

Are Colonial Systems in Canada and Australia Similar? A Study on Kenneth T. Williams' *In Care* and Dallas Winmar's *Aliwa!*

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Abstract—So different, yet so alike, Canada and Australia, the land of wilderness and the land of bushes respectively, are two nations that go back thousands of years with their culture, practices, traditions, and the natives' deep and sacred relationship with the land. The arrival of the Europeans disrupted the peace and the pattern of their lives, resulting in loss of indigenous lands, languages, cultures, and misplaced identity. Kenneth T. Williams, in his play *In Care*, draws attention to the flaws and loopholes in the system that trap natives like spider-webs. The second play taken up for study is *Aliwa!* by Dallas Winmar, an Australian play that recounts the journey of a mother, who strives hard to escape the clutches of the system trying to break her and her children up. While much research has been done on the sufferings and trauma of the native people, what really transpires on the other side is mostly kept in the dark. This paper examines how the colonial systems in Canada and Australia mirror each other in multiple aspects. It also draws attention to the systems established in colonial Canada and Australia, which aimed at obliterating any and all vestiges of Aboriginality, under the pretext of 'civilizing' the uncivilized. The paper utilises a play from each nation to validate the central objective of the paper, with a particular emphasis on the act of taking Aboriginal children away from their parents, a strategy used by the colonizers in both nations.

Index Terms—welfare, corrupt system, scoop of the sixties, stolen generations, aboriginality

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonialism is a global concept, which generally refers to the suppression of one nation by the other and the latter's taking control in terms of political, cultural, social and economic aspects. This concept of one nation taking full or partial control over another has shaken several countries such as North America, Australia, New Zealand, Asian and African countries and so on to the core. Among all these countries, this paper focuses on the consequences and everlasting impact of colonisation in Canada and Australia.

The arrival of the European settlers in 15th century Canada had been viewed upon by the indigenous people as a friendly visit. But the settlers had other things in mind when they started laying strong foundations in the native lands to build their empire. However, that was merely the beginning, because the natives were subjected to various traumatic events such as theft of land, forced removals of the native children, forced assimilation into European culture, and exhaustion of natural resources. Sherene H. Razack, in his book *Race, Space and Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*, comments on the White settler society as:

. . . structured by a racial hierarchy. In the national mythologies of such societies, it is believed that White people came first and that it is they who principally developed the land. European settlers thus become the original inhabitants and the group most entitled to the fruits of citizenship. A quintessential feature of White settler mythologies is therefore, the disavowal of conquest, genocide, slavery, and the exploitation of the labour of peoples of colour (Razack, 2002, p. 2).

The indigenous population was looked down upon as inferior, enabling the settlers to sign treaties and to pass laws that were mostly in favour of the settlers. Despite the colonizers' crude assumptions about the natives, the Aboriginals go thousands of years back in their culture, traditional practices, and worshipping their sacred land and their ancestors (Elders). The natives were mostly nomadic people with no proper legal claim to their lands, which eventually gave way to the colonizers claiming large parts of their lands and resources. Cole Harris, in his article *How did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire*, highlights the statement of an anonymous officer from the Department of Indian Affairs while addressing a group of First Nations people:

Many years ago, you were in darkness killing each other and making slaves was your trade. The Land was of no value to you. The trees were of no value to you. The Coal was of no value to you. The White man came, he improved the land, you can follow his example—He cuts the trees and pays you to help him. He takes the coal

out of the ground and he pays you to help him—you are improving fast. The Government protects you, you are rich—You live in peace and have everything you want (Harris, 2004, p. 170).

Some of the laws and acts that have been passed between the colonizers and the colonized include the Royal Proclamation Act (1763), Constitution Act (1822), Act of Union (1840), Indian Act (1876) and so on. Most of these Acts were in favour of the Europeans rather than the natives. For instance, the Indian Act, which was first introduced in 1876, aimed at eliminating the First Nations culture and bringing in the European culture. The Act passed through several amendments, most importantly between the years 1951 to 1985, which has been marked as one of the most difficult times for the natives, who lost their children to the Scoop of the Sixties. The Act had nothing to offer the natives except trauma, human rights violations, as also cultural, social, and economic disruption. The Act forbade the First Nations people from freely expressing their identity, from practicing their tradition through ceremonies such as Powwow, a celebratory gathering among the native communities, and from the Sun dance. In other words, the Indian Act made the indigenous people wards of the state, thereby giving the government a free hand to control the natives.

