

'Writing the body': The hypertext of photography

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Abstract

In Canada and the United States the transformative value of a photograph was quickly recognized for nation building, and this new invention soon served a purpose in public memory. Its uses expanded from surveying lands to promoting population growth, tourism, artistic expression and to imagining virtual communities. Photography's narrative, however, offers readers a commentary on knowledge, identity and memory within an interactive space that is a dialogue between subject and photographer and a visual 'writing the body'. A subject's presence and intentionality through this 'writing the body' is a significant locus for knowledge and alterity - the construction of cultural otherness. Indigenous people viewing early photographs of family members may glimpse past a genre's rhetoric and actually experience their people in a lived historical moment. This essay examines the genre rhetoric of E.S. Curtis's photographs and Indigenous 'writing the body' as a source of mnemonic knowledge. Photography addresses our senses and extends them while it gives form to a knowledge of being in a photographic hypertext that evokes public memory and references the personal, social and political.

Keywords

visual ethnography
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Native American
post-memory

The purpose of the [wampum] belt . . . is as a mnemonic device for remembering important ideas, so that when the reader of the belt holds it in his hands, the idea literally comes from the belt. These two parallel lines signify this to us: on the one hand, we are travelling in our canoe, down the river of life, and travelling in a parallel line in their boat are those Europeans or Euro-Americans who are here on our land, Turtle Island. We are travelling along and we have an agreement with one another. I am not going to get out of my canoe and get into your boat and try to steer it, and I am going to ask you not to get out of your boat and get into my canoe and try to steer it. We are going to allow one another to exist. We are going to accept the notion, that we are sovereign, that we have our own form of government and that you have yours. We have our own way of life, and that you have yours, and that we are not trying to convince you to be us; we are trying to convince you that because of our long history here, we have a knowledge of this place where we live. And so, we use this two row wampum belt even now, as the basis for all of the other treaties that we made after this time.

(Jemison 1995: 10) [G. Peter Jemison, the Chairman of the Haudenosaunee Standing Committee on the Burial Rules and Regulations]

Implicated in the positivist approaches to sciences and social science research, photography has been an empirical recording tool that generated photographic ethnographies, ethnologies and popular culture. As a form of non-sequential writing, photography gives the reader semiotic links and emotional pathways to knowledge, identity and memory. Barthes and Foucault described the world of text and its power and status relations as similar to a computer hypertext; a galaxy of signifiers, reversible and with no beginning, are an ideal of textuality in a node within a network (Barthes 1974: 5–6; Foucault 1976: 23). Despite a colonialist frame in early photography's spectacles and its display of artefacts, a separate agency of the pictured subject is preserved within an interactive narrative of 'writing the body'. Mnemonic knowledge is produced through the semiotics of a hypertext that extends the subject's agency beyond the genre's rhetoric.

According to postmodern thinking, the past as 'referent' is bracketed and then effaced altogether (Jameson 1984: 64). In retrieving its traces fixed in the document time of the photograph, however, a power is displayed in repetitions and resistances in the present. A photograph of a person or of people is an interchange in which the person imaged is always a presence. Collaborative works 'need to be appreciated as fruitful, contingent coalitions rather than performances of postcolonial virtue' (Clifford 2004: 22) – there is a learning process in the way that relations develop. Through resistance, one side of a double narrative produces a re-organization like a rhizomatic hypertext. The imaged and narrative presence of this 'other' text produces a dialectic tension.

A photograph is a complex construction with an animal origin (MacDougall 2006: 3). As a second hand or surrogate seeing, images of our bodies replicate the whole of the body's activities, its physicality, its shifting postures and its conflicting impulses. 'Writing the body' is a source of images referencing traditional Indigenous knowledge, skills, crafts and arts. Art historian James Elkins argues that pictured bodies are expressive in two largely opposite modes: (1) through physicality connoting in the beholder sensations and thoughts of pain and death and (2) through fantasy projection, transformations and metamorphosis (Elkins 1999).

Elkins describes a 'first seeing' as relaxed and languorous, and describes the way we look when there is a body to be seen: 'my eye rests in the eyes of the person I see, and it slides and caresses the person's skin as it moves from place to place' (Elkins 1999: 5). 'Second seeing' animates and directs everyday sight in a 'restless, nomadic way of looking' in search of a body (Elkins 1999: 6). When we look purposefully or when we think, this seeing process is complicated by our desires and heightened emotions. Photography addresses our senses and extends them while it gives form to a knowledge of being. A photographer articulates images of looking and being through a sensory knowledge located in the embodied experience of historical collectivities (MacDougall 2006: 6).

