenant Governor, H.A. Bruce called sterilization "damming up the foul streams of degeneracy and demoralization which are pouring pollution into the life's blood" (McLaren, 1990, p. 118) in a public speech. The city councils of forty-three Ontario cities including Toronto and Kingston passed resolutions in favour of sterilization legislation up to

1937. (McLaren, 1990, p. 121) This was a widespread and very public discussion that lasted for several decades. Indeed, it would be difficult to understand much of the social history of Canada in the early twentieth century without this realization. Many others who may not have explicitly advocated this theory were influenced by it. I believe Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin were among them.

Eugenics Today

Reading J.S. Woodsworth, or Edmund Bradwin, or Alfred Fitzpatrick one is struck by how depressingly familiar all of this sounds. These kinds of views were never properly put to rest and seem to be back with a vengeance. One need look no further than Donald Trump's campaign for the 2016 Republican Party nomination in the United States and we hear the same old litany; immigrants steal jobs, drive down wages, are content to live in crowded squalor, contain among them shadowy threats of crime and violent extremism, wish to change us to suit themselves, spread disease.

I recently read an article in *The Guardian* for example regarding people fleeing the wars in the middle east and crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Europe:

> During the last 10 years, refugees and asylum seekers have been demonized as scroungers, malingerers, the people stealing our jobs. Their cause has not been helped by the way in which they are greeted, as they arrive in boats, by officials in full quarantine protective clothing: it's as if refugees were contaminated aliens who have come to spread disease. (Moorehead, 2015, September 12, para. 12)

This sounds depressingly familiar.

Another article in the same newspaper reported that British Prime Minister David Cameron has recently called migrants seeking to enter Britain a "swarm of people" (Jones, 2015, October 14, para. 3). Similarly the British Home Secretary, Theresa May stated at a Conservative

Party conference that mass migration made it "impossible to build a cohesive society" (Jones, 2015, October 14, para. 3). It is also reported that the conservative tabloid press in Britain has described Muslim migrants as "cockroaches" (Jones, 2015, October 14, para. 18). This was of course a favorite term used by the Nazis to describe their enemies, particularly Jews. Prior to that it was often used by eugenicists to describe whomever they sought to call degenerate as was already shown above in Havelock Ellis's quote from 1912 included at the beginning of this chapter.

The same Guardian article that told of these comparisons of Muslim migrants to insects showed how similar such language is to that used during the infamous Evian Conference of 1938 where the world's leaders gathered to decide what to do with Jewish refugees trying to flee Nazi occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia and decided to do nothing. In the end nobody could bring themselves to advocate "importing Europe's racial problem" (Jones, 2015, October 14, para. 7), ensuring most of these people's subsequent extermination. This list of modern day examples of this very dangerous style of thinking could very easily be extended ad nauseum.

Closing Thoughts

I never initially imagined that reading Alfred Fitzpatrick would be the opening of a portal into a whole world of racist and classist anxiety that took place right here in Canada, but this is what continually jumped off the pages at me when I read his books. I was originally drawn to the story of log cabin schools away out in the bush in the mythical time of railway construction that is so dear to the Canadian national identity. This identity can be the story of the great North American alternative to the violent crucible that was (and is) the United States; the friendly mosaic to the north. The immigrants' destination that welcomed people as they were,

worked with them and cared enough about them to allow them to preserve their differences and together construct a humane social democracy. Not perfect, but great by comparison. It's a good story.

Frontier College deserves a righteous place in the pantheon of this Canada. It is a uniquely Canadian institution. While the intention certainly was to mold new arrivals into loyal British subjects, Frontier College went to the immigrants where they were and worked with them on a voluntary basis. There was no coercion, just a free service which you could use if you wanted to and which would actually help you get by in your new country. By many accounts it was greeted with thankful enthusiasm, and indeed, why not. I do think that this friendly and welcoming Canadian way is justifiably seen around the world as a better way to be.

This version of Canada is a reassurance to the world that people can live together, and it is sound evidence for the dispelling of racist fantasies. Canada never did become the "second Balkans" of Alfred Fitzpatrick's fears (1920, p. 130). The fact that many thousands of eastern and south-eastern Europeans came here at that time, worked hard, prospered and added texture to this country suggests that it can happen again; that despite the fears of difference inspired by Syrian refugees for example, in a few decades all will be well. This Canada is living proof that the introduction of different races and cultures of people does not lead to their imposing the alleged worst failings of their own cultures upon us. Canada's experience in the twentieth century is good evidence to suggest that people are just people and that race is actually a really stupid unit of analysis. We should congratulate ourselves that, for the most part, we did not round up the 'problem' groups and put them into concentration camps or 'homelands' as in Germany or South Africa.

Excepting, of course, that we did do exactly this. There is a whole part of our population

that did not get to be part of the Canadian dream (if there is such a thing) in the twentieth century. That part of our population which we did round up and put in camps. Most of them are still there. We call them reservations. If the residents are not imprisoned by barbed wire and armed guards, then they are or were until very recently by a tangle of legal, financial and social restrictions which have been placed upon them to control the 'problem.' I am talking of course about the people who have the greatest claim of all to this land, our native citizens. Canada cannot continue to consider itself the good guy in history, when the telling of that story requires a tremendous silence about a lot of what did happen here. To pretend that our history was better than that of other countries requires that we deliberately forget the bad parts. We have so far proven tremendously adept at forgetting our history and I think it has a strange and noticeable impact on our national character.

Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin were good men who devoted their lives to helping others. They also, however, ascribed to a worldview which viewed the behaviour of others as profoundly unhygienic and they exerted tremendous effort to do something about it. The hygiene narrative in their writings has not previously been pointed out. Such narratives as these were the intellectual supports for all kinds of evil. In North America, we got residential schools and Jim Crow. Elsewhere in the British empire, exactly the same kind of discourse gave us Apartheid and the White Australia policy. More than we like to admit it, this widespread attitude primed the pump for Nazism. The fact that here we did not embark on a program of systematic, industrialized extermination does not mean that we did not contribute to the moral and intellectual arguments which allowed these things to happen elsewhere.

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