End in Tears: Understanding Grief and Loss in D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded*

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> Every single of these villages was constructed of families with relatives in other villages. Rivers of tears must have been shed. Death must have become so commonplace that we ceased to grieve. No, grief became so constant we ceased to want to live. We have never stopped grieving.
>
> ***Lee Maracle***

In 1978, more than four decades after it first appeared, D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded* returned to print and began to gain critical currency.[1] What I hope to accomplish in this essay is to reconsider the complexity of the cultural and historical effects of Indian sufferings and to situate these effects as ways in which the Indian people negotiate sociality while surviving grief and loss. As a literary meditation on psychical and cumulative layers of racial sorrow, the novel tracks the etiology, and the totality, of female grief. McNickle reminds us of all that is incommensurable, all that is contradictory in a world of discipline and punishment,

1 Several scholarly articles detail the fictions that came out of and respond to the specific context of the 1930s. For example, in "The First Generation of Native American Novelists," Priscilla Oaks provides insights into the period in which *The Surrounded* was published and demonstrates how portrayals of the Indian hero and heroine were changed in the field of American Indian and

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socio-political control, and sanctioned violence. I hope to offer a relevant, although by no means exhaustive, analysis of the women's sorrow and how their actions elucidate the cultural, historical, and land losses the Salish people endured.

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While critical scholars have examined the construction of manhood and masculinity, less attention has been given to interlocking notions of gender and constructions of grief, loss, and resistance in the novel.[2] Consider, for example, the claim made by Louis Owens in "Maps of the Mind: John Joseph Mathews and D'Arcy McNickle": "In the resulting role reversal, those who act forcefully and attempt with disastrous results to control events are the women, Faithful Catharine and Elise La Rose, both of whom coerce an unwilling Archilde into the mountains and in the mountains commit murder in defense of their men" (70). Although apprehending the importance of the women's activism to the narrative, Charles R. Larson describes Catharine and Elise's confrontation with the law as an action "committed without forethought" (91). Robert Dale Parker's "Who Shot the Sheriff" cautions against "prescriptive realism," an interpretive approach which "dictates that characters must be 'positive role models,' strong sensitive women and strong (but not too strong) sensitive men" (926). Parker notes that although Elise "is the only major character that critics have mostly ignored" (923), she is characterized by reviewers as "profane and

mainstream representation. In particular, she details the emergence of a genre of Native American literature in the era of the Great Depression of 1929 and the stock market crash in the 1930s. In place of gender-race stereotyping, most Indian fictions depict the Indian hero as "rebellious" and the Indian heroine as "an earth-mother figure" (81). As well, the Indian woman character "was no longer the stereotyped princess or submissive squaw" in these fictions (81). See also James Ruppert's "Textual Perspectives and the Reader in *The Surrounded*," which takes into account the context in which *The Surrounded* is framed as well as the historical moment in which the novel was published. In "The Politics of Point of View: Representing History in Mourning Dove's *Cogewea* and D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded*," Robert Holton stresses that these works are "important, even essential, documents of the struggle to keep the Native historical point of view alive during a difficult period of North American history" (79).

2 In "Re-Visions: An Early Version of *The Surrounded*," Birgit Hans focuses mainly on Archilde, which is perhaps inevitable given her argument. Hans, nevertheless, describes Catharine as a "vital force" and refers to her act of murder as "motivated by a mother's grief" (191). For more scholarly articles privileging the study of Archilde's role, see, for example, Bill Brown's "Trusting Story and Reading *The Surrounded*," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 3.2 (Summer 1991): 22–27; Anne Secco's "Indian Life in the 1930s as portrayed in *The Surrounded*, A Novel by d'Arcy McNickle," *Revue Française D'Études Américanes* 38 (November 1988): 366–68; and William Bevis's "Native American Novels: Homing In," 580–620.

reckless, without morals or regard for the law of either race" (924). While Parker's article articulates many well-researched and insightful readings of gender identity and federal Indian policy, it ends by positing rational expression as the answer to the women's actions rather than addressing the broader historical and social context that constructs the women stricken in pain: "*The Surrounded* calls out not only for more agency and resistance from men, but also for more purposeful agency at large, as opposed to the impulsive, unmediated reflexes of Catharine's revenge, Elise's private quarrel, or Louis's greed" (923). We should not conflate gender and actions with nonspecificity; on the contrary, McNickle's text alerts us to the stakes and context in how gender is read.

