

Strong Arms and Idle Minds

Canadian Laborers and Masculine Imagery in the Rhetoric
Strategies of Frontier College Reformists in the 1920s

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ABSTRACT

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My master's thesis focuses on the masculine language and rhetoric used by Canadian social reformists Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin, who operated an adult education organization named Frontier College in the early 20th century. Frontier College's main agenda revolved around rural industry spaces such as lumber camps, mining towns and railway construction sites, which had in the turn of the century grown to employ an unprecedented number of transient workers from diverse backgrounds, and were largely defined by poor and unregulated housing conditions. The frontier laborers, as men in their physical prime haunted by idleness of the mind, caused great anxiety in the public imagination. Fitzpatrick and Bradwin believed that intervention in form of technical, cultural and moral education and housing reforms would work toward wholesome assimilation and canadianization of frontier laborers.

My primary sources consist of two publications, Fitzpatrick's *University in Overalls* (1920) and Bradwin's *The Bunkhouse Man* (1922), and my research questions center around the ways masculinity and manhood were employed in both texts as rhetorical strategies to impact both the workers and the educated middle-class audience. I discuss the themes, repetitions and implications found in the texts using the method of qualitative close reading and by contextualizing them in the contemporary ideals of physical, independent and assertive masculine performance. The theoretical framework of this thesis stems from feminist gender theory, performativity of gender and the concept of multiple masculinities.

The analysis carried throughout the thesis shows that the reformers' apparent fixation on the workers' masculine performance was most apparent in their language of exaggeration and emasculation, which worked as a tool of empowerment and inspiration for both the laborers as well as the middle-classes who reflected their masculinity on the imagery of idealized frontier manhood. Additionally, the reason why manhood arose into such a prominent position in the rhetoric likely stemmed from the societal anxieties over immigration, ethnic and racial diversity and non-conforming sexual and social behavior in relation to the middle-class Upper Canadian and British cultural values.

KEY WORDS: masculinity, rhetoric, frontier, adult education, Canada, labor

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Frontier Labor.....	2
1.2 Prior Research and Theoretical Approach	7
1.3 Primary Sources and Research Questions	10
2. Strong Arms and Hardy Men - Descriptions of Frontier Masculinities	15
2.1 The Workers.....	15
2.2 Frontier Masculinities	20
2.3 Gender Anxiety	27
3. Teachers and Exemplary Men – Strategies of Instructing Ideal Masculinity	35
3.1 Educating and modeling masculinity	35
3.2 Exaggeration and Emasculation.....	45
4. Conclusion.....	53
Sources.....	58
Lyhennelmä.....	63

1. Introduction

In the turn of the 20th century the Canadian society was transforming. The growing cities as well as the expanding railway system and flourishing industry created a need for natural resources and workers to provide them and to construct the new infrastructure. Simultaneously the Canadian national identity was searching its shape under British and American influence. Increasing immigration from all over Europe and Asia further diversified the demographic, which in part influenced the discourse surrounding language, ethnicity, race, gender and nationality. The influx of new immigrants showed largely in densely populated urban areas, but a significant number of people followed work to the Canadian Frontier, to lumber camps, railways and mines.¹ Even before but certainly after the accelerated immigration of the early decades of the 20th century and the expansion of labor markets, rural workforce had been caught in the margins of society, supposedly isolated from civilization and caught in disagreeable conditions. The overcrowded and often neglected housing and lack of didactic recreational activities unsettled some mainstream observers, who dubbed it shameful that men with such strong and healthy bodies were left idle and denied the opportunities to better their mind and spirit, and by extension to realize their full potential as Canadian citizens.²

The Frontier College, founded and run by reverend Alfred Fitzpatrick and instructor Edmund Bradwin, sought to reform frontier workspaces by bringing education closer to workers and by convincing the upper- and middle classes of their cause's importance to the upwards trajectory of the Canadian society and Anglo Canadian identity. One of the reoccurring points of interest in the Frontier College's social gospel was the perceived masculine status of rural workers, which both reformers continuously utilized in their descriptions. In this thesis I analyze the reformers' main texts from the 1920s and discuss their language, rhetoric and point of view as they relate to working-class men's masculinities and contemporary western gender ideals.

¹ Palmer & Sangster 2008, 121.

² Hobbs 2016, 207.

1.1 Frontier Labor

Between 1886 and 1914, during the so-called wheat boom, a new influx of new settlers, many of whom were immigrants, turned their eyes west and moved to farm the Canadian prairies. Rising wheat prices and new advancements in agricultural technology made farming these lands more profitable than ever, as Canada supplied both its own growing society as well as Britain and western Europe with wheat and natural resources. Consequently, the new frontier settlements majorly impacted frontier industry, as the treeless prairies created a demand for wood and more extensive railway networks to transport people and goods. In turn, railway construction played a part in discovering new mineral deposits, which aided the mining boom in areas like Sudbury in northern Ontario where the explosive work done during the Canadian Pacific Railway project in the 1880s had uncovered copper and nickel.³ This industrial boost in the frontier created a need for more workers to enter a very distinct work environment, which was typically characterized by its rural location and isolation created by the physical distance from larger settlements and towns, where the urban working class had already garnered the attention of both the social gospel movement and worker unions.

Physically isolated and migratory work environments often functioned seasonally and required the workers to leave their homes for months at a time. Farmers would leave their homesteads for work in lumber camps during the winter months while some, usually young unmarried men and immigrants with no immediate familial responsibilities could follow work wherever it was available throughout the year.⁴ Traditionally frontier labor such as lumbering was done by local men, and young boys grew up waiting for the day they could join their father and brothers in the lumber camps they had heard of in stories.⁵

The arrival of unprecedented number of immigrants impacted the traditional camp culture to some extent, which caused concern among the Anglo Canadian workforce who feared for the disappearance of their work culture.⁶ However, contemporary descriptions and retellings of this culture do exist alongside immigrants who often contributed to it, and only infrastructural and industrial changes later

³ Riendeau 2000, 173-178.

⁴ Radforth 1987, 27-30.

⁵ Radforth 1987, 44.

⁶ Radforth 1987, 41.

towards the 1940s seem to have made a notable impact in the decline of communal camp culture.⁷ Worker demographic also varied depending on industry, and while Anglo- and French Canadians and English speaking immigrants were evidently present in most rural camps and towns, it is common, for example, to locate descriptions of Italian immigrants in mining and railway work, whereas in comparison Scandinavians appear more in logging.⁸ Workers of all ethnicities and nationalities can still be located across all industries, however many were employed based on racial prejudices of the employer, and these stereotypes often extended to the understanding of inherent masculinity of the men.⁹

The physical conditions of work camps and communities were mostly unregulated. Communal housing in bunkhouses, dormitories and tents was common, and the free time and social life of workers concentrated in their confined living quarters. The work hours were long, and the little spare time revolved around equipment maintenance, calm activities like smoking, talking and playing cards as well as occasional dancing, singing and games. Bathing facilities were typically insufficient due to management's unwillingness to implement them into the camp structure as well as some men's aversion to regular bathing. In addition, clothes and blankets were rarely washed, which made body lice a daily nuisance found in every camp.¹⁰ Stories of the dubious and unregulated conditions welcomed public critique and sympathy for the men stuck in such appalling circumstances, but the long distances made enforcing any universal living standards challenging.

Alcohol and gambling were usually banned by employers due to the belief that they would cause unrest among the men and weaken productivity, and some prohibited card playing altogether.¹¹ Many camp workers engaged in occasional heavy drinking as well as fighting once they reached towns in between work seasons, and their conduct did impact their public image: while many pitied the men for the maltreatment they faced at work and camp, they were simultaneously feared and judged for their stereotypical roughness and lack of civilized character.¹² Illiteracy was common, and because some camps and communities

⁷ Bethke 1981, 12-13.

⁸ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 110; Forestell 1998, 253-254.

⁹ Radforth 1987, 33.

¹⁰ MacKay 1978 (2002), 228-247.

¹¹ Radforth 1987, 95; Blanchard 1969, 27.

¹² Radforth 1995, 235.

consisted only of immigrants, many could spend decades in Canada without learning English or French. While it is important to note that rural laborers, despite the camp's physical isolation, formed complex communal networks of their own, seasonal isolation from population centers, strict work schedule and lack of education still hindered some men's ability to take part in the larger Canadian society for their entire life, leading to industrial towns filling with retired men with no family, earnings or property of their own.¹³

Rural workers and their work typically fell under the category of unskilled labor, which allowed employers to keep wages lower but also kept the men in the margins of proper manhood, as skill was considered a masculine virtue among other nominators.¹⁴ After the rapid industrialization of North America in the 19th century more and more men earned their wages doing industrial labor under a larger employer, which some contemporary commentators deemed depersonalized, oppressive and emasculating.¹⁵ Physically industrial workers fit the new manhood ideal, and their bodies and strength were the object of admiration for many observers. Their relationship with the employer and the society, however, was paternalistic due to their status and image as marginalized men who were dependent on their employer and allegedly in need of leadership.¹⁶ The low value assigned to their labor and the nature of camp culture easily associated them with young, almost boyish mentality, which further justified questioning their mental potential. The hegemonic masculine status and by extension societal power was still reserved for educated, typically Anglo Canadian men in the higher social classes.

The educated elite, however, was itself already divided by questions of Canada's national status in relation to the British empire, western expansions and national identity. The complexity of the Canadian identity was influenced by several variables, including race, language and gender, and ideal citizenship required certain performativity. Conservatives and Liberals rivaled each other in the political sphere, although both sides typically shared a core interest of British cultural influence. The Liberal party gained control in the government in 1896, and

¹³ Kero 1976, 89.

¹⁴ Maynard 1989, 163-166.

¹⁵ Kimmel 2006, 58.

¹⁶ Heron 1995, 535.

simultaneously the liberal, anglophone Ontario elites worked toward strengthening distinctly British and Upper Canadian influence in the growing settlements on the west, for example Manitoba which up until the 1870s had been inhabited largely by French-Canadian, Roman Catholic and Métis population.¹⁷ Similarly, despite their general advocacy for railways, the Ontario Liberals criticized the Pacific Railway's monopoly due to its Quebec based funding.¹⁸

In the beginning of the 20th century the province of Ontario had become the focal point of liberals who sought to maintain British cultural values in the core of the developing Canadian identity and the colonization of the west. This approach actively championed Anglo-Saxon excellency and the inevitable progress of British civilization compared to the indigenous, Métis, French-Canadian and non-British immigrant populations of the dominion. The Ontario Liberal vision primarily emphasized the importance of Ontario-led expansion of British civilization across the dominion, and the anglophone sentiment of the Upper Canada's educated elite undoubtedly influenced the contemporary ideals surrounding masculinity, which in many progressive social reformist movements meant underscoring Anglo-Saxon ethnic, racial and cultural qualities as the normative and desired standard of citizenship and manliness.¹⁹

In addition to racial and ethnic dimensions, the overall western ideals of masculinity were transforming in the early 20th century. The Victorian, middle class ideals of the previous decades had emphasized propriety, piety and mental virtue as well as the positive influence of home environment and feminine company.²⁰ This was subject to change, however, as the language describing manliness began to revolve around metaphors of war and battle, and physical strength, bodily activity and triumph over nature were introduced as properties of the new ideal man.²¹ Men were discouraged from associating with women too freely in fear of absorbing their alleged weaker disposition, but simultaneously on the eve of homosocial normativity associating with other men became more controlled as well.²² The new ideal man was an individual, strong in both body and mind, and

¹⁷ Thompson 2020, 48.

¹⁸ Thompson 2020, 45.

¹⁹ Thompson 2020, 45-46, 58-59.

²⁰ Welter 1969, 76.

²¹ Rotundo 1993, 232-238.

²² Isenberg 2009, 146-147.

this change likely played a large role in the rising interest in educating and empowering working-class men. The masculine value seen in their bodies clashed with their lack of education, however, as their status still depended on their class and verifiable skill.

In urban environments working class and immigrant struggles were more prominent due to the concentrated population and visibility of the people in societal margins, and as humanitarian activism gained popularity from late 19th century onward, the urban working class too benefited from the increasing urban development and addition of libraries and parks.²³ The situation in the rural frontier, however, was much different. During work season the frontier workers were often involved only with the immediate camp community and occasionally with workers who were switching between different operations, and often their only contacts to the outside society were supply deliveries and traveling merchants, union agitators and preachers. Many of these visitors were after money or influence, but for the workers their presence offered a welcome change of pace in the repetitive camp life.²⁴

For some camps that welcome change of pace came in the form of reading rooms, camp libraries and teachers, as the adult education organization Frontier College began offering their services to Canadian lumber camps, railway construction sites, mining towns and other physically isolated frontier spaces. The Frontier College, founded in 1899 as the Reading Camp Association by Alfred Fitzpatrick and headquartered in Toronto, channeled its efforts into the education of both Canadians and immigrants alike, reflecting the anglophone Upper-Canadian liberal values. The Frontier College's goal in the early 20th century can, in sum, be described as a canadianization project: during its early decades it focused on providing Anglo Canadian rural workers with opportunities for self-improvement through education, and aiding non-Anglo-Saxon Canadians and immigrants assimilate into the Canadian society and British cultural sphere, with a special interest in the improvement of living conditions and overall elevation of frontier men's mental and spiritual resources.

²³ Riendeau 207-213.

²⁴ Blanchard 1969, 21-22; Radforth 1987, 94.

1.2 Prior Research and Theoretical Approach

The societal implications of industry and national expansion have been the foundation for a great number general and specialized Canadian histories. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway was the corner stone of Canadian politics in the late 19th century, and the growth of cities and frontier expansion accelerated the creation of national identity and culture shaped by industrial development.²⁵ The labor behind the resources for this growth and the social history of North-American frontier and working-class has been a stable point of interest during the past decades, and diverse studies on labor, immigration and working class experience have filled multiple article publications and essay collections on the topic. Immigrant history, in many cases, overlaps with labor history focused on the early 20th century as immigration was a topic tightly tied to industry and labor. In the collection *Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s – 1960s* (1998) multiple articles focus on the joined issue of immigration, race, ethnicity and labor, for example Anthony B. Chan in *Bachelor Workers* focuses on Chinese immigrant men in railway construction, while Ian Radforth discusses the issue of radical socialism in racialized labor spaces in *Finnish Radicalism and Labour Activism in Northern Ontario*.

The above-mentioned abundance of studies on Canadian labor and immigrant history somewhat intersects with research done on gender and sex in the 19th and 20th century Canada. Traditionally, histories discussing the topics of gender and sex have leaned towards women's studies, which arguably is connected to the fact that the field of gender studies has in the past had a feminine association. Indeed, Canadian working-class women have been a subject of multiple studies from various points of view. Carolyn Strangely's *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880 — 1930* (1995), for example, discusses in length the issues of urbanization and the consequent congregation of single wage-earning women in cities as well as the social perils associated with them. What the field lacks, however, is extensive research on the male working-class experience, as many male laborers were viewed through similar, gendered and moral anxieties.

²⁵ Vance 2009, 296-301.

Some studies have emerged to fill this void, many of them stemming from gay and queer studies. In a broader North American context, much attention has been given to the many peculiarities of frontier manhood. *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West* (2001) is an exceptional example of this, carrying multiple topical essays and articles ranging from the multicultural male communities of mid-19th century California gold rush to the gender protest of crossdressing Cowboys. In the Canadian context, social historian Steven Maynard has done groundbreaking research in his multiple studies and critiques on specifically working-class and rural masculinity and sexuality, all of which highly relies on the complex definitions and connections of gender and power.