The Children's Aid Society (CAS) was first established in Toronto in 1891, followed by the Child Protection Act first passed in 1893. The CAS and the Acts pertaining to it were introduced for the sole purpose of rescuing children from poverty, destitution, and abuse. Between 1831 and 1996, a large number of indigenous children were forcibly removed from their birth families and placed in foster homes or sent to residential schools or put up for adoption. This experience resulted in the adoptees facing a loss of cultural identity, as well as physical and emotional separation from their parents and the community. The Social Service System, in Colonial Canada, has been considered a political project which, according to Sherene Razack in his book *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race, and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms*, determines “who can speak, and how they are likely to be heard, but also how we know what we know and the interest we protect through our knowing” (Razack, 1998, p. 10).

Similarly, Australia the continent of bushes, had once been a virgin land with abundant landscape and wilderness. It had also been home for nomadic natives, who had lived there since time immemorial. The first colonial hit came in the form of a fleet of ships captained by James Cook at Sydney Cove in 1788, and Australia thus became the last nation to be colonized by the British. The word “Aboriginal” is believed to have existed in the English language since the sixteenth century, was used in Australia to refer to the indigenous people, and soon capitalised to refer to all indigenous Australians. The once culturally, spiritually, and materialistically rich natives of these nations lost their homeland, language, culture, and identity. Some of the under-privileged people of these countries made it their mission to rewrite history, and to shed light on the abominable acts of the colonizers.

Although present-day Australia is a nation, which is home to people from countries all over the globe, it is imperative to understand that, amidst these multicultural people are the natives whose lives changed irrevocably. In the nineteenth century, Aboriginal people started learning to read and write, usually at schools run by authorities. Early Aboriginal writings were not published without the sanction of the White authorities; however, that does not seem to be the case for twentieth century writers. Literature offered several Aboriginal writers, such as Sally Morgan, Jane Harrison, and Leah Purcell, the space to break the “Aboriginal silence.” Elizabeth Webby in *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature* pointed out that, “. . . Most White Australians had been told little or nothing about Australia's Black history. Since the 1970s, through increased Aboriginal activism and the work of historians like Henry Reynolds, more and more has been revealed” (Ed. Webby, 2000, p. 17).

The colonial system or government took advantage of the naiveté of the indigenous people, and used them to sustain its own growth, rather than that of the Aboriginals. This point is further substantiated by making a thorough study of Canadian Kenneth T. Williams' *In Care*, a disconcerting play that not only speaks of a mother's trauma of losing her children to the state and her futile attempts to rescue them. The above argument is also proved by an Australian play, *Aliwa!* by Dallas Winmar, which traces the journey of a mother, and her determination to keep her children out of the system. This paper also draws attention to the flaws and loopholes of a system, which was originally established to “care” for and seek the “welfare” of the indigenous people.

Kenneth T. Williams is a Cree playwright from Saskatchewan and is presently working as a faculty member in the Department of Drama, University of Alberta, Canada. He is also among the very few writers to hold an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) degree from the University of Alberta. His works include *Suicide Notes* (2007), *Thunderstick* (2010), *Bannock Republic* (2011), *Gordon Winter* (2012), *Cafe Daughter* (2013), and *In Care* (2017). *In Care* is a disturbing play, which recounts the journey of a mother to reclaim her stolen children as well as the cruelty of the corrupt Social Service System, that, according to Yvette Nolan, is “inexorable, unrelenting, and intransigent” (*In Care*, p.19). The play consists of four characters. Janice Fisher is a First Nations mother and her children are “in care.” Bayley van Rijin is of Indian/Dutch origin; she is a social worker and a therapist in the play. Holland Trent is a First Nations woman, and is the executive director of Circle Fire Family Services. Angel Carrie is the Métis police officer, who shoots and kills Dakota, Janice's first child. Every character contributes to the cause of the play, which is to trace a mother's helpless fight against an extremely rigid system.

The playwright takes us through the traumatic events in the life of the protagonist, Janice Fisher, who loses her three girls to the authorities. During her efforts to bring back her three girls, she learns that her first child Dakota has been killed by a police officer. Janice's harrowing past as a prostitute at thirteen, a mother at fifteen, and a drug addict is also brought to light. However, she does manage to turn her life around and become a stable mother, only to have her girls

taken away by the authorities, based on a false allegation. The flaws and the corruption in the Social Services System offer them a space to manipulate Janice, who is given an illusion of hope throughout the play.