The novel begins with Archilde Leon returning home from Portland to visit his Indian mother Catharine and Spanish father Max Leon, who live in separate dwellings in the valley of Sniél-emen. Archilde's brother, Louis, is alleged to have stolen horses and the law officers are "hunting him" (28). While on a ritual hunting trip, Archilde, Louis, and their mother meet the game warden Dan Smith, who shoots and kills Louis. At the sight of Louis's violent death, the grief-stricken Catharine kills the game warden. Later, Elise, Archilde, and his nephews, Mike and Narcisse, try to escape from the law officers by fleeing to the mountains with the sheriff in hot pursuit. When the sheriff comes up to their camp and pounces on them, Elise shoots him in an attempt to protect Archilde. Meanwhile, both Mike and Narcisse mount and ride off amid the shooting, and the text ends with the Indian agent's apprehension of Elise and Archilde.

McNickle's articulation of the women's bereavement and irretrievable loss remains relevant to the contemporary moment while reading it against and alongside the changes wrought in the last seven decades. In "Gendered Cartography: Mapping the Mind of Female Characters in D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded*," Roseanne Hoeffel emphasizes the women's role as "subversive change agents" (45), whose actions are crucial to "survival and resistance" (61). While Hoeffel discusses how the women "are the ones who stave off cultural murders as well as cultural suicide" (61), I am interested in thinking about the novel's articulation of gender and disciplined violence, for as Andrea Smith posits: "Putting Native women at the centre of analysis compels us to look at the role of the state in perpetuating both race-based and gender-based violence" (3).[3] Specifically, I explore the ways in which the women's sense of loss and subsequent actions bespeak the larger thematic concerns about land loss, communal

3 I thank the reviewer for bringing Andrea Smith's *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* to my attention.

sorrow, and the policing arm of the state. I argue that both Catharine Le Loup and Elise La Rose demonstrate female agency and resistance without endorsing violence as a solution to the disciplinary power of the state over the American Indian community. After setting out briefly the two crucial scenes, I examine McNickle's radical depictions of Catharine and Elise and their encounters with the law. The corollary of the women's sadness and the discomfort and pain attendant on their resistance, I argue, provides an intense interrogation of what it means to challenge the law.

A Synopsis of Two Scenes

The novel presents two scenes of confrontation between the women and the law enforcement officers. First the novel stages a ritual hunt. Both Archilde and Catharine ride into the mountains where they meet Sheriff Quigley, "a name that could frighten most Indians" (117). Referring to Sheriff Quigley, the narrative offers an image of a law enforcement officer that sums up Archilde, Catharine, and Louis's predicament: "He was a sheriff out of the Old West. He knew the type—he had read of those hard-riding, quick-shooting dispensers of peace, he had heard stories about them—and he was intent on being all of them in himself. He had made the part his own" (117). Archilde realizes with a chill of apprehension that Sheriff Quigley is tracking a horse thief, and he imputes the crime to his brother Louis. After Quigley has left, Louis joins Archilde and Catharine for game hunting. Questioned by Dan Smith, the game warden, about killing a female deer, Archilde explains, "We're Indians, and we're free of game laws" (125). When Smith's voice becomes "sharper," Archilde reiterates, "Indians are free from all game laws by special treaty" (125). Smith's smugness and condescension, however, underscores the institutionalized racism, the legacy of law, and the disenfranchisement of American Indians in the U.S. Furthermore, the game warden's failure to communicate with Archilde, Louis, and Catharine causes a commotion and in the ensuing moments he loses his temper, especially when Catharine and Louis are speaking in Salish. Calling Catharine a "squaw," the warden tells all of them that they are under arrest and then fires at Louis, who wants to gather his rifle before submitting to the officer (126). Catharine tries to explain to the warden that he mistakenly perceives that Louis would fight or run away, but she knows that it is pointless. Next she hits the warden with a hatchet, and Archilde cannot "explain how his mother had been able to move without being seen or heard" (128). Archilde can only remember Catharine "had covered her head again and was wailing for the dead" (128).

Then the novel stages the scene in which Elise, Archilde, and his two nephews, Mike and Narcisse, have run out on the Indian Agent and set up camp in the mountains. Early in September, Max Leon "captured" (110) his grandchildren, who "were like animals brought to the zoo," and put them in school at the mission (111). Mike and Narcisse, however, run away from school later on and stay in the woods until Archilde finds them. Prior to their escape, Archilde tells Elise that he is going to confess to what had occurred in the mountains with his mother and brother. Archilde tells Elise that he does not want to transgress the law or the geographic boundaries of the community: "The Agent expects me to come in.... So if they can't get me one way, they'll get me another. Not only Dave Quigley, but all the sheriffs in the country can be called in if they want 'em. Fat chance! Besides, we'd always be expecting it. We couldn't live" (289). Meanwhile, Sheriff Quigley approaches their camp by stealth and his sudden appearance at dusk takes both Archilde and Elise unawares. Quigley states that he must take all of them: Archilde is wanted for the murder of the game warden, Elise is a "material witness," and the boys are to be sent to the government school (293). When Archilde decides to obey the police order, Elise throws scalding coffee on Sheriff Quigley's face and shoots him three times with a rifle. By the novel's end, Mr Parker, the agent, and Joe La Ronde, the head of the Indian police force, have apprehended both Archilde and Elise. With these scenarios, we are reminded that violence enacted by individuals is criminality, but violence transmuted into power through the institutions of the law is essential for management of American Indians in the reserves.