During the nineteenth century there were two kinds of photographs: (1) private images made for and paid for by the sitter or individual and (2) public images made speculatively and designed to be marketed and sold to consumers as stereographs, cabinet cards, exhibition prints and postcards – generally these images were marked with words scrawled across the image, with

titles printed along the mounts, brief narratives printed on the backs or appearing in captions or texts in a descriptive pamphlet. Through the words one particular reading of the photograph could be reinforced at the expense of others, thus erasing ambiguities and promoting a preferential reading.

The photograph marks the social context

Within the photographic encounter and collecting practices the West privileged its desire, ambition, obsession and pathology. The storytellers behind the camera were not Indigenous and neither were the early collectors of these images. The vast photographic collection at the multi-site National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) was created by George Gustav Heye to appropriate the objects by, and representing, the Indians of America. As the largest and most comprehensive collection of its kind with masterworks and everyday objects from pre-Columbian and historical eras, Heye's vision defined the collection and organization of the 90,000 images of men, women and children participating in celebrations, ceremonies, historical events and everyday life.

Unlike the artifacts that represent material products created directly by Native hands, these photographs are at once more intimate and potentially less personal. They record the lives of Native people, yet the moments depicted may be subtly distorted or filtered by the perspectives and views of the photographers whose intentions and ideologies may be more ambiguous and difficult to determine.

(Martinez 1998: 30)

Collector General Nelson A. Miles, a famous Indian fighter, donated more than 200 photographs made between 1869 and 1892 that depicted Indian leaders, portraits and scenes. The collection featured the convulsive violence between Indians and whites in which the Indigenous people lose their struggle for political power and control of their lands. By the 1880s, many Indians were confined to reservations and dependent on the government. 'Portraits of great men give way to photographs of warriors on prison trains and horsemen reduced to digging ditches. In many of these images, the Native American is still the unfathomable or fearsome other, the alien who in some abstract sense justifies his own depression' (Martinez with Wyaco 1998: 81). The treaty signings in the nineteenth century required that Indian chiefs sign X with their hands as a consent to the political process that created reserves. These complex structures that brought people into imperialist systems still reproduce their power relations despite independence(s). A new dimension to Indigenous stereotyping emerged when Indians became collaborators in strange and staged poses in combinations of vanishing noble savages, 'before' and 'after' portraits and as official delegations in tribal dress with top hatted colonial officials (Hill 1998: 141). Army photographs, treaty signings, postcard images show cultural differences either positively or negatively constructed.

The photograph as writerly text

My hands in white cotton gloves flipped through one-of-a-kind late nineteenth century collector albums around a big table in the Yellowknife

Archive in the Northwest Territories of Canada. I am not alone. Suddenly a baby picture from the forties brings forth a cascade of laughter as two Inuit women, an aunt and her niece, discover their early family life in government commissioned photographs. It is an encounter where the past and the present coexist: 'one is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass' (Deleuze 1988: 59). The aunt then orders prints for her personal collection – a standard practice in this archive. Photography's intertextual narrative is thus conjoined in disjunctures of time and space from one generation to another in a retrieval of past lived relations.

Comparable as a revolutionary technology to the printing press and its effect on communication, early photographic representation created a writerly text with culturally specific meanings in the North American western frontier. As a text co-authored by two subjectivities, Indigenous subjectivity followed the Turtle Island principle: *I am not going to get out of my canoe and get into your boat and try to steer it, and I am going to ask you not to get out of your boat and get into my canoe and try to steer it* (Jemison 1995). Like the wampum belt's two parallel histories, the interactive narrative of the photograph documents an interlocutory address where an account of the self is enabling and instantiates the existence of an 'I' and its referent (Butler 2005: 32). The construction of a symbolic 'I', however, depends on the existence of a conceptual 'you'. This early photography depicts this relationship through whole lived body interactions between the photographer and North American Indigenous subject and is a significant locus for Western knowledge and the construction and exchange of Indigenous alterity – cultural otherness (Fabian 1983).