The second play taken up for research is *Aliwa!* written by Dallas Winmar, an Australian indigenous playwright. Her other plays include *Skin Deep*, *My Place*, and *Yibiyung*. The play recounts the inspirational tale of the three Aboriginal sisters, who narrate the struggle and determination of their mother to keep them together. The play covers varying themes such as a mother's love and determination, racial prejudice, togetherness, and the unfairness of the system. Although playful and tender, the play addresses some serious socio-political issues through the life of an Aboriginal mother, who is determined to hold onto her children, while the system is determined to keep them apart. Winmar's play is a celebration of the dogged tenacity of the mother, the matriarch Alice Davis, and her attempt to keep her family together against incredible odds. The play thus addresses the importance of togetherness and of a sense of belongingness, which have been seriously disrupted by the arrival of the colonizers.

Aliwa! tells the poignant story of the Davis family—half-caste Aborigines, who resist attempts by the Australian government to forcibly separate their children from their mother, and place them in settlements after their father is dead. The story is told in a series of flashbacks by the three sisters of the family, several years after the death of their mother. Judith, the youngest sister, has uncovered some files from the Department of Family and Children Services, and is pestering her older sisters, Dot and Ethel, for information about their family history. The older girls' reluctance to delve into their past is evident, for it contains a dark secret at its heart. Ethel, in particular, seems most determined to let sleeping dogs lie, but with a bit of gentle coercion, and the irresistible lure of a packet of Tim Tams, she agrees. The sisters then embark on a bittersweet journey into the past. In their journey into the past, they ponder upon the legacy left to them by their mother—an indomitable spirit that ultimately defied all attempts to break their family apart. This is indicative in Ethel's words to Judith at the end of the play, "We're still family, Jude, that's all she wanted" (Winmar, 2002, p. 85).

II. STUDY OF CHARACTERS REPRESENTING THE SYSTEM FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES

The three characters in *In Care*: Angel Carrie, Bayley van Rijn and Holland Trent, belong to native communities. They act as Indian agents, whose responsibilities include settling disputes between the government and the natives, re-enforcing provincial laws upon the indigenous communities that the government may have overlooked, and most importantly, maintaining financial records of the monies and goods owed by the government to the indigenous communities. These responsibilities put the Indian agents in a position of power, and provide a certain amount of control over the native communities. Likewise, Alice Davis in *Aliwa!* repetitively gets looked down upon because of her roots, and is constantly at loggerheads with the system, which poses a threat to her and her children's safety. Through these characters, the paper validates how the government, which has been established to protect the Aborigines, abuses its power to put the Aborigines at a disadvantage in various ways.

In Care begins with Angel reminiscing how he shot Dakota to death, and how her death haunts him even though his actions are seen as heroic by the inquest. Angel has had to shoot Dakota, while she was in an altercation with another girl, wherein she is repeatedly beaten up. Even though the inquest describes his actions as commendable, and justifies his killing by stating that "Dakota had to be 'put down' as if some kind of a dangerous animal" (*In Care*, p.29), Angel is aware of the cruel truth that Dakota had been born with cocaine in her system, which made her mentally unstable:

ANGEL - 1: I want a family. One day. Something like my folks had. House. Marriage. Kids. . . But Do we really get to choose these things? Dakota didn't choose to be born like she was. . . The papers had photos. . . She was really pretty. . . There was one picture where she was smiling. The only one where she looked like a happy girl in them. Her eyes shining. Full of life. Bright. But all of the others. Angry. At war.

JANICE: . . . I'm the one who got her hooked-on cocaine before she was even born. I'm the one who condemned her to the life she lived (*In Care*, 2017, pp. 31, 33).

Angel represents a select group of native people, who are chosen by the system, and are trained to follow the "plan"—the plan of taking complete or partial control over their actions. His simple desire to be a police officer is to help people, but it is indeed used by the system to manipulate him, in exchange for a certain amount of power: "I wanted to become a police officer because I wanted to help people. . . All part of the 'plan,' right?" (*In Care*, p.38). While some celebrate Angel for his actions, a few others call him a "murderer" to which he distressingly agrees:

I know I did what I was trained to do. . . But they have a point. Why didn't I shoot to wound? Tackle her? Use my baton? Why didn't I do anything else? Because there was nothing else, there were no other options, except what I was trained to do. . . It makes me feel like I want to visit her. I need to see her grave (*In Care*, 2017, p. 40).