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The Pocahontas Genealogy

What is the role of women's resistance to the state's monopoly of force, which purports to maintain order in conformity with the law? In order to comprehend and situate contemporary debates and early twentieth-century representations of Indian women, which are installations of a scripted context of perception by American popular discourses, it is necessary to recall how representation of the Indian woman took shape in the U.S. American/Euro-American imaginary. As a figure in which the nation invests its anxieties, contradictions, and desires, the American Indian woman embodies both attraction and repugnance. In "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," Rayna Green provides a comprehensive account of how literary and cultural productions deploy Native women (whether they be Pocahontas's "dark, negatively viewed sister, the Squaw—or the anti-Pocahontas" [701], or

Princess Pocahontas, the "good Indian" [703] woman) as screens against which nationalist fantasies of interracial union, salvation, and "the iconographic representative of the Americas" are projected and played out (701). Outmoded as such notions of Native women may seem in the twenty-first century, there is no denying that the business of imaging Princess Pocahontas points to a larger and extremely complex obsession with visual representations of women who are sweet in demeanour and virtuous in their long-suffering obedience to patriarchal authority. Any critical reading of American Indian women needs to rethink the popular stereotypical views of gender and femininity that have become so entrenched over the years, just as any nuanced understanding of American Indian female identity must take into account the U.S. entertainment industry's capitalization on these overdetermined conceptions. As Teresa de Lauretis, following Michel Foucault, suggests in *Technologies of Gender*, gender, "both as representation and as self-representation, is the product of various social technologies, such as cinema, as well as institutional discourses, epistemologies, and critical practices" (ix). Lauretis's notion of gender offers insights into the way in which the identity of American Indian women lies at the intersection of multiple forms of representation and subordination. Green notes that Pocahontas figures prominently in several nineteenth-century literary narratives, citing "James Nelson Barber's *The Indian Princess*; *or, La Belle Sauvage* (1808) and George Washington Custis' *The Settler of Virginia* (1827)" as texts that "dealt with her presence, or sang her praises from the pages of literary magazines and from the stages of popular playhouses throughout the east" (700). If the identity of American Indian women is intelligible only as Pocahontas, how does McNickle's text situate the production of American Indian female images within the larger context of literary representation and offer an implicit critique of Pocahontas featured in nineteenth-century literary texts?

Central to McNickle's novel is its demystification of a set of images developed in literary narratives. McNickle's presentation of Catharine and Elise reminds us that stereotypical images of what is perceived as Pocahontas, the virginal maiden par excellence, take place against a backdrop of over four centuries' worth of racial stereotypes concerning Indian women.[4]

4 In "Gender in Native America," Betty Bell points out that eighteenth-century literary and pictorial representations of Pocahontas focus mainly on "her royal birth and identification with colonial interests" (312). Bell notes that the first nineteenth-century Native women writers invoked "Pocahontas' nobility, authority, and visibility to make their self-representations coherent and acceptable to white audiences;" however, "the Indian princess remained performative, a

By challenging the scripted impulse underlying the representation of Indian women in American cultural perception, McNickle dismantles the conventional staging of a mythical figure, a cultural citation that not only exists in private and national fantasies but also operates to cover up the logic of racial and gender prejudice and exclusion. "The European American cultural bias against indigenousness," Kathryn Shanley points out in "American Indian Discourse and the Politics of Recognition," "is so extreme that Native worldviews are not recognized unless they are cloaked in eroticism, exoticism, or degeneracy" (270). *The Surrounded* refuses to disavow the reality of women's pain or to represent Catharine and Elise as reductive, erotic, or exotic stereotypes but, rather, shows that their subject positions are constructed across a multiplicity of geographical, social, and political relations.

What scholarly attention the novel has received in the examination of gender by critics for the most part has glossed over the complexity and power of the female characters. One of the most vexed issues in *The Surrounded* has been the representation of gender and female violence. By describing how "Archilde becomes the scapegoat because of a series of fatal accidents which draw him deeper and deeper into trouble with the law," Priscilla Oaks, in spite of her own insights into Indian stereotypes, sees Archilde as a helpless victim of his environment (82). Contrary to these critical views, I would argue that Catharine's killing of the game warden gestures not so much to her irrationality but, rather, to the intense pain of familial and communal loss. In analyzing Catharine's act of murder, it is crucial to contest the notion that violence ensues from a pathological impulse. Rather, Catharine's action signifies the terrifying sense of loss and long-term suffering of dislocation, as well as providing a way of attending to particularities marking Indian racialization. Through Catharine, McNickle critiques the role of violence enacted on her community in the name of human civilization and maintenance of social order. In addition, the estrangement of Archilde from Catherine, gesturing to the displacing effect of assimilation, underscores the vulnerability of biological ties on the reservation. Catharine's act of murder is not an isolated episode but, rather, an action that stems from, and is causally related to, the Indians' encounter with violence and the law that legitimizes their oppression. My argument is that the law, especially as it surfaces in the narrative, is inseparable from socio-political control and, in Archilde's terms, is "a threatening symbol"

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piece of Indian vaudeville, and was denied a presence or a voice in their written work" (313).