A 'writing the body' process has been theorized by French feminists Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous where a resistance takes place in the form of *jouissance* and re-experiencing the physical pleasures of infancy and sexuality. Kristeva's psychoanalytic concept of bodily drives (Kristeva 1980: 136) enjoins in intersubjective communication within a social system that it supports and encompasses – where symbolic coherence occurs in a dialogical relationship between a semiotic and symbolic order. *Jouissance* (Irigaray 1977) and *écriture féminine* (Cixous 1975) are paradigmatic within "the operating consciousness of signification" (Kristeva 1980: 131) by which language defines *différence* and exposes phallogocentric controls. A male-female dialogue of asymmetrical forms of recognition exists in a socio-sexual interaction and influences women's 'willingness' to perform a strategic female withdrawal from public space into the familial sphere (Mann 1994: 62–89). (Please note: The photographic examples to be examined in this article feature only male subjects, as the author did not want to complicate the present argument by introducing a socio-sexual reading in a context where western patriarchal standards were not universal.)

If we were to apply the dramaturgical model of Erving Goffman (1959), a symbolic interactionist, to our examination of photography, we would discover a performance relationship between the photographer and the subject, in which interaction is shaped by body movements and idioms constituted by the subject and the photographer with camera and tripod.

The portrait sitter matches the competence of the photographer's performance in camera operations by his expression.

A photograph as a text may have very different social uses for the photographer and human subject. Meanings are both temporal and embodied within practices that organize consciousness culturally and socially; photographer and subject are positioned differently in these relations and produce alternative sites of power. A photographic image produced within the conventions of nineteenth century colonial rhetoric may address and *speak* very differently to a contemporary Indigenous reader. As with language, the 'orientational' features of visual conventions are relative to the time and place of utterance (Lyons 1963). Though postmodernity no longer recognizes a subject in stable or abiding terms (Butler 1990: 1; Jameson 1984: 64), the differing social uses of the photograph by the photographer and the human subject draw on a materialist semiotics that organizes consciousnesses culturally and socially in a hypertext-like relation. 'Oriental' features become sites of performativity and consciousness-raising. New unimagined uses of the photograph create ruptures and breaks in the original logic of accountability.

Framing with a camera produces different modes of seeing. A responsive camera observes and interprets without provoking. An interactive camera records its interchanges, and a constructive camera interprets its subject by breaking it down and reassembling it according to an external logic (MacDougall 2006: 4). Framing has two intertwined impulses – to frame and to define what is beyond the frame. To ask what is outside the frame displaces the intention of the field of representation. A glance originating from the embodied location is a creative envisioning and source of recognition.

Alterity as resistance

Despite photography's emergence as a global commodity exchange, the early photographs of North American Indigenous peoples uphold a difference and alterity essential to Indigenous agency and sovereignty. To look, argues Emmanuel Levinas, brings the other into a personal ownership and relation within knowledge and perception (Levinas 1985: 85). In the face-to-face relation, the face is the site where the other exposes their otherness without being stripped of alterity and made into an object to be comprehended (Fagan 2008: 9–10). A traditional core of Iroquois leaders has maintained its own national structures and identities which exist as a presence in photographs. Family photograph archives document the processes of cultural transformation from a deeply personal perspective. Certain interactions with colonial photographs within a cultural immunity system (Jerne 1985) tell people who they are and who they most certainly are not (Figure 1).

E. S. Curtis's photogravure of Chief Joseph continues to advocate the cause of his people through his portrait's gaze which projects forward in time – his moral leadership a framework for descendants. The body is thus a performative site of personal or public memory. When we examine the bodily traces in the photograph, we may ask what these representations and resistances mean. If identity is an enacted fantasy or incorporation, it



Figure 1: 'Joseph-Nez Perce'. Hienmot Tooyalakekt (1841–1904), commonly known as Chief Joseph, was a leader of the Wallamotkin band of Nez Perce. Copyrighted 1903. <http://memory.loc.gov/master/pnp/cph/3a00000/3a03000/3a03700/3a03795u.tif>. Reproduction number: LC-USZ61-2088.

needs coherence (Butler 1990: 136). Judith Butler extends the concept of performativity beyond speech acts to include dress and comportment:

words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this onto the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle

of identity as a cause . . . the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.