These words denote the trauma that he experiences on account of taking the life of a little girl, who has no proper control over her mental health. This trauma turns to anger towards Holland Trent, who plays a major role in painting a bad picture about Dakota's death and Angel's actions. She ruthlessly calls Dakota's death a "state-sanctioned murder" (*In Care*, p.42) and Angel as "The Angel of Death" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 42). Angel snaps when Holland repeatedly provokes him with her careless talk about the little girl's death:

Imagine any nightmare with a child and I've seen it. Touched it. Abandoned. Neglected. The worst ones are when they don't react. When they are so far gone. When as infants they've already given up on this

world. . . There's nothing in their eyes. Dakota was screaming, she was alive, she was fighting something. The other little girl. She had nothing in her eyes (*In Care*, 2017, p. 45).

These incidents indicate how Angel himself is trapped by the system, which seeks to sustain itself at the expense of others' hopes. Despite the trauma and guilt eating him up, he refuses to lose hope, because he reaches out to Janice Fisher and offers words of support and advice, for he needs "to believe I'm making a difference. I need to know that I'm part of a system that cares" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 49).

The next character chosen for the study is Bayley van Rijn, a part-native woman, who is a social worker and a therapist at the Circle Fire Family Services. Bayley, like Angel, is part of the system, meant to create a difference and help people. She constantly empathises with Janice's loss of her children, and does not think twice about lending her emotional support. Whenever Janice admonishes herself for being a bad mother, Bayley consoles her, "You were a prostitute at thirteen. Dakota was born two years later. Dakota's father raped you when you were a child. He raped a child" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 34).

Her interest in Janice Fisher's case is genuine. She believes that the state has been unfair in taking away Janice's three girls, in spite of the fact that Janice has turned her life around and is living a stable life. She is flabbergasted by Holland's merciless actions and remorseless behaviour, because Holland wants the girls to be transferred to her agency only for the monetary funding provided by the government. However, it is quite clear throughout the play that Bayley is as helpless as Angel, because she works under Holland and has no say over Holland's callous decisions:

BAYLEY-3: . . . But I have trouble believing their complaint against her. They were having their own problems with the social services and were trying to deflect attention to someone else. Couldn't keep their stories straight. I've looked over her file. She's a good mother.

HOLLAND-3: Bayley. Perception is everything right now. We're being watched. Like hawks. And we need to treat Janice's file very carefully. People still remember the shooting (*In Care*, 2017, p. 36).

Bayley's efforts to reunite Janice with her girls are constantly thwarted by Holland, and she is helpless about her situation. Bayley truly believes the ways of the system, because she advises Janice to take up a job far-away in the mines and "stabilize" herself, in order to reconcile with the children. Bayley, like other natives, believes that a far-away job will bring the children back to the parent, but as mentioned earlier, the system manipulates the native parents to take up jobs in faraway places, thereby making them lose complete control over the children and their whereabouts.

There are two sides to Bayley, which are portrayed in the play—a native woman, with a certain amount of power, who empathises with Janice and does all that she can to reunite her with the girls; and a social worker, who is coerced to become an accomplice to Holland's brutal schemes, in order to make money out of the suffering of the native people. She is coerced, and her silence is bought in the name of a promotion and a hefty raise in pay, indicating that, given some time, Bayley may as well become another Holland Trent:

BAYLEY-4: A safe house? We barely have staff to keep up with the case files we have now.

HOLLAND-4: What if I made you Deputy Director?

BAYLEY-4: I can't. Just. Now?

HOLLAND-4: And a pay raise. A hefty one.

BAYLEY-4: I still want to keep some cases.

HOLLAND-4: Only a few.

BAYLEY-4: You let me choose whom, and you have a deal.

HOLLAND-4: Deal (*In Care* 2017, pp. 38-39).

Bayley's conscience strikes, when she realizes that Holland's true intentions are monetary benefits and not the welfare of the indigenous women, let alone reuniting children with their mothers. However, her displeasure towards Holland's devious schemes falls on deaf ears, and she probably feels as trapped by the system as Janice and Angel. Holland's brutal selfishness makes her finally realize that the system has nothing to offer to the helpless native women, except "an illusion of hope", which they hold onto, and that the system has played an integral role in building Canada into a colonial nation:

BAYLEY-9: There it is again. Can you hear it? Even when you talk like this, there's still "hope" in your voice.