(124). As Foucault demonstrates in "Powers and Strategies," law "is an instrument of power which is at once complex and partial" (141).

Sanctioned Violence

McNickle throws into relief the ironies of meaning produced by the law in free spaces: the Indian people living in open mountain spaces are the very people under surveillance. With police officers patrolling the mountains, the Salish community is judged and watched. Emphasizing the disciplining of the American Indian body by the apparatus of law enforcement, Archilde notes: "It seemed that every time an Indian left the Reservation he almost certainly ran into the Sheriff and had to give an account of himself" (117). Reflecting upon the deployment of violence "as a means of legal ends" in "Critique of Violence," Walter Benjamin argues that "law-preserving violence is a threatening violence" (284, 285). Describing police violence as "lawmaking," Benjamin states: "[T]he police intervene 'for security reasons' in countless cases where no clear legal situation exists, when they are not merely, without the slightest relation to legal ends, accompanying the citizen as a brutal encumbrance through a life regulated by ordinances, or simply revising them" (287). The invasion and surveillance of the open spaces of American Indian peoples—their communities and mountains—have led to the sanction of state violence in *The Surrounded*.

When we turn to the long history of American Indian land rights and the equally interminable history of managing that loss of landownership—always accompanied by traumatic violence—we see there has always been a complex nexus of negotiations with pain and sorrow, one that reverberates through *The Surrounded*. In his discussion of the "story of early-twentieth century land loss," Philip J. Deloria asserts: "We should not hesitate to mark it, not simply as classically tragic (though it was all that), but as a tragedy marked by cold viciousness—and by the pain, damage, and distrust left in its wake" (151). The blind chief Modeste's account of the Salish community bears out this loss; he stresses the point that the Salish people had land that stretched "from the plains east of the mountains to the Snpoilshi River" and that they went for their biannual hunting on the Missouri (70). "When we made a treaty with the Government they saw how it was," Modeste continues, "and that was the country we owned" (70).[5]

5 The formation of the U.S. was founded on a history of Indian land dispossession, from removing land from Indian control to maintaining a system of rules and regulations over American Indian communities, legislated by Congress and supported by the judiciary. Dislocation is a process in which the American Indians struggle with violence of the nation-state. Stephen Cornell notes

It is worth retrieving at some length the passage that registers the loss of land in connection with the theory of "civilizing the Indians":

> Years before, in the middle of last century, as Mr Moser understood it, the Indians had agreed to give their hereditary claims to all of western Montana and northern Idaho in return for a fixed reserve—which was to be set apart for their exclusive use—and additional compensation of money. The money disappeared into quicksand—there was lots of quicksand in the government service—and the reserve proved of little value to them as soon as the game vanished.... And finally, at the opening of the new century, each Indian was given a separate piece of land, a "garden plot," of eighty acres, and the remaining area was opened up for white settlement. (30)

By pointing to land sales and allotment, McNickle therefore alludes to a history of land loss.[6] Modeste goes on to recall: "We thought guns would save our hunting grounds and make the old times return. But that was a mistake" (72). Even more than this, Modeste understands that the black-robe Fathers serve to diminish the Salish people: "We thought they would bring back the power we had lost—but today we have less" (74). These details open up a range of questions about the nature of land as a constituent element in the definition of the American Indian community.

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that "assimilation and removal" are two modes of land acquisition (40). In the late 1860s, Cornell contends that the humanitarian reformers promoted "a program of forced cultural replacement" in an attempt to civilize the Indian (43). In her discussion of the seizure of American Indian land, Cheryl I. Harris writes: "Although the Indians were the first occupants and possessors of the land of the New World, their racial and cultural otherness allowed this fact to be reinterpreted and ultimately erased as a basis for asserting rights in land" (1721). By alerting us to "how rights in property are contingent on, intertwined with, and conflated with race," Harris's discussion is helpful in understanding the material realities of the historical suffering and experiences of oppression in *The Surrounded* (1714).