The Frontier College's reformist efforts have been mentioned in some generic studies on frontier labor, such as Ian Radforth's formative research of Ontario lumber camps in *Bush Workers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario 1900-1980* (1987) as well as Donald MacKays *The Lumberjacks* (1978) in which he reconstructs the history of North American lumber camps and loggers based on worker interviews, but other than brief mentions in wider historical studies, Frontier College and rural working class masculinity have been visible mainly in shorter and thematically limited articles.

Prior studies, both those that focus on Frontier College specifically and those that include it in a wider collection of source material, have seemingly divided the content to themes of race, education and gender. Pierre Walter, for example, makes such division in *Literacy, Imagined Nations, and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada, 1899-1933* while discussing Frontier College and imperialism. Fitzpatrick's work especially has proved fruitful to queer studies, and his rhetoric choices in camp life descriptions have been analyzed for example by Peter Hobbs, who discusses same sex relations in pre-World War II lumber camps in his article *Epistemology of the Bunkhouse: Lusty Lumberjacks and the Sexual Pedagogy of the Woods*.

But why masculinity? As anthropologist Don Conway-Long has noted, analyzing gender and sex in phenomena that at first glance seem to have little to do with them may often prove surprisingly illuminating.²⁶ According to Jody Mason, who

²⁶ Conway-Long 1994, 78.

has studied fiction as a part of Frontier College's library selection and as an educational tool, notes that the organization has for the most part been invisible in the fields of Canadian labor and literature studies.²⁷ As general interests have shifted and historical focus broadened, it has become increasingly appealing to examine questions of religion, social gospel, power, gender and sex as factors that potentially had broader societal impact and meaning.

Overall, however, discussion of masculinity and power structures related to it in frontier industry and Frontier College's work has lacked extensive research. Lorna McLean, in her 2002 article "*The Good Citizen*": *Masculinity and Citizenship at Frontier College, 1899-1933*, mentions the distinct lack of published studies made on the organization.²⁸ While her work, much like that of Pierre Walter's, recognizes the interesting emphasis on masculinity in Frontier College's message, its theoretical analysis stays rather superficial. Above mentioned studies on the topic, albeit diverse and essential in understanding the subject, leave much room to expand on the discussion on Frontier College's reformist literature's gendered rhetoric. The goal of my thesis is to add to the conversation by broadening both the historical and theoretical contexts of Frontier College and masculinity in the early 20th century Canada.

The theoretical framework I've applied to the analysis in this thesis revolves around feminist theorization of gender performance and masculinity. In my discussion of men, manhood and masculinity I recognize the complexity of defining such terms and nominators, especially when applied on someone by an outside party. According to Judith Butler's definition, gender is not a stable identity that leads to certain acts. On the contrary, it ought to be considered as an identity shaped by time and any repeated socially normative acts attached to it in the given societal context.²⁹ In my analysis I also utilize the concept of multiple masculinities, which refers to the above-mentioned identities as a multiplicity. This means that at any given time in a society driven by gender roles there is both a hegemonic way to perform gender and other performances that emerge in relation to it as well as the opposite. Thus, masculinities become known not only in their relation the perceived opposite, femininities and women, but in relation to

²⁷ Mason 2015, 109-110.

²⁸ McLean 2002, 227.

²⁹ Butler 1990, 139-141.

other men as well. This definition implies an inherent connection of gender performance and power, as these multiple masculinities stem not only from diversity but hierarchy as well.³⁰

Throughout the thesis I refer to the masculine ideal, which in this context primarily centers around the idealized version of strictly heterosexual, physically strong and independent Anglo Canadian manhood. It is relevant to note here, however, that the full ideal was just as unachievable for many middle-class men as it was for rural working-class men. This is a common aspect for the set gender ideal of any given time period, which I will further discuss in chapter two of this thesis. Despite the existence of the masculine ideal, described for example in the much-cited studies by E. Anthony Rotundo and Michael S. Kimmel, the western man in the early 20th century was a multidimensional character regardless of class. The masculine experience and performance of the rural workers differed from their urban counterparts as well as those of upper- and middle-class, but even within the frontier the men performed and strived for different masculine ideals.

The analysis of Frontier College literature has so far lacked the theoretical dimension of masculinity that would explain further the reasons behind the rhetoric choices made in the texts. Below, I explain the background of the organization and the two texts in question and discuss my methodical approach to answering the questions that arise from the reformers' rhetoric.

1.3 Primary Sources and Research Questions

The Canadian adult education organization Frontier College began its endeavor in 1899, and its early efforts peaked in the 1920s with the publication of Alfred Fitzpatrick's appeal *University in Overalls: A Plea for Part Time Study* and Edmund Bradwin's dissertation *The Bunkhouse Man*. In these books Fitzpatrick and Bradwin reflect on two decades' worth of work and observation in camps as they describe the rural workers and their conditions. During this time the Frontier College operated from Toronto, and especially in its early years its mission concentrated in Ontario before their services were extended across the Dominion.³¹

³⁰ Brod 1994, 86.

³¹ Morrison 1995, 33.

Alfred Fitzpatrick, who had worked as a traveling reverend for rural logging camps in the late 19th century, felt discontent with mere preaching and sought to bring social reform to the rural Canada in the forms of adult education and promotion of Anglo-Protestant middle-class values. In 1899 he founded the Canadian Reading Camp association, later renamed the Frontier College, through which he aimed to establish reading rooms, libraries and teaching staff in remote work camps in the Canadian frontier. In 1904 he was joined in his efforts by Edmund Bradwin who worked for the organization as an instructor of laborer-teachers.³²

Fitzpatrick's parents were second generation immigrants and farmers, and two of his brothers worked in logging camps. The harsh conditions and dangers of frontier industry were intimately familiar to him: his brother Leander drowned on a river drive when Alfred was in his late teens, and after completing his education he headed to California to work as a traveling preacher in hopes of finding his other brother, Isaac, and to pay respects to Leander's grave. During this time he also became familiar with the poor living conditions of North American frontier industry workers.³³ He dedicated *University in Overalls* to another brother of his, Thomas³⁴, who had suffered a head injury doing farm work as a teenager and of whom Alfred took care of until Thomas's death in 1924.³⁵

Compared to Fitzpatrick, few sources can be found on Bradwin's life before or even after Frontier College. His main role in the organization was that of an instructor supervisor, which allowed him to work in close contact with the laborers and examine their conditions and the work of the teachers firsthand. As a result of his time working in different camps, he wrote down his observation in his doctoral dissertation *The Bunkhouse Man*, which he submitted to the Columbia University in 1922 and published in 1928 in a university journal.³⁶

Fitzpatrick's Frontier College was primarily a social gospel movement. He proposed government funding for the project as well as broad state intervention in the camp conditions, arguing that the failure to do so would pose the men as a

³² Morrison 1995, 25, 34.

³³ Morrison 1995, 14.

³⁴ Fitzpatrick 1920, unnumbered cover page. "To my brother Tom. Who did too much manual labor while I did too little".

³⁵ Morrison 1995, 25.

³⁶ Burnet 1972, vi.

threat to Canadian liberalism.³⁷ Bradwin, despite mirroring Fitzpatrick passion for the social gospel element of the Frontier College to an extent, was more pragmatic in his approach and wanted to keep the focus of their operation on more basic literacy efforts. In 1931 he opposed Fitzpatrick's plans to expand the college's curriculum to offer a degree-granting program to the workers, and eventually lack of funding and the two reformers' bitter disagreements resulted in Fitzpatrick's resignation in 1933, after which Bradwin took over as the principle of Frontier College.³⁸

Although differences in their plans for the organization's future visibly manifested after the publication of the texts referred to in this thesis, the two educators' strikingly similar approaches to describing frontier laborers already show some distinct variations in the 1920s texts. Bradwin, whose dissertation has been used as a research source still in 21st century, is remarkably more neutral in his approach. This, however, is more descriptive of Fitzpatrick's passionate rhetoric throughout his own writing than any sort of objectivity on Bradwin's part. The stylistic difference of the texts is directly caused by their genres: Fitzpatrick's book is a free format plea to the public, a written justification for the organization's work on the frontier. Bradwin's text on the other hand is an academic dissertation. While many of his observations and arguments come off as subjective and biased to the modern reader, the style of his passion for the topic is distinctly different from that of Fitzpatrick's. Regardless of this, however, both texts share key vocabulary and rhetoric tools in their descriptions of working-class masculinity, which clearly links them to the same organization and agenda.

The Frontier College was shaped in its early years by its contrast to the conservative wing of social gospel movement. While many such missions focused on individual sin and personal ethics, Fitzpatrick called for state responsibility over the plight of rural workers, which in his view stemmed largely from systemic defects rather than pure, individual incapability.³⁹ The notably progressive nature of their work as well as their connections to other educated Ontarians suggests an affiliation to the Upper-Canadian Liberal circles. The Frontier College curriculum and agenda emphasize a similar interest in specifically Anglo Canadian, protestant

³⁷ Mason 2015, 111.

³⁸ Morrison 1995, 46-47.

³⁹ Mason 2015, 113.

education and training for those working in and settling the frontier, and the enthusiastic inclusion of immigrants in the objective to spread British cultural values also follows this political sentiment. The reformers saw great potential in immigrants, if they conformed to the Upper-Canadian and British language, customs and identity.

Both texts, however, are also very critical toward the educated elites, especially in terms of gender and masculinity. In the early 20th century men's physical strength and independence were considered the pinnacles of masculine virtue, whereas overt focus on book learning gained feminine association. To properly illustrate the role Frontier College played as a reformist influence, we must discuss its role both as mediator between the educated elite and the working class as well as its own agent with its own motives and relationships to workers, employers and elites. The organization held a peculiar position in between different spheres of Canadian society, where it had the task to both convince the elites that the industrial laborers of rural Canada were worth investing into, as well as to persuade the laborers to further divide their limited free time to improve themselves.

One notable challenge in these sources is their point of view. Although both reformers worked in proximity with the laborers, sometimes staying in the camps themselves and both continuously express sympathy for the workers' plights, their approach is still most descriptive of the middle-class view of the rural working class. Additionally, the texts were written to an educated audience, to garner the support and sympathy of the middle-classes or to narrate and analyze the conditions of rural industry to scholars. As such, the texts are both specifically sculpted to impact these audiences as well as written from that very perspective. The descriptions of workers as a somewhat passive and helpless mass stuck in isolation and idleness have been challenged and refuted in several studies focused on working class experience. Here, however, the focus is primarily in the Frontier College's perspective, and on how the reformers describe the objects of their effort and why they made their rhetoric choices.

Methodologically, I approach these two primary sources through qualitative close reading and analysis of their choices of wording, repeating themes, and indirect implications. More specifically, I read them from the perspective of their purpose

and agency within the environments they worked within: is their language indicative of contemporary tensions, would it have had specific emotional impact on the reader? This alludes to the Burkean method of viewing the power and meanings in text as a pentad of act, agent, agency scene and purpose, although my application focuses mainly on only few of these elements. Furthermore, my close reading extends to the form of the texts as well as their textual content, as I consider how Fitzpatrick and Bradwin deliver their descriptions and arguments.⁴⁰ I analyze them both as individual texts and as a combined effort to influence their mutual audience, and I compare Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's descriptions to each other and to other sources to determine their nature as representations of frontier work and worker identity. I discuss the language and form used in the texts, and how it recreates both solidarity and otherness between the author, workers and the reader and how it views masculinity as an integral part of the complex empowerment process.

The research questions I focus on in this thesis revolve around how frontier workers were described in these texts: what kind of masculine ideals and power structures operate within and behind their rhetoric and contexts? Why was workers' masculinity of interest to reformers, and why the rhetorical and practical tools they used were specifically chosen for this endeavor? I begin by focusing on the descriptions of men in the context of hegemonic masculine ideals of the time, followed by a look into implied gender anxieties found in the text. After this I focus on the proposed strategies of masculine education, and ultimately, based on the analysis of masculine elements in the rhetoric I strive to uncover why masculinity was displayed in both texts as such a crucial part of adult education and immigrant assimilation. Ideal masculinity and its imagery's use as a reformist tool are a carrying theme throughout both texts, uncovered in racial, social and moral descriptors of the workers as well as in their relationship to the educator and the middle-class public and educated elites. My approach focuses on the intersectional nature of the concept, as I discuss idealized masculinity of the early 20th century in the context of race, class, skill, morality and gender and try to uncover the underlying power structures by asking how and why this kind of masculine rhetoric was so heavily referred to and focused on in the effort to make a change.

⁴⁰ Brummett 2010, 38-40, 50-51.

2. Strong Arms and Hardy Men - Descriptions of Frontier Masculinities

Rural industry camps and towns have throughout the 20th century been described as highly masculine spaces, defined culturally by the idea on manhood associated with the men working in them. Ian Radforth has referred to them as having a keen sense of masculinity due to the perceived nature of some camp activities.⁴¹ Other studies, however, have contested this notion, even pointing to the opposite: a distinct lack of machismo in these spaces. Ella Johansson, who has studied Swedish immigrants in North American lumber camps, has emphasized the gentleness that the men in her sources depict, putting in question the generalized idea of predominantly rugged, violent masculinity that some others have equated with rural industry and frontier laborers.⁴² Further than that, what different writers and sources mean by terms like “masculinity”, “manhood” or “men”, what ideas and norms they assign to them and who they assign them to varies. The men who in the 1980s studies might have been hailed as the beacon of masculine virtue could have existed in the masculine margin in the 1910s, as is evident in the rhetoric used to describe workers from an outside perspective in the early 20th century. In this chapter I discuss who the workers in Canadian Frontier industry were, analyze the descriptions of the men and their masculinity found in Alfred Fitzpatrick and Edmund Bradwin’s texts and contextualize them within both their own contemporary normativity of gender as well as later theories of masculinities.

2.1 The Workers

The demographic of frontier camps and towns in the early 20th century Canada was varied and depended on the industry, immigration trends and workforce availability as well as individual employers’ preferences. In the 19th century lumber camp workers were predominantly Anglo- and French-Canadians and Irish and British immigrants. On the latter half of the century German, Polish and Scandinavian joined the workforce in larger numbers, with Immigrants from eastern and southern Europe following suit in the early 20th century.⁴³ In addition, Chinese immigrants played a major role in the construction of the Canadian Pacific

⁴¹ Radforth 1987, 8.

⁴² Maynard 1998, 191.

⁴³ Radforth 1995, 213.

Railway in the 19th century despite loud and racially motivated opposition.⁴⁴ The multicultural and diverse composition of the frontier laborers certainly contributed to rural working class culture, but it also subjected many workers to anti-immigrant hiring policies and racist treatment in and out of work.