The hope you want me to cling to, you want Janice to cling to, that something better is coming. . . That light isn't coming closer. It's an illusion. We focus on it to delude ourselves that it exists (*In Care*, 2017, p. 58).

Holland Trent is basically a wolf in sheep's clothing, because she represents the true intentions behind the Social Services System built by the government. Holland is a First Nations woman, who is given a powerful position in the government office. Hence, one would naturally expect her to relate to the trauma and pain of the indigenous women, and do everything in her power to help them. However, what really transpires is far from the truth, because she selfishly plays on the trust, naiveté, and vulnerable state of the indigenous women.

Holland's determination to transfer Janice Fisher's case to Circle Fire Family Services can be seen as her way of helping out Janice, but soon the misconceptions are removed by her brutal words, "Each of those kids has federal funding attached to them. Once the kids are in our care, that funding, every last dime, will go to us" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 30). Craig Fortier and Edward Hon-Sing Wong in their article 'The Settler Colonialism of Social Work and Social Work of Settler Colonialism' clearly classify the role of social work in the settler-colonial process into three duties, and point out what Holland exactly stands for:

(1) aiding in the dispossession and extraction of Indigenous peoples from their territories and communities; (2) supporting the (re)production of the settler state; and (3) acting as a buffer zone to contain and pacify Indigenous communities that are either engaged in direct confrontation with the settler state or are facing crises due to state and corporate practices of resource extraction and dispossession (Fortier & Wong, 2018, p. 442).

Holland's deception and greed is never-ending, as she continues making plans for programs that would bring money into her pockets, when the programs are actually meant to be for the betterment of the community. Holland's deceitful schemes to fill her pockets include a safe house for Aboriginal women and a state-of-the-art incarceration facility for Aboriginal offenders, giving an "illusion of hope" to Janice.

Her inconsiderate attitude towards the lives of the indigenous women and children is evident throughout the play with her comments such as: ". . . no one really cares if an Indian mother can't have her babies back" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 36); ". . . it's just another news item. Indian kid blah blah blah dies in care blah blah blah. It's only a matter of time before it happens again" (*In Care*, 2017, p. 45). However, she paints a completely different picture of herself, when she addresses a room full of cops about the anguish of Aboriginal women:

HOLLAND-5: Trauma. Pain. That's what you have to remember when you, inevitably, run into the clients of Circle Fire. . . Imagine. Being hit by a car. Every single day of your life. Psychologically, that's what my clients are dealing with. The brain will try to suppress the trauma. Hide it. Bury it. . . Just remember that these women, my clients at Circle Fire, are psychologically hit by a car. Every. Single. Day (*In Care*, 2017, p. 41).

Despite these emotional words, Holland's true face is constantly revealed in her actions. She doesn't think twice about using and manipulating Bayley to become her accomplice. She is the one who draws media attention to Angel for shooting Dakota, and turns a blind eye to Janice's cries for help to see her children. Bayley's plea to dismantle the system that separates children from their mothers is completely dismissed because, for Holland, the separation of children from their mothers is directly connected to the funding from the government, and that means more separated children give her more money. While Angel and Bayley are entrapped by the system that plays on their beliefs, Holland is a pure representation of the system itself.

It is essential to understand the true predicament of the "Half-Caste Aborigines" in colonial Australia for a better comprehension of the system. The offspring of White men, who had abused and exploited Aboriginal women, were considered "Half-Caste Aborigines". Most of the "Half-Caste" children were products of rape, one of the assimilation policies adopted by the colonizers. These children were often shunned by their White fathers as well as their Aboriginal mothers, and were viewed as a source of shame by the system.

The second play taken up for research, *Aliwa!* consists of a series of flashbacks, with the three Davis sisters looking back upon the journey of their mother Alice Davis, who against all odds, strives hard to keep the family together. Here, the play itself starts with the daughters uncovering some files from the Department of Family and Children Services, which has records of their family history. However, the truth of what really transpired is far from what is on the document. This highlights how the system has manipulated the records, and hidden the real truth of the injustices meted out to the native people.

The move of the Davis family to Yarloop, a timber-mill town, is met with stares and frowns from the town's residents, which make them feel like fish out of water. It all starts with the enrolling of the children into a new school in Yarloop, where the teacher refuses to admit Alice's children unless they have an approval from the Department of Education. The teacher does not sugar-coat her words while trying to put down Alice:

Teacher: Well, I'd have to get approval from... the Department of Education.

Mum: Don't the other mill workers' children come here?