6 As Philip J. Deloria notes, the Dawes General Allotment Act "shrank Indian landholdings from 138 million acres in 1887 to 52 million at the time of its repeal in 1934" (151). With regard to Indians' resistance against registration with the Dawes Rolls (1899–1906), Evan Marie Garroutte explains that the Dawes Commission "was to destroy indigenous cultures by destroying their foundation—their collective ownership of land—and to integrate the Indians thus 'liberated' into the dominant American culture" (232). In speaking of the notion of land that is the home for American Indians in *Indians and Other Americans*, Harold E. Fey and D'Arcy McNickle write: "Even today, when Indian tribes may go into court and sue the United States for inadequate compensation or no compensation for lands taken from them, they still are dealing in alien concepts" (28).

As William Bevis points out, the Indians have lost the "customs, rituals, and practices of law which bind people together into more than a population" (586). How do we critically understand a history of communal grief, material loss, social damage, and agency from the vantage points of the women characters in *The Surrounded*? What I want to think through, via Catharine and Elise, is the tension between violence and agency, an ongoing, conflictual negotiation with pain and sorrow. By agency, I mean to indicate an active, transformative subjectivity that disrupts the histories of power inequities and domination and offers possibilities of contestation. In this respect, the concept of agency challenges apparatuses and institutions that marginalize American Indian community.

Disciplining the Salish Population

In depicting the law enforcement officers' policing on Catharine's reservation, McNickle emphasizes the degree to which discipline is enforced through violence and legislation. "The exercise of discipline," Michel Foucault informs us in *Discipline and Punish*, "presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible" (170–71).[7] Foucault is speaking about the military camp as an ideal model of "observatories" found in "working-class housing estates, hospitals, asylums, prisons, schools: the spatial 'nesting' of hierarchized surveillance" (171–72), but these kinds of subjection and subjugation extend into *The Surrounded*.[8] Foucault identifies the elements of disciplinary apparatus as "an 'artificial' order, explicitly laid down by law, a programme, a set of

7 Numerous scholars have put forth the argument that Foucault's analyses do not address the issue of race. See, for example, Ann Stoler's insights into the importance and limits of Foucault's arguments in *Race and the Education of Desire* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995). Nevertheless, Foucault's work on technologies of surveillance and governmental rationality is germane to my reading of *The Surrounded*, particularly his argument about the ways in which the task of disciplining populations is undergirded by forms of violence.

8 Philip J. Deloria states that reservation administrators sought to convert Indian people to "American subjects" through "institutions and technologies" such as church records, agency records, ration-disbursement records, and allotment records (26). "This knowledge," Deloria continues, "made it easy to locate a particular person in time and in space and to determine the need for education, discipline, containment, or shunning." He adds, the "space within and around a reservation was contained and controlled in order to manage Indian people" (26). Nevertheless, Deloria argues, citing Frederick Hoxie, that "reservation spaces could shift in Indian eyes from 'prison to homeland,'" rendering the space as a site that is "attuned to new forms of resistance" (27).

regulations" (179). Here, Foucault's description of the disciplinary society enables us to gain some purchase on the ways the state re-secures its control over bodies of otherness. If discipline is a form of surrounded enclosure, it is not an accident, therefore, that the title to McNickle's novel gestures to the ways in which surrounding controls through containment and panopticist invasions. The Panopticon, Foucault writes, "was also a laboratory; it could be used as a machine to carry out experiments, to alter behavior, to train or correct individuals" (203). As in Foucault's argument about Bentham's Panopticon, a model of an ideal prison, the novel depicts the Salish community, which resides in the valley of Sniél-emen where "the mountains raised a magnificent barricade against the eastern sky, the highest jagged crests floating in morning mist 8000 feet above the valley," and details an ongoing system of disciplinary observation (*Surrounded* 44). This extreme form of monitoring the community's behaviour is evident as the novel demonstrates the frequency with which, in the mountains, the characters are subject to surveillance, a disciplining mode itself that entails violence and violation. How do we understand the effects of the encounter between the law enforcement officers and Indians in relation to the larger narrative of history of the state's disciplining process?

This extreme form of monitoring the community's behaviour is evident as the novel demonstrates the frequency with which, in the mountains, the characters are subject to surveillance.

The novel's insistent, continual engagement with a culture of discipline, which makes use of the police to survey and regulate captive Indian populations of the community, culminates in Archilde's feeling that the law enforcement agent is a haunting presence in the mountains: "He had come up the trail, unobserved, and appeared before them with ghostlike unaccountableness. Archilde thought immediately of the ubiquitous Dave Quigley. If he were anywhere within thirty miles, you could not be sure of being free of him" (124). In this, the phantom-like figuration of the game warden, whose task is to track and prosecute American Indians who break the law, resonates with Benjamin's observation of the police whose "power is formless, like its nowhere tangible, all-pervasive, ghostly presence in the life of civilized states" (287). To put it another way, the perilous free spaces of the mountains are undergirded by pervasive violence, with "hard-riding, quick-shooting dispensers of peace" (*Surrounded* 117). In this sense, the vision of the mountains as an open space under surveillance hardly fulfills the notion of the U.S. as a land of freedom and democracy. As the title of the novel suggests, the mountains remain a space of surrounded control and regulation, with state instituted game laws. To be an American Indian living in the mountains of Montana is to be under surveillance, with the threat of violence and detention. In keeping with the state's regulation and invasion of public spaces of the woods, it should not be surprising,