Edmund Bradwin, in his descriptions of the men he had observed in camps during his years as an instructor supervisor in the early 20th century, divides the workers into categories highly descriptive of the ethnic and racial tensions of industrial labor. Although he himself considers his classifications unpleasant and even unjust, he emphasizes their basis in empirical observations on the field. While the ethnic groups listed match the current understanding of who worked in the Canadian frontier, the meanings attached to them in Bradwin's text are telling of both racial and masculine ideals of the time. The first category, "the whites", includes English speaking Canadians and Americans, French Canadians and immigrants from the British Isles, as well as Scandinavians and "some of the Finns, and in fact any other foreign-born nationals who by their intelligence, their skill as worker, or sheer native ability, have earned a recognition on their individual merits."⁴⁵ Bradwin lists indigenous Canadians under this category as well, although it seems more due to the inability to group them among "the foreigners" than their alleged inferior nature fitting in among Bradwin's praising imagery of strong and self-reliant Anglo-Canadians or the ancient and proud people of Scandinavia.⁴⁶

French-Canadians also formed a complex group of workers among the "whites". As was briefly discussed in the introduction, the cultural and linguistic tension between Anglo- and Francophone Canada in the turn of the century was palpable. This was visible in the rural workforce as well, not only in Canada but in North America in general. French Canadian workers were described as "half-wild folk" with a partly savage character, who by nature required leadership and could not by their own vocation successfully settle or work the frontier. The harsh treatment across North American lumber camps caused many French Canadian loggers to retreat back to Quebec, and in the United States some French Canadian workers were observed to show symptoms of a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder called the French Canadian "jumping" disease, which resulted from racially motivated

⁴⁴ Chan 1998, 236-240.

⁴⁵ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 92.

⁴⁶ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 94-104.

punishments and violence in wilderness camps and continuous jumping between jobs.⁴⁷ Although the treatment of French Canadians seem to have been more severe in The US at the time, Bradwin's descriptions support the argument that French Canadian workers were to an extent racialized and othered in the Canadian frontier as well.

Bradwin's other category, "the foreigners" includes the immigrant workers from mainland, Eastern and Southern Europe as well as Asia. In comparison to the previous category, the groupings here seem based less on national borders and more on race and ethnicity. He uses "Slav" as an umbrella term, which he then divides and specifies regionally into eastern, western, southern and Balkan Slavs. Similarly, Jewish workers are referred to as "the Jews", Turks, Syrians and Armenians as "men of the Levantine peoples" and the Chinese as "the Orientals". Germans and Italians, who are also included in the foreigners, are the only ones exclusively referred to by their nationality in this chapter of *The Bunkhouse Man*.⁴⁸ While the initial division seems crude and hierarchical, the descriptions of different groups within both the whites and the foreigners rely heavily on both negative and positive racial stereotypes thought as inherent in each group's nature. In both categories Bradwin appreciates physical strength and endurance as well as intelligence and willingness to learn, despite some groups seem inherently more inclined to embody these positive tropes.

In contrast to Bradwin, Alfred Fitzpatrick largely passes over the ethnic groupings in the *University in Overalls* in favor of focusing on the camps' physical conditions and the workers' life quality. He does, however, generally address non-English speaking immigrants in his description of a proper camp teacher: for the benefit of the Dominion, "men with an alien tongue" should be met at his "first point of contact with our civilization"⁴⁹ and teachers should play special attention in their supervision, as they allegedly required more urging to attend education.⁵⁰ Fitzpatrick's approach to the juxtaposition of English and French Canada is also challenging to fully resolve: on the other hand he occasionally parallels them as equal languages to take part in the Canadian society with, but more often he leaves

⁴⁷ Newton 2016, 135-145.

⁴⁸ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 104-112.

⁴⁹ Fitzpatrick 1920, 128.

⁵⁰ Fitzpatrick 1920, 132-133.

French out from consideration when discussing camp curriculums. In the early reports of the organization he promoted including French language literature in camps that already employed French-Canadian workers, but also encouraged the French Canadians to be taught English.⁵¹ In the *University in Overalls*, on the topic of immigrants, English is clearly the more pivotal language to include into the assimilation education.

Overall Fitzpatrick seems adamant that non-English speaking workers, especially immigrants, were not only taught English but directed to English literature as well.⁵² This is likely due to fears of unregulated content circulating among the working class, such as union radicalism, but also because sticking to one's native language was considered detrimental to the Canadianization process. Simultaneously, however, Fitzpatrick speaks for the adaptation of indiscriminatory practices in the frontier:

An effort should be made by native-born Canadians to discourage the use on the works of insulting names and remarks regarding foreigners. It is a small peg, but in many a remote place much may hang thereon. Prejudice, race-hatred, and petty tyrannies in local places should disappear in a broader effort for wholesome Canadianism.⁵³

Here we can note that the Frontier College agenda was based on advocating the inclusion of immigrant workers in the Canadian society, with the final emphasis put on language instead of any racial or ethnic elements. How this manifested in the practical execution is, however, more convoluted. While the above declaration, in the historical context of ethnic prejudice and pseudoscientific race-hierarchies, is quite progressive, it was still written alongside boldly racialized categorizations and underlying perceptions of Anglo Canadian excellency.

While the ethnic and racial divide of the workforce varied depending on the year, location and employer, another aspect of frontier industry life that interested the Frontier College, the physical camp conditions, went through some improvements over the turn of the century as well. In the mid-19th century lumber camps commonly consisted of one, low ceiling cabin in which the loggers slept, cooked,

⁵¹ Fitzpatrick 1901, 4, 11.

⁵² Fitzpatrick 1920, 132.

⁵³ Fitzpatrick 1920, 133.

bathed and spent their time. Towards the end of the century frontier camps began to add more specialized buildings to their architecture, perhaps most notably kitchen and dining buildings.⁵⁴ Towns around mining operations grew to include several types of accommodation alongside retail businesses like laundry houses and barbers.⁵⁵ According to Bradwin, railway camps consisted typically of shacks of varying quality located four to eight miles from each other, and unlike in logging camps, workers' were largely responsible of preparing their own food.⁵⁶

Although some improvements, such as stoves or bathing facilities, had a direct effect on living quality, many of the changes stemmed from the growing industries' need to efficiently house more workers: the average lumber camp grew from housing a dozen men in 1860s to up to 125 in the early 20th century.⁵⁷ There were many solutions to managing the living quarters, and depending on the operation the men shared bunkbeds, rented space from packed dormitories or created smaller bachelor family units in their own housing.⁵⁸

Bradwin's and Fitzpatrick's descriptions of the frontier industry workers' and camps' racial, ethnic, social and physical conditions all add up to bring the question of masculinity into frame. The positive and negative racial attributes in the texts often base themselves on what was considered manly in early 20th century North America, glorifying the union of rugged physical strength and academic intelligence which had come to serve as the idealized form of the masculine performance for the western middle classes. In addition, the middle-class experience had come to emphasize men's social individuality, and as the norms of homosocial communities grew more distant, the more deviant they turned from the perspective of the new normal.⁵⁹

Due to their isolation in relation to towns, cities and mainstream society, many laborers were either unaware of the public's view of them or felt less pressured to conform to masculine ideals, as some evidently sought out frontier jobs specifically for its isolated homosociality.⁶⁰ To discuss frontier workers' masculinity and

⁵⁴ Rohe 1986, 20.

⁵⁵ Forestell 1998, 256.

⁵⁶ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 130-132.

⁵⁷ Radforth 1987, 26.

⁵⁸ Forestell 1998, 260-261.

⁵⁹ Isenberg 2009, 146-147.

⁶⁰ Radforth 1987, 45.

the Frontier College's view of it further, however, we must view the topic in the context of early 20th century western gender normativity and the theoretical perspective of plural masculinities.

2.2 Frontier Masculinities

Masculinity, as a concept, is not a universal or tangible phenomenon. Although trends of ideal performance can be traced throughout different eras and cultures, identities like this are best described as a multiplicity. Multiple masculinities as a theory argues that despite there often being a hegemonically normative way of performing gender identity, like in this paper's case the white, Anglo Canadian middle-class family man, there are multiple other intersectional masculine identities that coexist with it, shaped by race, class and power. Sociologist Harry Brod, who had considerable influence in the popularization of the theory in the late 1980s, reminds that the multiplicity does not necessarily actualize in diversity, but in power relations.⁶¹ To uncover some context to the multiple masculinities of the frontier, we must approach them as a conflict and as an opposition to the "other", which in this case means not only women and femininities, but other men as well.⁶²

The culturally normative western masculinity started to lean toward "new manhood", an ideal masculine model of a more individualistic and physically fit man at the end of the 19th century. Partly due to the influence of Theodore Roosevelt, who is often described as the pioneer of the new manhood, the ideological shift gained global popularity. Embellished by the legacy of the American civil war, the new manhood embraced primitive passion and bold authority over the refined self-restraint and logical reflection of the previous century. Manhood increasingly became described through metaphors of battle, and the old soft values of business and academia stood in stark contrast against the new cultural norm.⁶³ Similarly, the romanticized concept of fraternal love transformed from the intellectual manly friendship of the antebellum America into a bond forged in the fires of struggle, battle and risk.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Brod 1994, 82-86.

⁶² Brod 1994, 83; Kimmel 1994, 115-120.

⁶³ Rotundo 1993, 222-246.

⁶⁴ Garceau 2001, 154.

Physical laborers' bodies were admired by many contemporary commentators. Lumber workers were especially romanticized for their physique and the nature of their work outdoors, conquering the wilderness and facing its dangers, which was ideal in the abstract of new manhood⁶⁵. To contrast the men's alleged mental plight, Fitzpatrick praised the bunkhouse men as physically the "healthiest and best in the whole country", suggesting that education and better living conditions could render them "the best class in the community".⁶⁶ Bradwin, too, admitted that the lumberjack profession in general was "the most romantic of all frontier works in Canada", alluding to the public's over-generational fascination toward the "strong-limbed men" of the woods.⁶⁷ Workers blessed with "strong arms" is a common rhetoric notion in Bradwin's text, which implies that the clearly impressive physical prowess of the men was an important reason behind the need for improved conditions and adult education.⁶⁸ However, it is important to note the racial element in this rhetoric: in his "ethnic groupings", Bradwin assigns the descriptors of strength more readily to those he calls "the whites", giving the "foreigners" a less flattering introduction by depicting them as slow and immobile.

The image of a frontier laborer gained a status of almost mythical masculinity, which rarely collided with his own experience of manhood. While the workers' bodies were strong and their work rugged, the social culture of work camps was rarely restricted to the romanticized imagery. Alongside arm wrestling and axe throwing competitions, frontier workers engaged in dancing and crossdressing, singing and boyish party games as well as bed sharing and communal grieving.⁶⁹ As Steven Maynard notes, the early 20th century working class men were, as a category, a complex web of gender and sex identifications: despite their later associations with ideal western masculinity, laborers at the time performed and were perceived as highly varied masculinities.⁷⁰ Frontier workers, formerly marginalized and newly idolized, were likely unaware about their romanticized status, as it rarely affected their own experiences.⁷¹ Regardless of their own, largely untraceable identifications, the idea of them remained a source of awe as the newly

⁶⁵ Rotundo 1993, 232-238.

⁶⁶ Fitzpatrick 1920, 7.

⁶⁷ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 162.

⁶⁸ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 57, 83, 85.

⁶⁹ Mackay 2002, 240; Blanchard 1969, 29-30; Radforth 1987, 95-96; Radforth 1995, 225-226.

⁷⁰ Maynard 1998, 189-190.

⁷¹ Garceau 2001, 152.

emasculated middle-class sought out inspiration from their work, bodies and life-style.

Fitzpatrick too saw the frontier workers' physical fitness as a virtue that academia and the urban elite lacked, and he criticized the latter for forgetting the body in their quest for knowledge and influence.⁷² In a similar vein, Bradwin criticized the apparent drift between the working class and the educated elite, implying that the universities had ignored the working class as well as the country, hindering the national development.⁷³ The critique against the universities also has its own gendered dimension: while women's participation in academia had been received with scorn in the 19th century, by 1920 over 47 percent of all students enrolled in college were women. Simultaneously the educated class lost the cultural association to masculinity as the new manhood adopted other symbols of manly normativity by dividing masculine and feminine spheres and designating their interaction to be harmful, and by doing so opening the universities to distrust from the public.⁷⁴

In contrast, up until the late 19th century, the Victorian, western gender relations and ideals were dominated by the concept of true womanhood, or the "cult of domesticity", which advocated the betterment of men through the godly influence of women.⁷⁵ Frontier industry throughout North America was typically an all-male space up until the 1920s, after which women working as camp staff became more common.⁷⁶ The lack of women and any gendered associations they carried with them has often been portrayed as the allure of frontier labor: isolated camps were both an escape from familial responsibilities for men who longed for the solace in the company of other men as well as an opportunity to purposefully reject the cult of domesticity.⁷⁷

Historian Elliot J. Gorn, while discussing prize fighting and bachelor culture in the Victorian America, has suggested that men sought out these spaces and admired male strength and physique because they perceived other men as creatures of

⁷² Fitzpatrick 1920, 84.

⁷³ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 229-233.

⁷⁴ Kimmel 2006, 60.

⁷⁵ Welter 1966, 155.

⁷⁶Radforth 1987, 101-10.

⁷⁷ Radforth 1987, 45.

beauty and focused much of their emotional attention to one another.⁷⁸ Michael S. Kimmel has emphasized a similar notion while theorizing masculinities, writing that masculinity is largely a homosocial enactment of seeking approval from one's peers, other men.⁷⁹ As the new manhood gained ground as the basis for new hegemonic masculinity, this kind of gender segregation became more socially accepted and encouraged. Contemporary parents' guides specifically condemned the mixing of masculine and feminine influences, and young boys were advised to be given harder beds, colder rooms and less time with their mothers to rear them towards positive masculinity.⁸⁰ Whereas frontier workers of the old had been feared and ostracized for their homosocial isolation and primitive masculinity, in the turn of the century they were admired for those same characteristics.

Despite the surging trend of segregated gender identity and performance, both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin name the absence of women and their influence as one of the biggest factors behind the rural workers' plight. According to Bradwin the workers were "shifting, homeless and womanless"⁸¹, and Fitzpatrick appoints that the "absence of women from camp life is the greatest of its evils"⁸². Fitzpatrick saw fault in the working men's isolation from positive family values and women:

To neglect the opportunity to surround these men with home-like influences, and with the tools to with which to mould and fashion their character, is to leave them open to every evil influence. It is to allow their minds to be full of thoughts that sap their manhood.⁸³

The texts and their rhetoric choices create an interesting and complex relationship between the ideals of new manhood and the reality of working-class masculinities. The men's bodies were assigned masculine value within the hegemony if they were strong and healthy, but the social dimension of isolated, homosocial industry spaces posed a challenge for both Bradwin and Fitzpatrick. Despite the cultural resistance toward interaction of polarized gendered spheres, lacking feminine influence entirely lead to undesired masculine performance. This, based on

⁷⁸ Gorn 2012, 142.

⁷⁹ Kimmel 1994, 129.

⁸⁰ Kimmel 2006, 107-108.

⁸¹ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 225.

⁸² Fitzpatrick 1920, 14.

⁸³ Fitzpatrick 1920, 8-9.

these two sources, could manifest in many forms ranging from mental fatigue to atypical sexual behavior, but in its core, it implied the men's inherent incapability to reach ideal masculinity.

During the Victorian era the cult of domesticity, which was prominent especially within the middle and upper classes of North American urban areas, dictated the features of the so-called true woman, and the inability to fit the strictly defined cast contested one's womanhood.⁸⁴ Already in the 19th century this ideology drew critique due to its exclusivity, as some, for example formerly enslaved black women, were inherently incapable of reaching the ideal.⁸⁵ Similarly, the concept of new manhood and its ideals, while in part applicable to working class men, were mostly unreachable for them by design. Skill, race and class all dictated the creation of one's masculine identity, and as Michael Kimmel puts it, the hypothetical equality evaporates because personal definitions of masculinity are not equally valued in society.⁸⁶

Workers' bodies and romanticized physique did not evidently guarantee them a status of a proper man. The positive idea of masculinity was tied to much more than the body: it was a regulated construction based on class, race, skill and character. The ideals of hegemonic western masculinity were tied to Anglo Canadian middle-class normativity, which contributed to the creation of otherness around those who we're unable to meet those standards, such as immigrants or transient workers, who in the case of rural industry and Frontier College were put in direct comparison with the exemplary men, the teachers.⁸⁷ The interest in categorizing the workers' ethnicity and race, especially in Bradwin's text, has been understood to directly reflect a wider imperial, racial and cultural hierarchy. The value put on physical prowess, obedience, eagerness and loyalty divided workers in the public imagery. As mentioned earlier, the virtuous physical attributes are either denied or hesitantly assigned to some groups belonging to the category of foreigners. But skill, too, is in his text understood as something biological to one's race or nationality:

⁸⁴ Welter 1966, 152-155.