(Butler 1990: 136)

Colonial culture has a theatrical element; dress, housing, comportment and a staging of events performed – in Butler’s sense. Transitory and experimental colonial culture meant that there was no centre. A performative marking of a hierarchy of status and role provided colonial culture with a local regularity and predictability (Gosden and Knowles 2001: 14). Material culture is central to the performance and the appearances of colonialism. Formalized clothing and comportment made a reality of the ambiguities of what was negotiated in roles and relations. Physical stances and stylized stagings were displays of power. A New Guinea government handbook from 1936 describes the distinctions:

The standard attire for white men is the white duck coat and trousers, with shirt of white or cream silk . . . the white solar topee is the customary head-gear . . . evening wear for men comprises black dress trousers, white starched dress shirt, cummerbund and short white mess jacket . . . fashions may be varied in the bush, or where it is not possible to conform to the convention of an entire change of clothes at least daily.

(quoted in *Gosden and Knowles* 2001: 51–52)

Social relations binding colonial societies together existed as performances that enacted their fiction without bringing it to explicit consciousness (Gosden and Knowles 2001: 15).

Most of the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian was created before 1950 in an era of global colonization, which both denied Indigenous people’s control over their lives, and the institutions recording and collecting their images. Photographs of North American Indigenous peoples register the problematic intercultural relations between them and the settlers. A single photograph may exist outside its temporal narrative, but its cultural specificity is a calibration of events. The authority of the photograph asks us to consider whether it is a view by an anthropologist, tourist, artist, government official or amateur.

From the Native American perspective, the American expansion narrative is tragically written by the Wounded Knee Massacre of 29 December 1890 which expressed a despair over any hopes for a self-determined future (Johnson 1998: 14). An intertribal spiritual movement known as the Ghost Dance, led by Wovoka, a young Paiute with visions of a reunion with ancestors and an Indian promised land, divided Indians into two factions: the ‘friendlies’ that feared resistance and the ‘hostiles’ committed to the Ghost Dance who fled to a corner of the Pine Ridge Reservation (Fleming and Luskey 1986: 48).

At the request of the friendly Indians, Big Foot and his band of Miniconjou Sioux arrived in an attempt to make peace. Unfortunately General Miles presumed they were heading for the hostile encampment and tried to intercept

them . . . On December 29, the Cavalry was joined by Colonel Forsyth's forces. The 340 Indians were surrounded by over 500 soldiers and four Hotchkiss cannons. Emotions ran high, and when an attempt was made to disarm the Indians, shots were fired. Within a short time, two-thirds of Big Foot's band had been killed or wounded.

(Fleming and Luskey 1986: 48)

General Miles refused to defend the massacre and described it as a "deplorable tragedy" (Miles 1911: 243). Though no photographs exist of the massacre, George E. Tager was the first photographer to record the terrible aftermath which he distributed widely through his company, the Northwestern Photographic Company.

Taken-for-granted acts of daily life, what Marcel Mauss called *actes traditionnels efficaces* (Mauss 1936: 9) are how people produce effect on the world physically to become members of society. Habitual actions are socially learned but unconsciously deployed and reflect unconscious forms of socialization. Often sequential, such acts form chains of bodily actions (*enchainment organiques*) (Gosden and Knowles 2001: 18) and through repetition affect the physical world and give members a sense of community. Mauss made a link between the body and body politic where the routines of daily life committed people to a communal life as a whole. Technology and techniques are part of a total social reality in a circular relation to people's lives – deriving from and illuminating them.

Photographic production produces fictive constructions as it gives definition to various regimes of power within the lived, shared and separate domains of its participants. A genealogy that investigates the political stakes in designating an 'origin' and 'cause' exposes the effects of institutions, practices and discourses with their multiple and diffuse points of origin (Butler 1990: xi, 2005). The making of a photograph embeds in its document time the social organization of its production which cannot be fully known by the viewer. However, the subject represented in the photograph always has a physical relationship to the camera which is one reality, split into what is the camera's mechanical and material reality, and then the reality of what is being filmed.