therefore, that "another arm of law—a game warden" or "guardian of the peace"—intrudes on the mother and sons (124). Existing law is predicated on a model that can address neither the historical practices of Indians nor their contemporary legal and political circumstances, particularly the challenges wrought by the legislation of game laws in the novel. While the targets of surveillance are supposed to be lawbreakers, Archilde, Louis, and Catharine, who are perceived as suspect because of prejudice, are *always already* obvious suspects.

Faithful Catharine

For Catharine, violence is not the only mediating agency of social interaction. A closer examination of Catharine's tribal ancestry and religious instruction provides a more nuanced understanding of a painful negotiation with hierarchies of power. Strongly attached to the Church, Catharine has been baptized by the black-robed priests, and, up until she confronts the game warden, she has been "loyal to the Church" (174). Besides her devotion to the Church, Catharine also "urged her children to remember their duties and when they strayed from grace she was full of sorrow and dread" (175). While others despaired when they lost the "old life," Catharine "had gone on performing her duties and never questioning what she had been taught" (210). The Fathers called her "a model of devotion" and said to the people: "'Do as Catharine does and your prayers will be answered'" (210). The novel gestures to how femininity, which is generally associated with passivity, transforms out of grief and pain through Catharine who refuses to witness passively the game warden's shooting of her son.

What Catharine demonstrates is a refraction of a history of expropriation, injustices, and colonial paternalism and, at the same time, exposes the limits of the disciplinary apparatus. As Sheriff Dave Quigley's determined pursuit of Louis attests, the violence perpetuated against the Indians is not considered a criminal act of violence because it is instituted and sanctioned by the laws of the state, which has a monopoly on legitimate violence. Through Horace Parker's description of Dave Quigley, we see how the sheriff with "his badge of office flapping on his unbuttoned vest" (279) represents the "surplus of power" he has bestowed upon himself: "Whenever he had to bring in an Indian prisoner he acted as if a state of war existed between the two races. He gave no quarter and took no chances" (280). Discipline, Foucault explains, "arrests or regulates movements; it clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals wandering about the country in unpredictable ways" (*Discipline and Punish* 219). Playing the role of disciplining the Salish community, the sheriff

must, therefore, "neutralize the effects of counter-power that spring from them [groups of individuals] and which form a resistance to the power that wishes to dominate it" (*Discipline and Punish* 219). McNickle depicts how the metaphorical body of the Salish people is the site of multiple subjections such as the law, regulatory controls, and bodily injury. The meaning of Catharine's act can be productively interpreted in the light of this undergoing of and resistance to a constant presence of governmental coercive violence and disciplining of the Salish peoples and practices. The enclosed circle of violence in which Louis and Archilde find themselves caught engenders a fearful existence; they live in the valley always with a sense of danger and threat hanging over them. In particular, the conundrum that lies at the core of Catharine and Elise's actions suggests simultaneously the failure of the state to provide security and regulate its relations to American Indian society.

As the daughter of Chief Running Wolf, Catharine is greatly esteemed by the community. The narrative gives us a sense of how Catharine is undone by the hunting incident:

> When she came back from the mountains, having killed a man, she felt more dead than alive. It did not seem possible that she would be forgiven this sin and be allowed to walk the earth. Sin had become a mighty thing in her mind. Since childhood she had been meticulous about confessing the least, venial transgression; the commission of mortal sin terrified her. And then this thing happened. She confessed her crime, but before that she had already decided that she would have to go to hell. (175)

This passage draws attention to Catharine's ambivalence and reveals a structure of communal relations supplanted by dominant culture. At first, she starts doing penance for her crime, but eventually she stops going to church altogether. Sitting "in her doorway all in a lump, looking as crushed and lifeless as last year's prairie grass," Catherine asks: "What is to become of me? What have I done?" (176). These thoughts lead to a series of unanswerable questions about what she had done and culminate in a sense of hopelessness and sorrow: "A son is part of your body and when a son dies you have to ask yourself: How is it that I am still here? Why do they take only part of me?" (130–31). That we cannot "see" Catharine's killing of the game warden adds another level of complexity to McNickle's depiction of her character. Her plight as a grieving mother who has lost her son and the consequences she suffers of the warden's death can be read as a questioning of the law and its hypocrisies.