⁸⁵ Jacobs 1861, 83-86; Harriet Jacobs, an escaped enslaved woman, stated that the ideal sexual purity and the true woman's right to protect it was unachievable for women who had been forcefully sexualized by slave owners and foremen.

⁸⁶ Kimmel 1994, 124.

⁸⁷ McLean 2002, 240.

Each nationality on a frontier work seems to fit into some particular form of activity: the Slavs usually become labourers' helpers, the English-speaking delight in machinery, the Finn excels in blasting, while the newcomer from Italy displays an adaptedness for work with cement.⁸⁸

Bradwin curiously disregards the Chinese in his text, mentioning the "orientals" only "occasionally found" in railway work. This may be due to the timing of his observations, as many Chinese immigrants moved to western Canada and other industries in the 1880s, but there is another reading of this exclusion available. The racial segregation in Canadian industry was the strictest between white workers and the Chinese, latter of whom systematically received poorer living quarters and meals in railway construction sites. They were less likely to learn English as well due to the social segregation.⁸⁹ In the mining town of Timmins, Ontario, Chinese men could be found working in laundry houses and restaurants, performing what was considered "unmasculine" work for much of the male population. The Chinese were, however, excluded even from the consideration of achieving manly status in Canada due to their race as much as their performance of masculinity.⁹⁰ This inherent otherness of Chinese workers in Canada and their social segregation is an important detail in analyzing Bradwin's text, as the exclusion of an entire group of immigrants who played an integral part in the development of Canadian industry and society is telling of masculine values and their racial dimensions.

Racial and ethnic definitions and associations of masculine traits are evident in Bradwin's other groupings as well. White Anglo Canadians, Americans and British and Scandinavian immigrants were most readily assigned both physical and mental masculine virtue, reaching at times poetic proportions. According to Bradwin, nothing in Scandinavian immigrants' background "suggested effeminacy", as the sturdy men were naturally lenient toward "frugality, initiative and self-reliance".⁹¹ Although less flattering language is mostly reserved for men in the category of foreigners, for example the "joyless-looking and suspicious" Slavs,

⁸⁸ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 110.

⁸⁹ Chan 1998, 240-244.

⁹⁰ Forestell 1998, 262-264.

⁹¹ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 100-101.

some of whom “suffered from their lack of English” which they were unwilling to learn, Bradwin finds some positivity in nearly all ethnic groupings. Typically, this consists of physical praise and commentary on men’s resilience and determination: virtue, here, is found in “the quiet strength, unpretending courage and perseverance and the stanchness which we like to think of as the very essence of our own Canadian character.”⁹² In his study of Frontier College and the construction of British Canada, educational scientist Pierre Walter suggests that recognizing immigrant workers’ ability to endure the hardships of Canadian wilderness was in itself prove that they had citizenship potential, and that Frontier College’s assimilation effort was mainly focused on socializing the men to fit into the imperialist norms.⁹³

Although both sources assign masculine value on the workers based on their race, skills and bodies, it is also relevant to consider the issue of identity from the workers’ point of view and emphasize the plurality of gender experience and performance. The Frontier College approached the subject of their observations from the educated middle-class’ and elite’s perspective, creating a biased imagery of the physically powerful but mentally neglected builders of the Dominion. While it is challenging to track down the men’s own complex identifications, it is reasonable to argue that their experiences were varied and potentially contradicted reformers’ views of them. Although their physical strength and work on the wilderness was romanticized in the minds of the middle-class Canadians, they rarely saw the merit of this in their own everyday life.

Firstly, the nature of frontier work kept them isolated in the frontier for long periods of time, and the limited free time and ways to spend it after a hard day of work allowed little interest in reflecting on their social status. Secondly, it is plausible that some men did not care about the public anxiety and pressure of the masculine ideal. For some, frontier camps were a welcome relieve from marital expectations and responsibilities, and workers sought out work in camps to find solace in the company of men.⁹⁴ It has also been argued that some widespread leisure activities found across North American frontier’s homosocial work spaces, such as stag dances and crossdressing they sometimes entailed, were a form of active

⁹² Bradwin 1922 (1972), 105-107.

⁹³ Walter 2003, 51-52.

⁹⁴ Radforth 1987, 45.

protest against hegemonic masculinity.⁹⁵ Occupying a space out of the reach of masculine normativity, for some men, was a way to escape the societal restrictions applied on proper manhood, and redefine the rules of their own masculinities.⁹⁶

The masculinity of rural workers clearly preoccupied Frontier College's agenda. Workers' manliness was made apparent in the descriptions of their bodies, their hardiness and their rugged work, which fitted perfectly in the frames of the new manhood's ideals. This alone, however, did not afford them the luxury of proper Canadian manhood, as for most of them adhering to the hegemonic ideals posed a challenge. The racial dimensions of masculine hierarchy played a significant part in the workers' capability to Canadianize and perform the desired manliness. The masculine virtues of education and self-restraint of the past century had shifted to the appreciation of strength and dominance, and the pious and calming influence of women transformed into fear of effeminacy.

Frontier College's approach to masculinity appears to have resided somewhere in between these ideals: the workers were masculine, but in order to modify them to fit the middle-class model they had to be socialized and domesticated by introducing them to Christian family values. Here the nature of multiple masculinities in this context comes apparent. The rural workers were othered from hegemonic masculinity due to middle-classes' and elite's anxiety towards a differing performance of masculinity. The multiplicity lies not in the diversity of the workforce, but in the calls for control that diversity created, and that anxiety towards the gendered performance of camps is most visible in the social dimension of frontier labor.

2.3 Gender Anxiety

The public glorification of the frontier laborer's body and the new manhood virtue assigned to his character did not typically extend beyond his physique and the physical nature of his work. Sources strongly suggest that their social, cultural and mental conditions were viewed as deficient due to both biological and environmental factors. Alfred Fitzpatrick goes as far as describing the camp life as

⁹⁵ Garceau 2001, 152-154.

⁹⁶ Kimmel 2006, 69-70.

entirely devoid of culture, and both he and Bradwin emphasize the monotony of living in these spaces as one of the main culprits behind the workers' alleged mental predicament.⁹⁷ Available contemporary sources from workers themselves, however, do not entirely support the claims made by Fitzpatrick and Bradwin, and some praised the camp and bunkhouse culture as the highlight of frontier work.⁹⁸ Here, I will discuss the social dimensions of Frontier College's interest in workers' masculinity, and the anxiety that arose from the gender performance in homosocial workspaces.

Women began seeking employment in lumber camps in notable numbers only after the turn of the 20th century. Working mainly in kitchens as well as cleaning and maintenance work, they were often already married to someone in the camp staff; if they were single, they kept to themselves in separate accommodation.⁹⁹ According to one Norwegian lumberjack's memoir if a camp was near a town or settlement, women might arrive from outside the camp to take part in joyous and wild Saturday night dances held in an empty storage building.¹⁰⁰ It was, however, more common for women to be completely absent from camps, making them a predominantly homosocial community.

The anxiety towards the homosocial and isolated male culture in rural industry spaces was largely based on the belief that the gender segregation would erode the workers' longing for normative family values, gender roles and responsibilities. As was discussed in the previous chapter, according to Fitzpatrick the absence of women and the camp conditions that lacked home-like influences would erode the men's character, making him susceptible to "evil" influence.

Work, leisure activities and household tasks as well as expressions of comradery and affection had various gendered associations to them in the early 20th century North America. In gender segregated frontier spaces, the gendered understanding of everyday activities lost ground: if no women were employed or otherwise living in a camp, all domestic work and tasks that had gendered associations at the time were done by the male workers and camp staff themselves. Without the option of traditional gender division, men in all-male communities cooked,

⁹⁷ Fitzpatrick 1920, 6; Bradwin 1922 (1972), 88.

⁹⁸ Blanchard 1969, 2.

⁹⁹ Radforth 1987, 101-102.

¹⁰⁰ Rosholt 1980, 102.

cleaned, patched socks and did laundry without question.¹⁰¹ Men relied on each other for support and care, and there is no evidence that would suggest that camp activities that toyed with the preconceived or socially constructed normativity of gender, like playing the part of a girl during Saturday night dance, implied emasculation or welcomed ridicule among workers.¹⁰²

The idealized gender roles of the middle-class also met a challenge in another group: frontier and working-class women themselves. Although both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin underline the positive influence of women in the lives of working-class men and their journey to ideal masculine performance as good citizens and husbands, women of the frontier had a much more complex agency in the matter. Some lumber companies in early 20th century utilized the belief in women's positive influence by making camps more accessible to married men and their families by offering insurance plans, companywide activities and family housing. The "domesticated logger" was thought to be more loyal to the company and more conservative in his political views.¹⁰³ Fitzpatrick and Bradwin clearly subscribed to this notion as well, although studies suggest that working class women and laborers' wives rarely had the desired, calming effect on the men. On the contrary, sources show that the opposite was just as likely: in some cases, the married workers along with their wives were in fact the loudest in their support for unions, for example in Cape Breton in the 1922 where the women expressed their class loyalty even stronger than the striking coal miners by gathering to ridicule and berate soldiers sent to intervene the strike.¹⁰⁴

The Frontier College and other patriotic social reformists were also not alone in their use gendered rhetoric: labor unions like the Industrial Workers of the World also relied heavily on the language of masculine and feminine, although in their use much of the message was turned upside down. Men without wives and families to support were thought to be more likely to jeopardize their income to take part in strikes and other unionizing efforts, so female influence was viewed as damaging to the political cause. This made married workers and women's domestic influence undesirable, but the disabling effect of women included

¹⁰¹ Forestell 1998, 262.

¹⁰² Walter 2003, 54-55.

¹⁰³ Rajala 1989, 175-178.

¹⁰⁴ Penfold 1996, 270-271; Rajala 1989, 179.

prostitution as well, which was claimed to weaken the men's bodies and rid them of their hard-earned money. The imagery of poor loggers' "broken, diseased bodies" became a political rhetoric, and men were advised to be wary of female influences altogether and instead encompass themselves in the culture of masculine solidarity.¹⁰⁵

Canada's growing urban areas created another source of anxiety that is not only visible in Canada's city planning and legislation in the early 20th century, but in Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's texts as well. Concentrated population and the emergence of visible homosexual subculture in cities such as Toronto lead to an increased visibility of illegal same sex acts in crime statistics, which in turn fueled public discussion and fear of spreading immorality.¹⁰⁶ Historian Andrew C. Isenberg suggests in his study of 20th century representations of the homosocial wild west of the 19th century that the transition from culturally homosocial communities to a more heterosocial society urged the public anxiety towards spaces where men were known to congregate, such as the army, navy and rural work camps. Acts like bed sharing, which was common throughout frontier industry due to both lack of space and cold climate, and physical expressions of fondness in male friendship became seen excessively more deviant the further western society moved from mainstream homosocial culture.¹⁰⁷

Before I delve into this topic further, it should be examined why sex is an important inclusion in the discussion surrounding gender performance and gender anxieties in a social context. Several gender theorists and researchers have emphasized the inherent link between gender as sex, especially in a society that treats heterosexual acts as normative and homosexual acts as taboo. According to Judith Butler, for example, gender is a discursive tool to define so called natural sex: if desire is appointed as a strictly heterosexual phenomenon, acts that deviate from it place the gender of the participants under scrutiny.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, sociologist R. W. Connell has noted that in homophobic ideology it is common for the boundaries of straight and gay to blur with those of masculine and feminine.¹⁰⁹ While comparing sexual acts of early 20th century working class men to any modern

¹⁰⁵ Loomis 2017, 40.

¹⁰⁶ Maynard 1994, 208.

¹⁰⁷ Isenberg 2009, 146-147.

¹⁰⁸ Butler 1990, 6-7, 17-22.

¹⁰⁹ Connell 1995, 40.

definitions of gay identity would be reckless at best and transhistorically inaccurate at worst, the above-mentioned blurred lines are fruitful to consider here as well: same sex relations that occurred in camps would have had, in some observations, a direct impact to the men's status as masculine, even if they still performed ideal rugged masculinity or did not embody stereotypical feminine traits otherwise.

Although explicit implications of sexual relationships between men in these rural spaces are rare to see in sources, they do nonetheless exist. One lumberjack described an incident in a Quebec camp, where he woke to the sexual caress of his bunkmate. Although according to his retelling the act was not reciprocated, he expressed sympathy for men unfortunate enough to be discovered, which would imply that such relations were not completely atypical or shocking.¹¹⁰ Susan Lee Johnson, while discussing the social dimension of the mid-19th century California gold rush, notes that when discussing a rural social spaces that were distant from common customary social restraints and had their own, competing cultural practices, it would be foolhardy to suggest that same sex intimacy would have been restricted only to those instances we can explicitly source.¹¹¹

The difficulty of studying same sex relationships in isolated workspaces like logging camps and mining towns, as Nancy M. Forestell points out in her study of the bachelor culture of Timmins, lies in the scarcity of sources: we can prove same sex relationship of various natures existed, but uncovering the meanings attached to them is challenging.¹¹² Similarly social historian Steven Maynard, who has paid significant attention to the questions of working-class gender, masculinity and sexuality across several of his studies and critiques, points out that the significance of same sex relations in historical study is not in the questions of "did it happen", but in the social implications carried in the ways they do come up.¹¹³ Musings about placing homosexual identifications in relation to early 20th century rural working class communities, especially as sources indicating meaning are lacking, would inevitably be unethical.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Maynard 1989, 167.

¹¹¹ Johnson 2001, 61-62.

¹¹² Forestell 1998, 263.

¹¹³ Maynard 1998, 192.

¹¹⁴ Maynard 1998, 189-190.

Sexual acts between men were, however, a reality of many homosocial spaces. Judith Butler has theorized that the cultural possibility of a phenomenon creates dread against it: the public anxiety over same sex relations in homosocial spaces means that the unthinkable act was, in fact, a widely known possibility.¹¹⁵ This anxiety has been widely acknowledged in studies focused on gender segregated spaces of the 19th and 20th century North America, and historians have argued that sexual acts and relationships between men in remote mining and logging camps were just as common as in other isolated and homosocial spaces.¹¹⁶ Still, many sources stress laborers' heterosexual desire, which Peter Hobbs suggests is a direct attempt to quell any and all impressions of frontiersmen as nothing but heterosexually normative.¹¹⁷

In both *The University in Overalls* and *The Bunkhouse Man*, the anxiety toward an isolated camp as a place where the unthinkable happened regularly is evident. For Fitzpatrick, the homosocial nature of work camps posed a serious problem, and in his opinion, the isolation and social conditions of the camps were largely to blame for the workers' poor living conditions. In his writings he is vocal about the concerns over bed sharing and confined living quarters:

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. [...] The bunkhouse is a curse to the inmates, to the employer often and to the public generally. Why should young lads with comparatively clean minds be tumbled promiscuously into bunks with filthy-minded men?¹¹⁸

For Fitzpatrick, despite his interest in empowering the laborers and educating them in becoming proper Canadian citizens, the men and the masculine performance found in camps posed an immediate threat. Those who had succumbed to the "moral diseases" spread by idleness and isolation were simultaneously victimized by the living conditions as well as potentially spreading it to others who

¹¹⁵ Butler 1990, 77.