Teacher: Well. Yes. There are no other native children at this school, Mrs. Davis. . . some people are not happy about having a native family here in the town, let alone taking up one of the jobs at the mill (*Aliwa!*, 2002, pp. 20-21).

Not only is the mother traumatized, the girls face equal discrimination at school where some White kids bully them using offensive phrases such as "Nigger, nigger, pull the trigger. . . you lousy nig" (*Aliwa!*, 2002, pp. 26-27). Underneath all this, the system works hard to institutionalize the Davis children and rip the family apart. The letter from Constable O'Brien states:

To the Chief Protector of Aborigines. . . There are a number of children, members of this Davis family, who could, with advantage, be removed to an institution. . . should be removed in the interest of other children in the district. These children attend the state school at Yarloop and I am sure that their presence is objectionable to some people.

Constable O'Brien, 1116/1931 (*Aliwa!*, 2002, p. 29).

The sudden demise of the girl's father shakes the foundation of the entire family, and life becomes a greater struggle. The family falls into severe financial hardship, and the system works even harder to have the family shattered, thereby posing an ever-present threat of breaking up the family. With their father no longer around, the family is more vulnerable to the vile ways of the system. It is imperative to note that Half-Caste Aborigines, like the Davises, had a difficult time finding their place in the community, as they were often shunned by the indigenous as well as the European communities, and lived with hurt and humiliation throughout their entire lives. Despite all the agony and trauma, the sense of belonging to a particular community, which is present in the lives of the indigenous people, is

absent among the Half-Caste Aborigines, as they are unable to accept and to be accepted in both worlds. The system, instead of lending their support to such lost souls, constantly targets them, and the same happens with the Davis family:

Re: Death of William Davis—Half-Caste Aborigine.

. . . half-caste William Davis met with his death yesterday. . . With regard to the family of the Deceased, who left a wife and ten children. . . it appears to me that something will now have to be done in connection with them. The children are in constant association with the White boys and girls of Yarloop and I do not think it is in the best interests of either the White children or the Davis children, that this association should be permitted to continue. I am of the opinion that they should be sent some place where they will be able to mix with persons of their own race.

A.O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines (*Aliwa!*, 2002, p. 38).

The irony in the above lines is clearly evident because, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, appointed by the government to protect and ensure welfare for the Aborigines, ends up abusing his power to ruthlessly destroy the Davis family. The correspondence between Alice Davis and the authorities, with her begging for resources to keep her family alive, and the excuses that the authorities give to reject Alice's requests, bring to light the hypocrisy of the "supposed protection" that the system has promised to the Natives.

Contrary to Alice's thoughts that they may have escaped the eyes of the system, since they have been on the move, the authorities constantly track the whereabouts of the family and look for ways to rip them apart. Nature works against them as well, when their temporary tent is blown away by a dust storm, pushing Alice to rent a house beyond her capabilities, in order to provide a home for her children. However, this does not escape the eyes of the authorities who, under the pretext of protecting the children, are determined to tear the family apart:

Dear Constable Hess,

I fail to see how the local Whites can object to the Davis family renting a house, after all they have not broken any law. But perhaps the trouble is over-crowding. Ten people in three small rooms does not sound too good. . .

With regard to the children still at home, their welfare is of some concern. . . If this is the case then the younger children would be better off at Carrolup Mission.

Yours sincerely,

A.O. Neville, Chief Protector (*Aliwa!*, 2002, pp. 79-80).

It takes a lot of courage on the part of Alice to challenge the system, and repeatedly escape the clutches of the authorities, by sending her baby Jude to be brought up by her married daughter, Ethel, in order to provide a safe and healthy living, even if it is away from her. Alice understands that the authorities' promises of providing a safe childhood for her children are false, and she strives on her own to provide a fairly happy and safe childhood for her children.

III. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Social Services, in colonial Canada and Australia, are considered to be a settler colonial project, which hid its true facade behind an outward appearance of charity. The aim of the colonizers was to give the state power over the lives of the native children, and partial or complete control over their parents. The main findings of this research paper are encapsulated through the four characters, from two plays chosen for this study—Angel and Bayley demonstrating how the system doesn't think twice about manipulating and trapping the people working for them, Holland symbolizing the system that feeds on the "illusion of hope" the indigenous women cling onto and seeks to make monetary gains by vile means, and finally Alice representing the fight of the indigenous people against the "pseudo-hopes" fed by the authorities and their efforts to save their children.

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