At the midsummer dance, Catharine tells everyone of the hunting trip incident and of the confession, fasting, and prayer that failed to "free her heart" (208). "In the old days," Catharine says, "you were whipped and no one spoke of it again. The heart was free. I have asked this to be done to me" (207). At the same time, Modeste describes how the Indian guardians prohibited the use of the whip and introduced "new laws" (207). Unlike the whip, a native custom that "kept the people straight," the new laws ensure that "nobody is straight" because "nobody cares about the new" (207). As Laird Christensen argues, "the public confession and whipping encouraged the wrongdoer to reconsider his or her actions in relation to present circumstances while reinforcing the cohesion of the community" (7). It is in these moments when Catherine suffers the enormity of pain, confusion, and even despair that she chooses to articulate her story rather than remain silent. Catherine's flagellation represents both the redemption of a crime and the grief of a mother who has thought long and hard about her role in bringing up Louis and her helplessness at his becoming "bad" when he returns from school (208). Catharine elaborates: "You knew my sons and how I prayed for them and tried to keep them from going to hell. It would have been better if they had been given the whip" (210). This scene goes beyond an affective description of sadness to a profound sense of Catharine's self-conscious, conflicting, and difficult negotiations with meanings of structural control—of mourning, dispossession, law, prohibition, and social damage—that underlie her relation with the community. Not only does Catharine sleep peacefully "with the red stripes of the whip on her back," Archilde also notices her serenity after getting the lash (211). He realizes that his mother is a strong woman and that her tepee is a sanctuary in which he finds "unaccountable security" (222). In Archilde's description of Catharine, McNickle makes forceful reference to her stature in the community: "He was continually surprised by evidence of the regard in which his mother was held. She was important to these people" (266). In this sense, Catharine mourns a loss that extends beyond the loss of her son to communal and historical losses.

Good-hearted Elise

It is noteworthy that some critics responded to Elise's character rather negatively. Interestingly, Elise gets the lion's share of the blame for Archilde's predicament. For instance, Louis Owens laments that "Archilde has been dragged helplessly into the mountains by Elise, a mixedblood who prefers white dances, drinking, and sex (with sensible fears of 'syph') to the ceremonies of her Indian relations, and that once in the mountains he makes

no choice at all but simply falls prey to circumstances manipulated by the impulsive Elise" (73). Despite Elise's "strength and heroism" (91), as Charles Larson argues, "Her desires for revenge create the final trap that ensnares" Archilde and herself (92). James Ruppert describes Elsie as a "desperate young Indian and product of a boarding school" (75). Rather than viewing Elise as a "desperate," "impulsive" woman and assigning culpability to her, I suggest that her characterization serve as a response to the law and cultural alienation that she and the community encounter daily in the reservation and boarding school. Initially a bit wary of Elise, a runaway from an Indian school in Oregon, Archilde soon becomes aware of her "good nature" and vivacious personality (250). Later, Archilde admits to "how he had tried not to be seen with her, how he had fixed her in his mind as a person of no great sense—and he was ashamed" (254). Whereas Father Jerome wants Archilde to inform the law officers of the hunting trip incident, Elise, who can "always smell danger," warns Archilde against going to the Indian agent Mr Parker again (267). Earlier on Archilde was being held in custody in connection with the game warden's initial murder inquiry. Mr Parker views locking up Archilde every night at the agency "as a matter of convenience" (149). During his one-month detention at the agency, Archilde articulates the difficulties of making sense of his identity and thinks that he may "wind up like every other reservation boy—in prison, or hiding in the mountains" (150). Even after his release from the agency, Archilde is "left quaking" after an encounter with the sheriff: "He must catch a train that night! He must sneak away! They would telegraph and have him taken off the train! Then hide in the mountains! Like Louis—like an Indian!" (220). What I find compelling about Archilde's fears is that they point to the broader issues of the dynamics of violence in confrontation with the law's agent.

As a community under panoptic surveillance, the reservation is patrolled by a law enforcement body that regulates the actions and behaviour of its inhabitants. In short, the inhabitants' perception of their lives on the reservation is filtered through their sense of being scrutinized and judged. Aware of the double bind in which they found themselves, Elise cautions Archilde, "if you go and tell this story they'll go their goddamnedest—you see—to stick you for it" (288). Despite Elise's protest, Archilde is bent on telling Mr Parker "what had really taken place in the mountains" and putting "himself beyond the reproach of the priest" (267). Although Mr Parker assures Archilde that "a simple hearing" should "clear" him, the agent adds, "the law can make these affairs complicated and—disagreeable" (270). Archilde's seeming naïveté stands in stark contrast to