¹¹⁶ Isenberg 2009, 151.

¹¹⁷ Hobbs 2016, 210.

¹¹⁸ Fitzpatrick 1920, 8-9.

arrived in these spaces and were supposedly free of such predicaments beforehand.

Bradwin, despite approaching the topic in a more restrained manner, also implies similar discontent with the forced intimacy of crowded living spaces in camps. In his opinion such living spaces exposed men to irritability and anger, but also confusion:

It is quite noticeable in camps of whatever kind that men with a stripe desire, where possible, to get into a small building by themselves. On the Pacific Coast where the Loggers' Union has succeeded in wresting recognition of this preference, the camps are usually composed of many small-sized bunkhouses, accommodating six and eight men. Nor is it conducive to Adamhood that sixty, eighty and, at times, one hundred men be huddled pellmell for months at a stretch bunking in crowded quarters.¹¹⁹

Bradwin himself seems relatively nonchalant in his implied reference to this "preference" among the men, but the sentiment echoes that of Fitzpatrick's, that the social and physical space of isolated industry camps had a negative effect on men. According to him, the work season "deprived" and "starved" the men of the companionship of women, which in turn lead to "all-night orgies, the drunken sprees lasting for days in some top room of a hotel or lodging house" as the men arrived in towns with their wages.¹²⁰

Overall, much of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's implied anxieties concentrate in the physical and social space of the bunkhouse, as it symbolized the unorthodox elements seen in frontier laborers' masculine performance that worked against the Frontier College's efforts to portray frontier workers in a positive light.¹²¹ Therefore, to reinvent the bunkhouse was to reinstate undisputed masculinity for workers. In both texts, Fitzpatrick and Bradwin make the impression that rural workers were powerless under their misfortune. The men were held helpless in the vicious cycle of backbreaking work and debauchery, with little agency of their own and dependent on the employer and outside intervention. The workers' alleged lack

¹¹⁹ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 88-89.

¹²⁰ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 137.

¹²¹ Hobbs 2016, 210-2011.

of agency can, however, be disputed in many aspects. Sources show that rural workers were not only active and enthusiastic about their participation in camp culture and worker communities, but that they vocally opposed reforms they did not find desirable, such as the Frontier College's proposal to abolish bunkhouses.¹²²

The public imagery, however, relied in the representation of frontier workers as men in need of healthy, masculine leadership and supervised education in Canadian citizenship. The reformers were adamant that the failure to intervene in a larger scale was, essentially, a crisis for liberalism.¹²³ Considering that a notable portion of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's implied anxieties centered around the workers' performance of masculinity, as has been shown throughout this chapter, I argue that the said crisis extended beyond language, politics and race, and included a crisis on gender as well. By performing masculinities outside the lines of the ideal, normative standards, the worker's posed a threat to Anglo Canadian gender hegemony. Although gender is an incoherent, constantly changing system meanings and can therefore not be in a real, tangible crisis, the fact remains that the educated middle-classes could have perceived the threat posed by facing the other as such.¹²⁴

In this chapter I have discussed the theoretical nature of masculinity in the context of early 20th century Canada, and the anxieties assigned to nonconformist behavior of some working-class men. In sum, the rural workers in the public's perception of them existed in a complex web of admiration and fear. They were idolized for their physique yet feared for their inherent otherness. By having witnessed the camps firsthand and through correspondence with laborer teachers, Fitzpatrick and Bradwin were intimately aware of the problems involving management and bad living conditions as well as the byproducts of rural homosocial isolation. Both reformers are clear in their proposal for change: educate the men, abolish the bunkhouse and show example. In the following chapter I delve further into these strategies.

¹²² Radforth 1987, 103.

¹²³ Mason 2015, 111.

¹²⁴ Maynard 1998, 185.

3. Teachers and Exemplary Men – Strategies of Instructing Ideal Masculinity

Much of the early 20th century social reformation and immigrant assimilation efforts focused on questions of language and literacy. In addition, the performance of gender played a significant role in the rhetoric of reformers like Fitzpatrick and Bradwin: to be a proper citizen was to be a proper man. This is implied in both texts through a language of otherness, as the observed men are continuously described as lacking and in need of intervention and guidance: their physical strength and station in the wilderness painted them as an essential force behind the scenes of national and economic growth, but the realities of their living conditions and the work place culture born in isolation from middle class ideals rendered them susceptible to public scrutiny. The power structures in gendered discourse also derive from within, in the form of anxiety born from encountering otherness and reflecting it to one's own embodiment of hegemony.¹²⁵ To analyze the relationship of working class and hegemonic masculinities we must take into consideration the different power structures operating within and around them and ask how and why the workers' masculine status was an important rhetoric tool. In this chapter I discuss the masculine dimension in Frontier College's educational strategies, and how the powered rhetoric of the texts relates to concepts of masculinity from the perspective of their educated, liberal middle-class audience.

3.1 Educating and modeling masculinity

In the previous chapter I discussed the history and theory of masculinities in the early 20th century. The new manhood ideals of physical strength and dominance over nature took over earlier virtues of high education, pious spirituality and fraternal love. The values of education and piety were, however, still an important base for the reformers' quest in the outskirts of society. Frontier College's main agenda was to bring learning opportunities and reading material in camps in the form of teachers and library buildings, but the reasonings behind why the education was needed was complex. Technical knowledge of topics related to the job, such as mathematics and engineering, were believed to improve men's position

¹²⁵ Kimmel 1994, 126.

regarding wages. General education on language, history and Canadian geography and culture, on the other hand, were believed to render the men's minds stronger against labor radicalism and more favorable towards good citizenship ideals, and give them "a fighting chance" in their assimilation to good citizenship.¹²⁶ Protestant family values and morals were also emphasized especially in Fitzpatrick's plea for education, and although Canadian middle-class normativity was hardly a teachable subject on its own, it is implied throughout both texts to be at the core of the type of "social justice" needed by the men who had been "buried socially, intellectually, and morally".¹²⁷ Here, I will discuss the language in Frontier College's defense for working class education from the perspective of masculinity, and examine what tactics both sources recommended to be used to successfully influence workers to shift their masculine performance.

Literacy and education had already in the early 20th century shifted into the center of western society's discussion concerning national development. Frontier College's curriculum had begun by focusing on the English-speaking workforce's literary intake and technical education, but as more immigrants joined the rosters, special attention was given to them learning English and Canadian culture.¹²⁸ The frontier laborer, unlike his urban counterpart, was largely unreached by charities which provided city workers with libraries and cultural opportunities, and according to the reformers this idleness caused by lack of stimulation negatively impacted the men. How workers spent their time and what they read was a source of interest as well as anxiety all over the industrialized world at the time, and libraries and factory schools were widely understood as tools of social control to guide uneducated readers to choose between good and bad literature.¹²⁹ According to book historian Martyn Lyons, in Europe where social reformism similar to Frontier College was common at the time, much attention was given to the strategies of social control. In France, for example, the working-class reader was referred to as a large child in need of supervision and censorship in his consumption of print media, and literature was assigned value based on its assumed ability to positively enrich readers' minds.¹³⁰ Earlier in the 19th century some Canadian

¹²⁶ Walter 2003, 53.

¹²⁷ Fitzpatrick 1920, 37.

¹²⁸ McLean 2002, 231-232.

¹²⁹ Lyons 1999, 314-315; 332.

¹³⁰ Lyons 1999, 333.

social reformers, hoping to shape the working-class identity by turning them into a reading class, published specifically designed and written novels for workers who so far had been attracted to fiction and dime novels. This was believed to aid their transformation into proper citizens, husbands and fathers.¹³¹

While both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin emphasized the importance of literacy and availability of good reading material, for Frontier College education entailed much more than book learning. It was a coordinated effort to fashion the workers' physical, mental and social character to fit the model of a first-class citizen. Prior to the publication of *The University in Overalls* Fitzpatrick had compiled a guide for teachers on how to approach the workers in camps and construct their lessons efficiently. In the *Handbook for New Canadians* he instructs the teachers to not only extend the immigrant workers' vocabulary, but to guide them on matters like good hygiene and table manners as well.¹³² The curriculum was based on the hopes that immigrants would stay in Canada, but emphasis put on their proper assimilation shows the fear that the failure to do so would lead to congregation of marginalized men in towns and cities.¹³³

The English speaking and Canadian frontier workers, to whom more advanced education was targeted, were not excluded from the practical guidance. Although bad hygiene and manners were attributes assigned to some ethnic groups by default in the sources, others suggest that camp customs like avoidance of bathing were a camp wide issue even before the influx of immigrant laborers.¹³⁴ On the other hand, some industry spaces were well known for their respect for manners and custom, even if they were self-imposed. For example, dining in lumber camps was a sober and well-orchestrated event: everyone was expected to eat in silence, not criticize the food, and women, if there were any employed in the cookery, were to be respected and left alone.¹³⁵

Overall most camps had a self-managed code of conduct set in the bunkhouse, most likely to minimize any upset and disorder in the crowded space. Stealing was strictly prohibited, but so was sitting on another man's bed if they were not

¹³¹ Burr 2008, 91-92.

¹³² Walter 2003, 47-48.

¹³³ Fitzpatrick 1920, 138.

¹³⁴ Blanchard 1969, 24; many camps lacked the facilities, and some men believed bathing to cause pneumonia.

¹³⁵ Conlin 1979, 178-179.

already in friendly terms.¹³⁶ Disputes could in some camps be solved by fighting, but even violence had its own set of complex rules.¹³⁷ Rural workers did not exist in a lawless vacuum, however their normal conduct, which was shaped by their conditions, differed from that of the middle- and upper classes, prompting the imagery of savagery and unruliness which Frontier College had to tackle if they were to shape the workers into proper men.

Frontier College's focus on social education might have also been a result of the shifted opinion on higher education. Historian E. Anthony Rotundo has noted that the emergence of physical strength as a common nominator of positive masculinity towards the end of the century opened the once marginal suspicion toward educated men to expand into public scorn, and as he stresses, no one was more scornful than educated men themselves.¹³⁸ Despite his own status as an educator, Alfred Fitzpatrick heavily and colorfully criticizes the universities and the educated elites:

The university, alas! too often is hedged about by false pride, custom, and precedent, and is unwilling of itself, to stoop down and fraternize with the worker.¹³⁹

He follows by describing universities as self-alienated hothouses that create men who "have no occupation and are fit for none".¹⁴⁰ Similarly, in a previous chapter of his book, he argued that boys who grew up with their noses kept in books all day would not develop normally.¹⁴¹ According to this approach, only by familiarizing children and adults alike with both theoretical and technical education and physical exercise could men become ideal Canadian citizens. In Fitzpatrick's rhetoric neither the working-class nor the elite were assigned unconditional masculine power. In his analogy, the working class and the educated elite were likened to two brothers of the same family, one "debauched by doing too much of the drudgery" and the other "spoiled by being satiated" and "made effeminate with a one-sided education he has not earned".¹⁴²

¹³⁶ MacKay 1978 (2002), 235.

¹³⁷ Blanchard 1969, 30-31.

¹³⁸ Rotundo 1993, 224.

¹³⁹ Fitzpatrick 1920, 84.

¹⁴⁰ Fitzpatrick 1920, 85.

¹⁴¹ Fitzpatrick 1920, 76.

¹⁴² Fitzpatrick 1920, 35.

Here the question of power structures and ideal masculinity in Frontier College's plea for education turns more complex. As historian Peter Burke notes in his explanation of central concepts of social history, power is not a concept that someone or something has and everyone else lacks.¹⁴³ So is the case with subject of this study as well: Frontier College had power over the curriculum of their camp schools, but it was still affected by the whims of individual camp owners and employers, the workers' own wants and needs as well as outside funding and support.¹⁴⁴

Fitzpatrick's answer to the moral debauchery of frontier workspaces described in his text is the complete reconstruction of camp infrastructure and heterosocial intervention in the form of purposefully employing and housing more women in frontier industry spaces. He paints the picture of the perfect camp through a near poetic fictional scene:

Can you not picture a camp where each single man has a small room to himself, and where he can take a shower bath after work? [...] After supper he goes into the reading room and has some music on the gramophone.¹⁴⁵

This imagery continues with a look into the life of a married frontiersman:

Where each married man has his own apartment, there the wife and children help him live the normal life. [...] Only through the presence of women and children can the single man in camp as well as the husband, be taught the proper way of life. No amount of preaching or teaching will take their place.¹⁴⁶

Introducing privacy, women and concrete examples of happy marital life into the workers' everyday life was believed to mirror the middle-class normativity in the rural working class.

This sentiment is echoed by Bradwin, although less intensely, as he suggests that the men need not only "wisdom to govern the use of their wages" but "the

¹⁴³ Burke 1991, 76.

¹⁴⁴ Morrison 1995, 46-47.

¹⁴⁵ Fitzpatrick 1920, 15.

¹⁴⁶ Fitzpatrick 1920, 15.

guidance and intelligent sympathy” of heathy leadership.¹⁴⁷ The suggestion here is that the power of example could steer workers towards the desired middle-class masculine performance. By shaping the workers’ literary intake, worldview and housing, Fitzpatrick and Bradwin hoped to emulate the middle-class experience in the frontier. Studies have shown, however, that imitating class does not have direct effect on upwards class mobility. Martyn Lyons has noted that imitating class at this time in history seldomly equaled class mobility or diminished class prejudice towards those doing the imitation.¹⁴⁸

Additionally, although Frontier College was vocal in its proposed housing reform, other sources suggest that this aspect of their agenda was significantly less popular in camps than straight forward education or library extensions. According to Ian Radforth some Ontario loggers rejected the idea of single housing altogether, and criticized Frontier College’s proposal to abolish the bunkhouses as pointless and unrealistic.¹⁴⁹ This further demonstrates the complexity of power structures relating to frontier labor and reformism: Fitzpatrick and Bradwin use loaded language to describe men and to instill power to influence them by gaining public support, but that alone is uninformative of how the alleged power manifested in action as it is evident that the laborers did have their own power and agency.

In discussing frontier masculinity and power structures, the topic of skill is also relevant to take into consideration. Alongside the growing appreciation for muscular masculinity seen in physical laborers, technology gained masculine association as well. Furthermore as industries changed and workforces grew larger, men from different class backgrounds and with different levels of skill found themselves sharing workspaces with each other.¹⁵⁰ This, in turn, lead to a charged relationship within industry hierarchies, as the engineering class sought power over the so called unskilled working class in terms of masculinity: foremen, engineers and other educated employees in different industries faced the challenge of upkeeping their masculine superiority against the romanticized worker, while simultaneously establishing solidarity and trust between them.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 224-225.

¹⁴⁸ Lyons 2016, 124-126.

¹⁴⁹ Radforth 1987, 103.

¹⁵⁰ Kimmel 2006, 58-59.

¹⁵¹ Oldenziel 1999, 52-60.