The photograph as message carrier

For the reader, the photograph of a person becomes an encounter with an 'other' with sites of recognition or forgetting involving both active and passive components of agency and identity (Devereaux 1995: 67). Photography dislocates time and space by making details available to the 'optical unconscious' undermining the linear structure of narrative (Barthes 1972: 7). Barthes uses the example of the fraction of a second when a person starts to walk. It eludes description but is revealed through the camera lens and photo enlargements. The punctum, as the potentially threatening and hallucinatory detail in the photograph, unleashes a personal torrent of memories, emotions and desires. A placement of a dead child's mitten in the photograph would have poignancy for a bereaving mother and would produce an intense punctum. Punctum is a portal to a deeper level experience which is re-entered and relived vividly; it fuses

memories and desires in a personal and imagined space. The 'second look' or glance of the photograph may be an unconscious return to that experience of attraction/repulsion and its hallucinogenic reality. Nature engages the camera and human eye differently. Hence, the camera's space and frame has created a new and optical unconscious.

As a lucrative commerce for early practitioners a genre of Romantic Indian views became collectible souvenirs that stabilized relations that only a few years earlier were hostile. Native American leaders Red Cloud, Sitting Bull and Geronimo appropriated the photographic stage for their own purposes using it as message carriers for peace (Figure 2).

Curtis's 'Portrait of Geronimo' (1905) was taken when Geronimo was on a government-enforced tour with President Roosevelt after officially being a prisoner at Fort Sill, Oklahoma for more than 20 years. Curtis renders Geronimo in a blanket and ceremonial headdress which disguises Geronimo's contemporary clothing and obliterates the political situation by which the photograph was constructed. Geronimo posed and dressed the part of 'historical old Apache' which Curtis needed for his first volume of 'The Native American Indian' portfolio: 'Wrapped in a blanket, his wrinkles accentuated and facial details softened, Geronimo seems a relic of the past, a poster boy for the vanishing race' (Sandweiss 2001: 31). But like Sitting Bull, Geronimo only a year before at the Saint Louis Fair sold his photographs for 25 cents, keeping ten cents for himself and anywhere from ten to twenty-five cents for selling his autograph. Geronimo boasted, 'I often made as much as two dollars a day, and when I returned I had plenty of money – more than I had ever owned before' (Barrett 1906: 197).

As one of Curtis's most political representations, the photograph is a prime example of how a non-European subject is represented in ways that are appropriate to the colonizer. Geronimo's portrait denies the political complexity of the Indigenous experience and completely ignores the struggle that is really lived by his subject in the moment of picture-making. Geronimo, the Apache leader of the last American Indian force to surrender to the United States in 1886, died a prisoner of war, unable to return to his homeland and only 4 years after riding in Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade. In this paradoxical moment of photography Geronimo, himself, graciously performs 'Glory Days'. But why would this legendary living figure want to be remembered otherwise? The pain of being a prisoner of war is anaesthetized by a ceremonial headdress that reinforces Geronimo's authority as a fearless guerrilla. A year later Geronimo – still in military custody – published his own 'as-told-to' autobiography which blasted the military establishment. He was specifically critical of the photographs that illustrated his life dressed as in 'days of old' and 'ready for church', by implication invalidating Curtis's typecasting of him.

As documents of lived encounters early photography joins narratives of public memory to a non-indifference to its transitive aspects (Simon 2006). Roland Barthes in his introduction to the "Structural Analysis of Narrative" identified two orders of narrative: those with a 'functionality of doing' and those with 'a functionality of being' (Barthes 1977: 92–93) based on axes of a horizontal time progression and a vertical dimension of cultural specificity. A non-indifference to its transitive aspects (Simon



Figure 2: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/74/Edward S. Curtis Geronimo Apache cp01002v.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/74/Edward_S._Curtis_Geronimo_Apache_cp01002v.jpg). Geronimo – Apache (1905) Description by Edward S. Curtis: This portrait of the historical old Apache was made in March, 1905. According to Geronimo's calculation, he was at the time, 76 years of age, thus making the year of his birth 1829. The picture was taken at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the day before the inauguration of President Roosevelt, Geronimo being one of the warriors who took part in the inaugural parade at Washington. He appreciated the honour of being one of those chosen for this occasion, and the catching of his features while the old warrior was in a retrospective mood was most fortunate. Northwestern University Library, Edward S. Curtis's 'The North American Indian': the Photographic Images, 2001. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/curthome.html>. Source: <http://memory.loc.gov/award/iencurt/cp01/cp01002v.jpg>.