Elise's knowing skepticism about notions of freedom on the reservation. Elise knows all too well that the state mobilizes power and violence to American Indians and thus alerts Archilde to the untenability of turning himself over to Mr Parker. Under the circumstances, McNickle's depiction of Elise takes on added significance. Although both Catharine and Elise resist the law, the force of the narrative seems to draw out the women's differences to highlight the ways in which Elise's resistance begins with her refusal to allow the Indian school to "correct" her behaviour and submit to the "training" of her body (*Discipline and Punish* 172). Rather than wait for and contemplate her surrender to the intrusive power of the law, Elise revolts against the law and refuses to perform the submissive role that is expected of her. After Sheriff Quigley is shot, Elise finally tells Archilde: "'I said to myself that if Dave Quigley came for you I wouldn't let him take you'" (295). The narrative asserts from the outset that Elise has "no impulse for heroic action" and has decided to shoot the sheriff only because she resists passive acquiescence to his order and, by extension, the judicial policy of the state, which depends on the separation through imprisonment of Salish peoples from their community (267). By refusing to mask the violence against the sheriff's body, the novel shocks its readers out of their expectations of gender identity, and McNickle implicates his readers by involving them in a scene in which power is contested. The novel crucially presses for continuity in struggle for justice and refuses to slide into a tale articulating how Archilde and Elise escape from the law. Resisting authority at the moment in which the event takes place, the novel demonstrates, is risky on many fronts. Transgressions come with a price, as when the law enforcement agents take Archilde and Elise away at the end.

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Women's Resistance

What I would want to assert is that both Catherine and Elise's actions need to be understood as events that occur on a continuum of legitimate violence, bringing out into the open the larger questions of the state's role in the constitution and imposition of coercive order. Nor should these women's actions be misconstrued as irrational, uncivilized feminine behaviour: on the contrary, it is precisely the excessive, legitimated, masculinist violence of the state apparatus which informs their interventions. In this respect, both Catharine and Elise's acts of murder might be read as a displacement of law and what Michel Foucault refers to as "governmentality" and "the double consequence of projection and reciprocation"

(103). In "Governmentality," Foucault writes that government is a matter of "employing tactics rather than laws, and even of using laws themselves as tactics—to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved" (95). Foucault further posits in *Discipline and Punish* that the police apparatus has "a faceless gaze that transformed the whole social body into a field of perception" (214). "With the police," Foucault argues, "one is in the indefinite world of a supervision that seeks ideally to reach the most elementary particle, the most passing phenomenon of the social body" (213–14). Foucault's idea of the police allows us to understand how they infiltrate into the Salish community, how the government installs violence in its disciplinary practices, and how the community suffers from the imposition of technologies of disciplinary power. Paula Gunn Allen points out that the "colonizers' revisions of our lives, values, and histories have devastated us at the most critical level of all—that of our own minds, our sense of who we are" (193). From this vantage point, Catharine's and Elise's agency emanates from everyday disempowerment, pressures, racialization, and tension. One critique of the law in relation to First Nations women that is of relevance to my study of McNickle's novel is Patricia A. Monture-Okanee's "The Roles and Responsibilities of Aboriginal Women: Reclaiming Justice." For Monture-Okanee, the justice system and its "relationship to Aboriginal People must be understood to be a relationship of violence" (260). "The criminal justice system," she continues, "the police and other authorities by their omissions, have perpetuated and perhaps even encouraged the violence that First Nations, and particularly First Nations women, have endured" (260). McNickle's text thus compels a critical response, one geared toward reflecting upon material realities of past and continuing injustice.

Conclusion

What is at stake in the formation of Indian subjectivities born out of violence? Crucial to the narrative is the idea that female intervention is a violence of loss as well as a possible site of agency. This attention to the enactment of violence as a corollary of pain and mourning that stems from fractured communal bonds and grief rather than pathology or merely emotion renders it a productive investigative category. The title of the novel certainly reflects my wish to draw the connection between the idea of entrapment and the panoptic, so that *The Surrounded* signifies an incarcerating institution, a locus cordoned off by what Foucault calls "a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify

and to punish" (*Discipline and Punish* 184). I suggest that *The Surrounded* displays, rather than resolves, how tactics of law enforcement regulate and structure the topography of the mountains and, by extension, the Salish community. Both Catharine and Elise's reactions to the law enforcement officers make explicit the ways in which the living conditions, freedom, and land of the Salish peoples have been disciplined and managed by the nation-state through the apparatus of laws, through dispossession, and through the disabling of communal relations. The women's actions represent the displacement of institutionalized control and regulation of the Indian people who are accorded the similar right of humanity. I argue that female confrontation with the law enforcement officers is not predicated on the feminine but, rather, on an ongoing process of social survival and revisioning, as well as a refraction of the state's disciplinary power and legitimated violence. The textual investment in the violence committed by women who refuse to submit to a regime of discipline cannot be underestimated. Rather than offering an easy resolution to communal pain and dispossession of land, *The Surrounded* makes it impossible to recite disciplinary effects upon the Salish inhabitants in the mountains as containable events.

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