It is important to emphasize the indisputable skill that went into mastering aspects of frontier industry work. Most frontier workers were considered unskilled not because their trades did not require highly specialized knowledge and skillsets, but because they did not require degrees and were therefore cheaper to employ.¹⁵² Frontier College reformers recognized this fault in the structures of hiring and wage distribution, and challenged the notion that laborers' status as unskilled equaled absence of skill crucial to the operation. Bradwin noted that the impression of work and activities in camps was only partly true, and that a newcomer "endowed with physical strength" could not measure up to the value of "third-rate man" with years of camp life experience behind him:

The very nature of the day's occupation calls for responsiveness, one man with another; [...] The faculty of reading the other man's thought, the knowledge of just what to do and the right moment at which to do it will save much unnecessary labour.¹⁵³

This hierarchy of skill and masculinity is remarkably visible in Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's texts and the Frontier College's agenda in general. Instructors, usually university students, were sent to live in camps between their studies to teach frontier laborers. The instructors were to be "occupied as a leader among the men of his work group".¹⁵⁴ However, as previously mentioned, these instructors were often young college students, advised to enter the self-sustained culture and hierarchy of frontier work camps. Especially in lumber camps, which widely championed a distinct culture and community of their own, outsiders and those who "did not belong" were often met with suspicion.¹⁵⁵ Visitors to lumber camps who came to marvel at the strength of the woodsmen and the glory of nature quickly found themselves a subject of ridicule, and workers found entertainment in city folks who were unable to even recognize a saw.¹⁵⁶

This aspect of frontier life was noticed by Fitzpatrick and Bradwin as well, and the importance of instructors' ability to blend in as part of the workers was strongly

¹⁵² Radforth 1987, 69.

¹⁵³ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 162.

¹⁵⁴ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 14.

¹⁵⁵ MacKay 1978 (2002), 237.

¹⁵⁶ Blanchard 1969, 21.

emphasized. Fitzpatrick underlined the students' who wanted to work as instructors need to gain authority by proving themselves useful and efficient:

Nothing but efficiency appeals to these men—efficiency, not in mathematics or literature, or theology, but in actual labor of the hands, and in their particular brand of manual labor [...] The student who would win the frontier toiler and help develop his mind and soul must first be his hero; he must excel in the special work of that laborer, whether on the river, in the woods, the rock cut, mine or right of way. He must prove that his all-round education of hands and mind and soul has made him more contented, happier and more efficient than those whose hands and feet have been over-worked while their minds are dormant.¹⁵⁷

The resident teacher, despite often being young, had to perform authoritative masculinity for the workers: he had to be a hero and an exemplary Canadian in order to entice workers to imitate him and absorb his influence. It was, however, the teacher's obligation to perform the laborer's brand of masculinity well enough to gain power over him. This meticulous dance of power and empathy is well described in Ruth Oldenziel's research on masculine associations of technology as well. In industries where middle-class men socialized with working class men in the workspace, the creation of respect and authority for the man higher in social hierarchy had to stem from his ability to speak working class men's language without becoming one of them.¹⁵⁸

Very similar approach is visible in Bradwin's text, as he described the laborer as a hardened man who was difficult to reach by those who he did not deem equal:

While they may be brilliant in the class-room, they lack qualities which win men in camps. Men who have rubbed up against the raw realities. whose judgments have slowly matured under obstacles often encountered and frequent reverses, who, with passing of years, have grubbed unaided for the fundamentals of life are not easily reached by boy-students. Send no ignoramus to men on the frontier.

¹⁵⁷ Fitzpatrick 1920, 119-120.

¹⁵⁸ Oldenziel 1999, 60.

[...] first and foremost he must measure to full stature as a man; for the sturdy inmate of the bunkhouse will pay obeisance in his soul only to equals.¹⁵⁹

The rhetoric appears ambivalent, as if the laborer had suddenly become the measurement of masculinity young teachers were to compare themselves to. The frontiersman, as an object to the “boy-students” reach, reflects the kind of physical masculinity that was shown desirable in the second chapter of this thesis: they had conquered the rough wilderness and emerged victorious from the battle against adversity. The power in these quotes is, however, still assigned to the teacher, who in these scenarios must be the one to prove himself better and worthy of the men’s “obeisance”. In his relationship with the workers, no matter his age, he had to embody the authority of a schoolteacher mentoring a classroom of children.

This focus on the teachers’ ability to join the workers in the woods and mines of the Canadian frontier is particularly interesting in the context of education. According to James Morrison, who did research on Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Frontier College in the 1980s and was able to interview contemporaries connected to him, behind the scenes Fitzpatrick’s hiring policy focused less on teaching abilities and more on physique.¹⁶⁰ The workers’ bodies were generally seen as their strongest masculine virtue, so by employing male teachers who displayed similar physique, they could not only instill authority easier but also model a more complete imagery of ideal manhood. Therefore, I would argue that the reformers’ and especially Fitzpatrick’s fixation on the body was partly rooted in the dismissive attitude toward higher education and its feminine associations.

Here it is also important to note that despite the reformers’ calls for more women in rural industry spaces, descriptors assigned to the camp teacher in both texts were almost exclusively masculine, leading to the impression that the laborer teacher position was targeted mainly for men. This sentiment is further proved by Jesse Lucas, who worked as Alfred Fitzpatrick’s secretary at the time. According to him, women played a minor role in the laborer teacher system under Fitzpatrick’s leadership until 1930s, after which Bradwin became the principal of the

¹⁵⁹ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 220.

¹⁶⁰ Morrison 1988, 46.

organization and seemingly refused to hire women altogether. According to Lucas' interview, Bradwin "felt that there was no need to go to the extra expense placing women" in camps.¹⁶¹

Another frontier occupation like that of the laborer teacher described above was the missionary, and a brief look into studies made on missionary masculinity proves fruitful in analyzing Frontier College's rhetoric. Much like the laborer teacher, those who sought out work as frontier missionaries were expected to prove themselves manly enough to gain the respect of the hardy folks of the backwoods while simultaneously modeling domestic ideals.¹⁶² The interest in this occupation was seen to derive from boyhood stories and plays filled with thrill and adventure, as men could enact their childhood fantasies in the frontier. Anna Johnston notes in her introduction to the history of missionary writing in the British Empire that missionary men discovered and invented their masculinity through encounters with other cultures.¹⁶³

It is interesting to note some differences in these two otherwise very similar job descriptions. Both missionary work and frontier labor happened in mostly homosocial environment, in which much of gendered work usually associated with women fell on men to do by themselves. In both cases men sometimes formed bachelor families, either out of necessity or preference, to share household chores and the living space.¹⁶⁴ Missionaries in Canada took part in this kind of arrangement to display proper Christian domesticity for the indigenous people they were trying to influence, and to prove their masculinity by surviving the wilderness independently without the help of women.¹⁶⁵ The Bachelor culture and bachelor families of frontier labor, on the other hand, shunned such implications and Fitzpatrick especially was adamant that such display of positive homosociality would damage men's psyches.

Adult education was first and foremost meant as a vehicle of class transformation. Although the effectiveness of Frontier College's methods in the early 20th century is disputable due to the one sidedness of sources on the topic, their work in the

¹⁶¹ Morrison 1988, 45.

¹⁶² Rutherford 2010, 55-58.

¹⁶³ Johnston 2003, 8.

¹⁶⁴ Rutherford 2010, 56-58; Forestell 1998, 261.

¹⁶⁵ Rutherford 2010, 56.

frontier was undoubtedly formative in the development of modern education in Canada.¹⁶⁶ When discussing an organization with such deep rooted agenda in cultural assimilation and patriotic identity shaping, it is however crucial to consider the motives that could have fueled their mission. Like Pierre Walter aptly points out, a concern for human welfare easily entangles with fear of outsiders and the belief in Anglo-Protestant superiority.¹⁶⁷ Frontier College approached rural industry workers through education and example, but to discuss the reformers' motivations we must look deeper into the rhetoric behind the actions and who it was aimed to influence.

3.2 Exaggeration and Emasculation

Education and example were Frontier College's key strategies utilized to push workers towards the ideal performance of gender in a heteronormative middle-class fashion, and to encourage the rejection of homosocial work environment in favor of the edifying presence of women and domesticity. Simultaneously however, as was discussed more in depth in chapter two, the dominating concepts of new manhood ideals romanticized men's independence from women and the achievement of masculinity by rejecting femininity. The reformers' anxieties stemmed largely from the conflict of encountering the other in the workers' gender performance. But why was such emphasis put on the manhood of the workers? Here, in the final chapter of this thesis, I discuss Frontier College's rhetoric on rural working-class masculinities through their simultaneous language of exaggeration and emasculation, and what the motivations behind this were based on the historical contexts of gender and power discussed in previous chapters.

Throughout his book, Alfred Fitzpatrick paints an image of a perfect man: a man within whom the physical, intellectual and spiritual combine. Despite his physical masculinity, the worker was only a man in the making, someone to be shaped to fit the normative Anglo-Canadian ideal of fully developed manhood. Edmund Bradwin in turn calls a well-instructed laborer as much an asset to the country as a business school graduate, in both cases the emphasis being on "the exceptional qualities of both mind and body".¹⁶⁸ Both reformers recognized and

¹⁶⁶ McLean 2002, 241.

¹⁶⁷ Walter 2003, 55-56.

¹⁶⁸ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 233-236.

celebrated the workers' physical maleness while they simultaneously categorized them as not yet mentally and socially men, capable to fully assimilate into the Anglo Canadian manhood and proper citizenship. To the reformers they were inmates in the prison of bad working and living conditions, and could be freed of their sentence only by following the lead of laborer teachers and ideally by moving from the crowded bunkhouses into small houses of their own, where they could practice middle class performance.¹⁶⁹

But if the workers were inmates, were they worthy of release from their bunkhouse prison? Judged by the assortment of praising descriptions throughout both texts they clearly were, but perhaps most obviously the emphasis on workers' masculine worth comes through in the final pages of *The Bunkhouse Man* where Edmund Bradwin breaks the predominantly analytical narrative voice of the previous chapters of his dissertation to deliver poetic reverence to the frontier worker:

Few men physically are so splendidly endowed as the workers in frontier camps. [...] Abounding health is theirs with something heaven-sent in their laughter and the freedom of untrammelled ways. But, while massive thighs give pride, let us salvage and join to ourselves as people, by a fitting display of more real human interest, this mighty resource of sinew and strength — men undaunted, and fitted to bear the grapes of Eschol.¹⁷⁰

This is an apparent break of style for Bradwin, to the extent that queer studies scholar Peter Hobbs has called the paragraph "fetishizing". However, according to Hobbs, this kind of overt fixation on physical laborers muscles and virility is common across similar observations and especially lumberjack literature. Take for example Paul Bunyan, a fictional lumberjack who was told to have created streams and rivers with his sweat and, according to some interpretations, even his ejaculate, which goes to prove just how fascinated contemporaries were by retellings of frontier men's masculine excess.¹⁷¹

The descriptions of gender and masculinity in both Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's books can be approached from two angles: exaggeration or emasculation. The

¹⁶⁹ Fitzpatrick 1920, 9.

¹⁷⁰ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 241.

¹⁷¹ Hobbs 2016, 208-210.

former shows through in the language used to describe the physical, as was discussed in chapter two. This kind of hypermasculinization of the perceived other can be found throughout many North American pseudoscientific approaches to gender at the time.¹⁷² The Frontier College's brand of masculine exaggeration, however, was curious in the sense that it afforded the workers' alleged hypermasculine physique inherent virtue, albeit also claiming they needed outsider guidance to harness it properly. Oversaturating the worker's masculine virtue, their bodies, also allowed the observer to downplay any unorthodox masculine performance attached to it, like the causes for social anxiety observed here in chapter 2.3.

Exaggeration of the frontier laborers' rugged, physical masculinity in Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's texts as well as numerous other contemporary observations may also have been linked to the increased romanticizing and popularization of the frontiersman character in the public imagination. Stories about Paul Bunyan, Davy Crockett and cowboys of the wild west were an export product, and the men of the frontier were the real life equivalent for the fictional heroes of these adventures.¹⁷³ Similarly, young British missionaries often headed to Canadian frontier's male majority spaces to fulfill fantasies created by adventure novels.¹⁷⁴ By the early 20th century the untamed wilderness of the North American frontier had, for the large part, already been tamed, yet middle-class men hoping to rediscover their masculinity still turned to the hinterland imagery for inspiration.¹⁷⁵

Middle-class men who looked up to the idealized, fictional frontier characters and their adventures as a model of wild, passionate and strong masculinity were, however, shadowed by the realities of the frontier: the laborers who had inspired the likes of the mythical lumberjack Paul Bunyan rarely performed and identified masculinity similar to the stories. Bradwin refers to Paul Bunyan as "a mystical superman" and "the forest Zeus" and a "patron revered of all good bushmen".¹⁷⁶ Here I find two noteworthy elements in Bradwin's text: first, he discussed Paul Bunyan as an exclusively lumberjack hero, which disregards the characters

¹⁷² Kimmel 2006, 64.

¹⁷³ Connell 1995, 185-186.

¹⁷⁴ Rutherford 2010, 52.

¹⁷⁵ Kimmel 2006, 62.

¹⁷⁶ Bradwin 1922 (1972), 164. "Bushman" was a common alternative term for lumberjacks and loggers in Canada.

impact outside of the rural working class experience. As shown above, middle classes were a large audience for tales of mythical frontier characters. Secondly, Bradwin implies that all *good* bushmen found their inspiration from the hypermasculine, resourceful and jolly Bunyan, which ambiguously implies that the workers' value was in some way or another tied to their performance of masculinity.

Although Paul Bunyan stories undoubtedly circulated among rural workers, I would argue that the character was hardly the realistic idol for workers that Bradwin suggests he was. On the contrary, both their role as an employee, overpowered by the company management, and their bunkhouse lifestyle in homosocial communities opposed the masculine frontier fantasy. The men shared their beds, played games and pranks, danced and some occasionally engaged in sexual acts with each other.¹⁷⁷ Some formed homosocial family units of their own to divide chores, and in these spaces, men turned to one another for advice and comfort. They had the imagination and freedom to create their own entertainment, which often defied normative gender roles and confused observers, such as one visiting journalist who described witnessing of "ferocious, unshaven woodsmen, hats on and coats off, prancing through a quadrille" as the "oddest of all spectacle".¹⁷⁸

Michael S. Kimmel has argued that the great secret of American manhood lies in fear: men are afraid of other men. According to him, men's heightened attention to behavior that goes against gender normativity is a symptom of one's own fear of not measuring up to the hegemonic standards of masculinity.¹⁷⁹ Along these lines it is therefore reasonable to argue that Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's complete disregard for the above aspects of frontier workers' culture imply anxiety over encountering the other, not only in the context of ethnicity or class but masculinity as well. In their texts the men are idle, bored and utterly void of culture, but the absence of the camps' cultural dimension more likely implies the writer's refusal to disclose it rather than it not existing.

This leads us to the educators' second approach, emasculation. I use this term to discuss the rhetoric tactic used in the texts to create certain imagery for the

¹⁷⁷ MacKay 1978 (2002), 240-247.

¹⁷⁸ Unknown author, in New York Times. Jan 21st, 1900, 27.

¹⁷⁹ Kimmel 2006, 131.

audience. I do not imply that it was a practical tool used on workers on the field, or that reformers wielded such power and influence to directly affect workers' self-defined masculinity or manly identity. In this context emasculation is a repeated characteristic in the language used in descriptions and observations of men to influence the audience, to generate sympathy and diminish any fears one might have had toward the unknown, hypermasculine men of the wilderness. As I discussed earlier, the exaggerated masculinity of frontier workers served to brand the rural working class as potential Canadians worthy of public attention and help. In turn, balancing the exuberant praise of muscle and strength demanded a certain type of patronizing angle to render the laborers harmless and pitiful due to their mental and social shortcomings.