2006: 186) is marked in time, place and presence within historical relations. The encounter between photographer and subject constructs a myth (Barthes 1972) that normalizes the physical world – gestures, facial expressions, clothing and visual embodiments of ideologies. These myths constitute memorial spaces where a Derridean ‘learning to live with ghosts’ (Derrida 1994) extends community, embodiment and relationship to reconfigure them into a ‘politics of relationality’ (Simon 2006: 187).

Photographers invest specific histories and signifying practices in the images they create that serve to recall the past. Within the National Museum of the American Indian in the United States thousands of images communicate an American history through a saga of conversion and transition. At a period of the most acute and destructive impact of colonialism, the early archives of photographs of Indigenous peoples are a storehouse of message carriers. The contemporary Native American Art movement uses the term ‘message carriers’ (Harlan 1993) for practitioners using film as a medium to carry messages to their own cultures and to non-Indian and pan-Indian communities (Jensen 1993: 1). The original embodied subjects fixed in the photograph’s documentary time are given a presence in the present of a past by a technology that enforced an engagement with an original actuality.

Photographs create new signifying practices and articulations of space that are not only physical and culturally specified, but also relate to the moral or ethical spaces between persons and may constitute a violation of it (Devereaux 1995: 71). Marianne Hirsch in her study of family photographs came up with the concept of post-memory, a generational difference from history by deep personal connection (Hirsch 1997: 22). As visual evidence from past generations, personal connections can be made on many levels that include knowledge of persons, geography, place or culture. The photographic aesthetics of post-memory is ‘a capacity to signal absence and loss and, at the same time to make present, rebuild, reconnect and bring back to life’ (Hirsch 1997: 243). A politics of relationality not only implicates us in a past we did not live, but impacts us with a reckoning with the possibilities of our future and with what it means to live relationally with the living, the dead and the unborn.

Contemporary photographic exhibitions are agents of public history discourse where photographs open to different judgements. Within a documentary essay or museum exhibit the photograph is a reiteration of what’s out there, what is real, and what is imagined. Curators, as cultural brokers, use the museum or gallery as a performance stage and contested terrain of local and global politics (Karp and Lavine 1991; Cronin 2000: 3) where the past as the past reverberates with a depth in the present. Contemporary cultural theorists now examine both the mediation of meaning in the photographic text, the contexts of production and public presentation (Hudson and Thomas 2001). Significantly, American Indigenous peoples now have access to these documents at the National Museum of the American Indian. Visual media can transcend boundaries of time, space and even language effectively to mediate social ruptures that link past and present.

Indigenous producers, curators and educators engage in powerful processes that address the living relationships between oral histories and cultures (Figure 3).



Figure 3: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?ils:23:/temp/~pp_r9vG.
TITLE: *Horse Capture – Atsina*. CALL NUMBER: LOT 12322-A [item] [P&P].

George P. Horse Capture describes a personal revelation and the new meaning in his life with his first experience of a Curtis reproduction of his ancestor:

After passing through many corridors and doors, we came to a large file in a remote section of the archives. Opening a drawer, the priest carefully removed an immense sepia toned photographic print. He held it out to me, saying, “This must be your relative.” And there, in that hidden place, for the first time, I saw Horse Capture, my great grandfather. The world stopped for several moments as I peered at my direct blood ancestor. He was handsome and strong. His

classic tribal hairstyle, clothing, and proud bearing marked him as a leader of the A'ani. He was free from restricting complexes, his moccasins were firmly planted on the earth. This was the moment when my great grandfather and I met for the first time, across the ages. Scanning the treasured photogravure, I saw in the left corner, next to my great grandfather's English and Indian names, the word *Atsina*, a derogatory and incorrect term used to designate our tribe. In the center, smaller printing spelled out the name of the photographer: E.S. Curtis. So, at the very time I met my great grandfather, I also met Edward S. Curtis, and they both have been with me ever since.

(Horse Capture 2003)

In the interval between a negative appraisal of classical ethnography and a deconstruction, a contradiction emerges. The photograph's hypertext exists in the resistance to one form of knowing wherein the reader enters an interactive space of alternative knowledge, identity and memory. Body idioms negotiate public and personal space in a counter-iteration of nation-building within cultural linkages of mnemonic knowledge.

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