Despite the workers' bodily virtue, Fitzpatrick stresses that they were not men *yet*, but rather someone who was on his way to that status and should be treated as such:

After all, the camp man is human. He is a man in the making. Why not treat him as a man, house him as a man should be housed, and give him room to grow?¹⁸⁰

Although both reformists use the word "man" to discuss the workers throughout their texts, the emphasis put on the term in the above quote is telling of the deeper implications of their rhetoric. Albeit their reformist mission's main goal, which focused on education and assimilation, the rhetorical core circles around the concepts of manhood and masculinity as inherently connected the ability to reach said goal. Additionally, the form of especially Fitzpatrick's text, as seen in the above quote, is by design influential. Here his tone is near accusatory, and as this quote appears in the beginning of the book, he had not had much space to even delve into the plights of the men that the reader is coaxed into caring of. Out there, in the wilderness of the frontier, were people potentially men but deprived of the means to cease that identity. Fitzpatrick asks the reader why these people should not be treated as men: in the end, if they were, and if they accepted the Frontier College agenda of cultural assimilation, they could become assets to the liberal movement to which the contemporary reader of the text likely belonged.

¹⁸⁰ Fitzpatrick 1920, 9.

The public image of the working-class and the descriptions of workers in Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's texts allude to this perceived character of a laborer: he had been sapped from his manhood, housed like a pig and in constant need of intervention in order to guide his character to acceptable masculinity. Questioning the men's manhood, however, goes to multiple directions. While he describes university student's lack of physical strength and bodily virtue, Fitzpatrick refers to them as effeminate. The workers on the other hand are not deprived from masculinity due to overpowering and negative association to femininity. On the contrary, their description lacks any straightforward effeminacy. This approach, again, can imply that the reformers' felt it necessary to avoid drawing attention to any widespread gender non-conformity in favor of keeping the public's sympathy on the workers' side.

Contrasting the Frontier College's descriptions of workers to that of the educated elite is telling of different dimensions of masculinity. Whereas book learned university students were described in terms of effeminacy as they lacked bodily strength, physical masculinity is something frontier workers already possessed. It is reasonable to note that in the reformers' rhetoric, laborers were not emasculated in respect to gender dichotomy. They were distinctly male and possessed the bodily traits and characteristics ideal to a man. Still, they were not men yet. But if the frontiersman was, as Fitzpatrick puts it, a man still in the making, what was he if not a man?

One quite straight forward answer reveals itself in Anthony E. Rotundo's research of the history of American manhood: if a man is not a man, he must be a boy.¹⁸¹ Boyhood in this context was the phase in a man's life when he had the freedom to be impolite, messy, violent and even savage before he was expected to mature into proper, ideally middle-class domesticity. His existence was in between the dichotomy of nurture and authority of home, and the outdoor friend group with its own rules and alternate expressions of emotion.¹⁸² This is arguably a very middle-class description of childhood, but quite fitting when trying to understand the perspective of the middle-classes' approach to workers. Nancy M. Forestell has described the culture of a similar all-male work environment, the mining town, as

¹⁸¹ Rotundo 1993, 20.

¹⁸² Rotundo 1993, 31-55.

a culture of bachelorhood, which came to its end as mining town became more accessible to married men and their families.¹⁸³

The emasculating imagery built around frontier laborers relied heavily on the absence of agency and power: the working-class men, isolated in the rural frontier, were powerless in front of the camp conditions and the employer. They were inmates, victims, children, treated like animals and lacking wholesome guidance. Much of this was based on legitimate social and labor issues. The camp conditions were poor in general, the housing questionable and work hours long. Most frontier work was also highly dangerous, and in a typical Ontario lumber camp death and serious injuries were weekly occurrences.¹⁸⁴ Employers and foremen held often unreasonable power over the workforce, to such extent that Frontier College strictly advised laborer teachers to not meddle with the camp management in any way.¹⁸⁵ After all, the industry employers were the camps' final authority, who decided if they allowed Frontier College to enter their spaces and influence their workers, and ultimately, as social historian Craig Heron puts it, for companies' profit margin application of the workers' labor power was more important than welfarism.¹⁸⁶

Still, Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's suggestion that the frontier worker by default lacked initiative and agency in the face of above-mentioned difficulties has been debunked from many angles. First, rural workers did occasionally influence the camp infrastructure and physical conditions. Finnish immigrants, for example, were known to build saunas in lumber camps, where their addition had a direct impact in overall hygiene and the severity of the lice problem.¹⁸⁷ Secondly, workers were known to assert their independence by relying on the transient nature of their work and jumping jobs. Some men took advantage of the everchanging labor market, and quit and travelled from camp to camp after better work and living spaces while simultaneously broadening their skillset.¹⁸⁸ And thirdly, as has been discussed previously, rural working class had a diverse and complicated culture and social networks of their own. Therefore, it is unclear to what extent

¹⁸³ Forestell 1998, 273.

¹⁸⁴ Radforth 1995, 221-226.

¹⁸⁵ Morrison 1988, 43.

¹⁸⁶ Heron 1995, 536.

¹⁸⁷ Radforth 1987, 92-93.

¹⁸⁸ Rajala 1989, 170.

Frontier College's rhetoric of idleness and helplessness would have been relatable to the laborers themselves, but it certainly was an enticing imagery for the middle and upper classes.

As technologies advanced, industries grew and ideals shifted, middle- and upper-class men faced the challenge of redefining their masculinity in the shadows of the newly emerged bodily dimensions of the muscular new manhood. In her study of masculinity and technology, Ruth Oldenziel notes that for some men higher in the class hierarchy of the early 20th century industrial west, workers' bodily achievements became currency and an object of appropriation. By declaring authority over working-class men, their masculinity was awarded to those who had power over him.¹⁸⁹ A similar grab for identity can be seen in the Frontier College's rhetoric as well, as the emasculated educated classes sought authority over the masculine worker by claiming him by default in need of their help.

The racial elements of masculinity are also important to take into consideration while discussing the reasons behind the emasculating rhetoric of the texts. As I noted in the introduction as well as the second chapter of this thesis, Frontier College operated primarily in and from the province of Ontario, and likely took part in the broader Upper Canadian liberal ideology of British and Anglo Canadian superiority in the western expansion. Especially in Bradwin's text, much of the emasculating language centers around the ethnic descriptors, which by default categorize most of the racially othered groups in a comparatively more negative light. Consequently, however, most of them were afforded enough potential that proper introduction into the Anglo Canadian society could render them an asset for the nation. The alternative, where immigrants would not adapt to the British values, English language and Canadian society, was exactly what the reformers hoped to avoid, as it would have meant encountering the other in an uncontrolled fashion.

So why were Fitzpatrick and Bradwin preoccupied by the rural laborer's masculinity? In sum, their organization functioned as an intermediary between two very different and distinct cultures of manly identity and performance. By exaggerating their manliness, they engaged the reader in the character of a frontiersman, his

¹⁸⁹ Oldenziel 1999, 61, 101.

romanticized occupation and his potential as a true Canadian icon. The middle classes, as it stood, were already consuming this imagery in the form of fiction. In the frontiersman the educated audience, many of whom possibly struggled with the emasculated status of their own class, could reflect on the type of man they dreamed to be.

Simultaneously, however, the hypermasculine laborer was a threat: despite the glorification, the masses of transient, multicultural, neglected and deviant men were the unknown, the other. By rendering them by default helpless and near childlike, the audience was more likely to feel responsibility over the social reform of rural industry. Exaggeration and Emasculation, here, were oppositional but connected rhetorical strategies to persuade the public to take part in the organization's social gospel. Combined with the educational strategies described in chapter 3.1, it is evident that Frontier College aimed to function as a two-way influencer, hoping to both assimilate the workers as exemplary Canadian Citizens, as well to reinstate virtuous masculinity in their own class.

4. Conclusion

The Frontier College was undoubtedly a key force behind adult education efforts in spaces where such action for humane improvement had long been absent. By the 1920s the organization had operated across the Canadian frontier for just over 20 years and had observed the men and developed strategies of gain influence and power over them. They sought validation from the middle- and upper classes through different publications, most notably founder Alfred Fitzpatrick's *University in Overalls* and instructor supervisor Edmund Bradwin's doctoral dissertation *The Bunkhouse Man*, in which readers were made aware of the hardships and poor conditions the men of the frontier routinely faced.

Regardless of the Frontier College's undeniable influence in rural and adult education in Canada, the rhetoric used in the 1920s publications to describe working class men of the frontier leaves the modern reader curious. The masculinity of workers and their status as men was a thriving force throughout both texts, and a trend visible in many other contemporary observations as well as later research. The frontier was a wild, untamed space that called for hardy and strong men, and

this muscular, assertive and savage masculine imagery aligned with the relatively new ideals of masculinity in the early 20th century. The frontier was a space for patriotic fantasy, where rugged men reigned over unforgiving nature and provided the Dominion with the necessary resources to develop its society. Middle-classes, to whom this imagery was mainly exported to, idolized the working-class man's physical masculinity, but this class relationship turns complex once we consider its inherent paradoxicality: from the perspective of the elites, working class men embodied the physical aspect of ideal hegemonic masculinity, but their race, class, skill and gender performance still made them subjects to outside governing in the patriarchal power structure.

Men who worked in frontier industries, despite their physical virtue, were marginalized from hegemonic masculine ideals due to their diverse performance of masculinities. It is evident in the texts of Fitzpatrick and Bradwin that the Frontier College made the conscious decision in their educational strategy to teach laborers how to be proper citizens, proper husbands, proper fathers and proper men. Alongside subjects like literature and math, the men were encouraged to internalize the protestant Anglo Canadian character modeled to them by the camp teachers: good hygiene, manners, family values and Upper Canadian patriotism. In Fitzpatrick's more imaginative proposals for improved camp life, workers would have mimicked the middle-classes in their own separate houses, relaxed over a book and some music before they would assemble for evening lessons. This scenario was a wild contradiction to the realities of frontier life, as workers were typically housed in crowded bunkhouses and shacks with little to no free time after long and tiring days of hard labor. The men sought comfort in the little moments of joy and communal culture that had developed in the homosocial frontier spaces over the past decades, which largely went against the social normativity of masculine performance of the time.

The social dimensions of rural working-class masculinities generated anxiety in the middle-class observer, including the Frontier College reformers. This included many alleged debaucheries, ranging from excessive use of alcohol to sexual relations between men. In the Frontier College's rhetoric, the men were corrupted by idleness, confused by their gender segregated surroundings and their manhood had been sapped by infectious moral diseases. The suggested remedy was

the inclusion of women in camps and rural towns, as their presence was believed to naturally domesticate men: a belief deeply rooted in the Victorian ideals of true womanhood, which promoted women's calming and pious character as a balancing agent to men's natural passion and savagery.

Women in Frontier College's texts, however, were predominantly to be brought into these spaces as domestic workers and wives, not as teachers. The role of the camp instructor was to be an exemplary man to the workers, someone they could see as their equal in ways of strength and efficiency but also someone who embodied authority over the workers. Only then would the frontiersman be persuaded to abandon his ways and to imitate the happiness modeled by the teacher and his proper lifestyle.

The goal of my thesis was to discuss the masculine element in the Frontier College's rhetoric and, ultimately, to analyze why educating ideal masculinity was such a pervasive part of the reformist agenda. Doing this required an in-depth look into both the history of gender in North America and the theoretical frame surrounding the very concept of masculinity. Representations of frontier workers, in research as well as fiction, have generally been built on a preconceived image of profound masculinity, but since the late 1980s this characterization has been met with increased scrutiny. Instead of a simplified descriptor of a manly man, the worker's masculinity has become a multiplicity, a complex web of identities eschewed by the hegemonic standard. Power and gender in a patriarchal society go beyond the dichotomy of men and women, and men in possession of hegemonic masculinity exercise power on women as well as othered men.

Power, however, is a complicated construct in on itself. It can be observed in society and human interaction, but it is not a unique object that one possesses and the other does not. Although Frontier College reformists expressed an apparent desire to shape working-class masculinity to fit in their own image of proper manhood, describing the laborer man's character as lacking and in need of leadership, their texts imply distinct anxiety caused by encountering the other. Fitzpatrick and Bradwin assigned workers enough masculine virtue to render them sympathetic to the reader, as someone worthy of social justice. Simultaneously, however, they were emasculated and painted as a group that desperately needed the intervention, which empowered the middle- and upper-class audience.

Masculinity was a key element in Frontier College's rhetoric because it directly addressed so many Anglo Canadian middle-class fears, anxieties and curiosities. The educated middle- and upper classes had found themselves on the edge of hegemony under the ideals of new manhood, and establishing authority over working class men and their performance of physical virtue was a way to appropriate their masculinity and reinstate power in the social hierarchy. But as Fitzpatrick and Bradwin's texts imply, rural working class homosociality and intersectional diversity were viewed as problematic. Therefore, they had to utilize both pity and hypermasculine exaggeration to disguise nonconformity and emphasize the workers' worth.

To answer the question why Frontier College reformers paid such attention to workers' masculinity is a challenging task. Throughout this thesis I have discussed the topic from multiple angles, like anxiety and power, and based on these some explanations can be offered for consideration. Middle classes sought inspiration from working-class masculinity, but on closer inspection the working-class masculinity was at odds with the hegemonically normative, Anglo Canadian masculine ideal. The reformers' rhetoric was a way to explain and justify the public fascination toward frontier and working-class manhood. I argue that due to the rhetoric of exaggeration and emasculation displayed in the sources, in addition to class transformation suggested in prior research, the Frontier College sought to influence and the masculine performance and imagery as well as empower all implied participants and subjects: workers, immigrants, teachers, employers, middle classes as well as the elites.

There are two reasons for this argument based on my analysis presented in this thesis. Firstly, both reformists' rhetoric included masculine descriptors and criticism of not only the workers but the educated middle and upper classes as well. Although the authority was ultimately assigned to the higher social classes in the end, they were reminded of their imperfections repeatedly. By exaggerating the overt physical masculinity of the worker, critiquing part of the audience for embodying the exact opposite while simultaneously offering a solution in the form of organization support, activism as well as sending young, educated boys to work where they could achieve the ideal body, Frontier College sought to influence the educated audience and their anxieties directly.

Secondly, by practically infiltrating among the workers in the form of laborer teachers, Frontier College hoped to teach ideal masculine performance and protestant family values primarily through example. Here their focus laid on rechanneling masculine value, which rural workers had already been assigned, to adhere to the Anglo Canadian normativity, which would not only render the men good citizens of the preferred political and cultural alignment, but also defuse them as a threat. Empowering the frontier man, in this context, was deeply connected to simultaneously emasculating him in the eyes of the public.

Research on rural labor from the perspective of gender and social history has experienced a notable ascent in the 21st century. Frontier College has proven itself a fruitful source for such studies, as the reformers' curriculums, reports, appeals and documented observations serve as an interesting window into the frontier from the perspective of the educated classes. It is, however, just that: a perspective of authority. Sources from Frontier College are, as far as historical sources go, very easily accessible. Much of it has been digitized and made available in multiple online archives for free, and the physical copies are easily purchased. This has undoubtedly influenced the research field, as many studies of frontier masculinities are made from reformist perspectives. More questions of the same theme could, however, be asked from the working-class men themselves: how did they identify as men? How did they perceive the hegemonic ideals? Was masculinity nearly as prevalent in their frontier experience as outside sources make it seem? What dimensions did the isolated homosociality add to North American working-class experience?

This thesis scratches the surface of both Frontier College rhetoric and rural working class masculinity, and to fully grasp the complexity of the theme from all angles would require the addition of working class sources as well as wider theoretical overview of not only masculinity and hegemony, but class, race, identity and power as well. This is a challenge difficult to tackle in a thesis such as this: working class sources, albeit potentially available in forms of interviews and letters, would take more time and resources to locate and analyze than is available for a project of this scale. Similarly, to include the full theoretical complexity of the topic would easily overpower the analysis of the primary sources if not given adequate space. However, these afore-mentioned challenges pave the way for further

research, and is something I would like to carry over and continue to examine in a doctoral dissertation in the future.

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Lyhennelmä

Pro gradu -tutkielma *Strong Arms and Idle Minds — Canadian Laborers and Masculine Imagery in the Rhetoric Strategies of Frontier College Reformists in the 1920s* käsittelee kanadalaisen aikuiskoulutusjärjestö Frontier Collegen päätoimijoiden Alfred Fitzpatrickin ja Edmund Bradwinin reformismiteksteissään käyttämää maskuliinista retoriikkaa. Tutkimuksen pääpaino on järjestön toistuvissa tavoissa kuvailla työläismiehiä ja edistää näiden imagoa potentiaalisina kansalaisina ja voimavaroina kasvavalle anglokanadalaiselle theiskunnalle.

1800- ja 1900-lukujen taitteessa kanadalainen yhteiskunta eli teollista ja ekonomista murroskautta, ja rajaseuduilla tuotettujen luonnonresurssien kansainvälinen kysyntä loi maahan ennennäkemättömän tarpeen työvoimalle sekä kasvavan määrän maahanmuuttajia. Osa sijoittui urbaaneihin asutuskeskuksiin tai siirtyi preerioille viljelemään maata, mutta huomattava joukko erityisesti miehiä työllistyi rajaseutujen teollisuuteen esimerkiksi tukkileireille, rautateille ja kaivoksille. 1900-luvun alun poliittinen ilmapiiri Kanadassa oli latautunut, sillä kysymys englannin kielen sekä brittiläisten arvojen säilymisestä valtiollisen kasvun sekä kanadalaisen identiteetin olennaisena osana ajoi erityisesti Ontarion liberaalien toimintaa. Monikansallistuva yhteiskunta liitettynä jo kytevään vastakkaisasetteluun anglo- ja frankofiilien välillä herätti enenemässä määrin kiinnostusta sosiaalista reformismia ja koulutusta kohtaan.

Frontier College aloitti Alfred Fitzpatrickin johdolla toimintansa Ontariossa vuonna 1899, ja Edmund Bradwin liittyi järjestöön opettajaohjaajana 1900-luvun puolella. Järjestön toiminta keskittyi varsinkin alkuaikoinaan Pohjois-Ontarion syrjäseuduille, missä metsäkämpille haluttiin pystyttää kirjastoja ja lukuhuoneita työläisille. Myöhemmin toimintaan liitettiin myös työläisopettajan rooli, jonka täytti usein nuori yliopisto-opiskelija, tehtävänään työskennellä päivisin miesten rinnalla ja ohjata nämä iltaisin koulunpenkille. Frontier Collegen opetussuunnitelma painottui suurelta osin englannin kielen ja lukutaidon opetukseen, mutta opettajien tehtäviin kuului myös moraalisenä esimerkkinä toimiminen. Fitzpatrick ja Bradwin uskoivat koulutuksen ja kulttuurisen esimerkin ohjaavan työläisiä kohti ideaalia kanadalaisesta kansalaisidentiteettiä ja perinteisiä perhearvoja.

Motiivit Frontier Collegen agendan takana sekä sen konkreettiset vaikutukset ovat kuitenkin monitahoisia. Tutkielma lähestyy näiden kahden reformistin pääteoksia maskuliinisuuden ja retoriikan näkökulmasta, tukeutuen feministisen teorian ja sukupuolen performatiivisuuden teoreettiseen viitekehykseen. Tutkielmassa hyödynnetty aiempi tutkimus perustuu yleisteoksiin Kanadan ja Pohjois-Amerikan työväen historiasta sekä mies- ja sukupuolentutkimukseen. Frontier Collegeen keskittyvää tutkimusta löytyy muutamien artikkelien muodossa, ja useampi 2000-luvun puolella kirjoitettu artikkeli pohtii Frontier Collegea maskuliinisuuden näkökulmasta. Tutkimuskentältä kuitenkin puuttuu teoreettinen lähestymistapa järjestön retoriikkaan ja laajempiin yhteiskunnallisiin konteksteihin. Tämä tutkielma keskittyy syvemmin analysoimaan sukupuolittuneen retoriikan syitä ja seurauksia: minkälaiset maskuliinisuuden ihanteet ja valtasuhteet vaikuttivat reformistien retoriikkaan, ja miksi he keskittyivät työläisten miehisyyteen? Näitä kysymyksiä pohditaan tutkielmassa laadullisen lähiluvun kautta, useita eri tekstien kohtia tarkastellen.

Tutkielman ensimmäinen luku, jossa avataan rajaseututyöläisten taustoja, maskuliinisten ihanteiden historiaa sekä sukupuoleen liittyntä ahdistusta, jakautuu kolmeen osaan. Ensimmäinen alaluku on katsaus siihen, keitä leireillä työskenteli. Siinä missä aiemmalla vuosisadalla useat rajaseudun sesonkityöläiset olivat paikallisia kanadalaisia miehiä tai englantia äidinkielenään puhuvia maahanmuuttajia, 1900-luvun puolella yhä enemmän työläisiä saapui muista Euroopan maista sekä Aasiasta. Tämä näkyi myös siinä, että yhä tyypillisemmin työläiset olivat naimattomia poikamiehiä, joilla myös oli enemmän vapauksia liikkua leiriltä leirille töiden perässä. Reformisteista erityisesti Bradwin kiinnitti huomiota metsäkämpien monikulttuurisuuteen, ja hän omistikin kokonaisen kappaleen miesten etnisille kategorisoinneille. Hänen kuvauksensa jakautuu kahteen pääosioon, ”valkoisiin” ja ”ulkomaalaisiin”, ja vaikka hän geneerisesti löytää positiivisia ja negatiivisia puolia kaikista kuvailemistaan ihmisryhmistä, hänen maalaamansa mielikuvat suosivat valkoisten kategoriaa ja erityisesti anglokanadalaisia ja brittimaa-hanmuuttajia. Fitzpatrick kiinnittää omassa kirjassaan vähemmän huomiota etnisille kategorioille, peräänkuuluttaen rasististen ennakkoluulojen kitkemistä rajaseuduilta, mutta hänkin implikoi maahanmuuttajien arvon inhimillisenä pääomana perustuvan näiden kykyyn ja halukkuuteen opetella englantia ja omaksua brittiläinen arvomaailma.

Toisessa alaluvussa käsitellään maskuliinisuutta ja sen ihanteita 1900-luvun alun Pohjois-Amerikassa, painottaen miehisyyden teoreettista luonnetta: koska maskuliinisuus muuttuva, yhteiskunnan vaihtuviin ihanteisiin sitoutuva käsite, myös siihen liittyvät identifioinnit ja määrittelyt ovat moninaisia. Maskuliinisuuden moninaisuus pohjautuu ensisijaisesti valtasuhteisiin, sillä usein vaikeasti saavutettavat ihanteet ylläpitävät hierarkioita ja toiseutta paitsi miesten ja naisten välillä, myös miesten keskinäisissä suhteissa. Kuten Fitzpatrickin ja Bradwinin teksteissä käy ilmi, työläismiesten maskuliinisuuteen suhtauduttiin tavalla, joka erotti nämä keskiluokkaisesta miehuudesta. Yhdysvaltojen sisällissodan jälkeisistä miehuusihanteista puhutaan miestutkimuksessa ja sukupuolen historiassa termillä ”uusi miehuus”, joka viittaa tapaan alleviivata miehisyyden yhteys fyysiseen raakaan voimaan, itsenäisyyteen ja itsevarmuuteen. Rajaseututyöläiset olivat keski- ja yläluokan näkökulmasta jo pitkään sisäistäneet osan näistä piirteistä, mutta vasta ihanteiden siirryttyä ne saivat positiivisen mielleyhtymän. Erityisesti naisten kasvava osallistuminen korkeakoulutukseen ja pelko feminiinisuuden heikentävästä vaikutuksesta ajoi keskiluokkaiset miehet hakemaan inspiraatiota rajaseuduilta, jossa voimakkaat ja lihaksikkaat miehet hallitsivat luontoa ja elivät vaaran ja kuoleman takomissa miehisen toveruuden yhteisöissä.

Työläisten ihanteellinen maskuliinisuus kuitenkin rajoittui suurilta osin näiden fyysiseen kehoon ja siihen heijastettuihin mielikuviiin. Vaikka sekä Fitzpatrick että Bradwin yhtyivät työläismiesten ruumiiden ihailuun, heidän huolensa ja ahdistuksensa kiinnittyi metsäkämppien sosiaalisiin oloihin. Kuten erityisesti toisen luvun kolmannessa alaluvussa käy ilmi, reformistit pelkäsivät miesten eristyksen naisten oletetusti rauhoittavasta ja ylentävästä seurasta sekä leiriolojen luomasta toimittomuudesta ilmenevän epätavanomaisena ja paheksuttuna käytöksenä. Naisellisten vaikutteiden puutoksen uskottiin kadottavan miesten kaipuun perhe-elämää, perinteisiä sukupuolirooleja ja vastuita kohtaan. Vaikka monet kotityöt olivat 1900-alun länsimaisessa yhteiskunnassa sukupuolittuneita, homososiaalisissa yhteisöissä miehet tekivät niin miehiset kuin naisellisetkin askareet ilman yhteisön sisäistä väheksyntää. Samoin monet metsäkämpille tyypilliset ajanviettotavat rikkoivat sukupuolen performanssin normeja, kuten lauantai-iltojen tanssiaiset, joissa osa miehistä omaksui naisen roolin. 1900-luvun alun Kanadassa osa metsäkämpistä myös majoitti miehet tiloissa, joissa useampi mies jakoi makuusijan. Petien jakaminen itsessään ei vielä kyseisenä aikakautena sisältänyt

seksuaalisia assosiaatioita, mutta Frontier Collegen kirjallisuus viittaa voimakkaasti miesten hengellisen vajavaisuuden ja yleisen joutilaisuuden täyteen ahdeuissa majoitustiloissa johtavan miesten välisiin seksuaalisiin kohtaamisiin. Se, että Fitzpatrick ja Bradwin avoimesti viittaavat työläismiesten puutteisiin suhteessa ajan maskuliinisiin ihanteisiin, herättää edelleen kysymyksen siitä, miksi nämä piirteet nostettiin lukijakunnan tietoon.

Tämä kysymys johtaa tutkielman kolmanteen lukuun, jossa analyysin kohteeksi nousee Frontier Collegen opetusstrategiat sekä tekstien retoriset vaikutuskeinot. Luku 3.1 keskittyy järjestön opetussuunnitelmaan, ehdotettuihin muutoksiin leireissä sekä työläisopettajien rooliin kanadalaistamistyössä. Fitzpatrick ehdotti metsäkämppien uudelleenjärjestämistä siten, että jokaisella miehellä olisi oma pieni majoituksensa, johon päivän työn ja opiskelun jälkeen hän voisi vetäytyä omaan rauhaansa. Tämän uskottiin myös houkuttelevan perheelliset miehen tuomaan vaimonsa ja lapsensa asumaan leireille, minkä puolestaan oletettiin inspiroivan naimattomat miehet emuloimaan kunnollista, normaalia perhe-elämää. Myös leireille lähetettävien työläisopettajien odotettiin herättävän kunnioitusta, jotta he voisivat keräämänsä auktoriteetin kautta toimia esikuvina toivotusta maskuliinisesta performanssista, jossa vahva ruumis, terävä mieli ja protestanttinen moraalit yhdistyivät tasapainoisesti. Fitzpatrick ja Bradwin toivoivat koulutuksen ja esimerkin johtavan paitsi sosiaaliseen reformiin, myös sosiaaliseen liikkuvuuteen, sillä järjestön opetustavoitteet ja strategia selvästi edistivät miesten osallistumista liberaaliin anglokanadalaiseen ja keskiluokkaiseen elämäntapaan.

Yllä mainittujen strategioiden konkreettiset vaikutukset leireillä ovat kuitenkin epäselviä. Muissa lähteissä on nähtävillä, että työläiset suhtautuivat varauksella majoitusmuutoksiin, ja leirikirjastoissakin osa keskittyi viihteelliseen fiktion kuluttamiseen. Tutkielman painopiste on kuitenkin Frontier Collegen reformistien retorisessa vaikuttamisessa tekstissä itsessään. Tutkielman viimeisessä käsittelyluvussa 3.2 analyysin kohteeksi otetaan tutkimuskysymysten kannalta olennainen tekijä: Frontier Collegen yleisö. Fitzpatrickin ja Bradwinin teoksien kohdeyleisö oli koulutettu keski- ja yläluokka, ja teosten tarkoitus oli vedota lukijoihin ja kerätä kannatusta järjestön toiminnalle. Molemmissa teoksissa on havaittavissa kahtiajako liioittelun ja vähättelyn välillä, kun reformistit painottavat samanaikaisesti lukijalle sekä työläismiesten maskuliinista erinomaisuutta ja yltäkylläisyyttä

että näiden voimattomuutta ja lapsenkaltaista kyvyttömyyttä edistää omaa asemaansa. Tässä osassa tutkimusta ehdotetaan, että syyt yllä mainitun retoriikan takana juontuvat luvussa kaksi pohdittuihin sukupuoliyahdistuksen ja toiseuden teemoihin. Rajaseutufantasiat ja myytit yltäkyläisestä työläismaskuliinisuudesta kiehtoivat keskiluokkia, mutta samanaikaisesti rajaseudun työläiset edustivat uhkaavaa, tuntematonta toiseutta. Käyttämällä liioittelun ja vähättelyn retoriikkaa reformistit säilyttivät työläismiehen myyttisen maskuliinisuuden esikuvana keskiluokille samalla kuitenkin nimittäen näille vallan avuttomien työläisten pelastajina ja hyväntekijöinä.

Tutkielman loppupäätelmissä vastataan alussa esitettyyn tutkimuskysymykseen siitä, miksi Frontier Collegen reformistit nojautuivat niin vahvasti maskuliinisuuden teksteissään. Ensisijainen vastaus tähän on se, että metsäkämpät ja rajaseutu itsessään herättivät maskuliinisia mielikuvia 1900-luvun alussa, joten on loogista, että reformistit huomioivat herkästi niissä asuvien työläisten maskuliinisia piirteitä. Toiseksi, koska maskuliinisuuden moninaisuus ja miehinen toiseus oli selvästi esillä näissä tiloissa, ne ruokkivat keskiluokkaista sukupuoliyahdistusta. Ja kolmanneksi, maskuliininen retoriikka oli vaikuttavaa. Se vetosi koulutettujen luokkien omiin epävarmuuksiin ja haluan edistää rajaseutujen kanadalaistumista. Lopuksi on kuitenkin oleellista huomioida tässä tutkimuksessa käytetyn lähteistön yksipuolisuus, ja kuten loppuluvussa todetaan, käsitelty aihe on hedelmällinen lähtökohta laajennuksille esimerkiksi työläiskokemuksen itsensä kautta.