

SHARLOT HALL AND THE NATURALIZATION OF SETTLER COLONIALISM

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ABSTRACT

Kristin Sargeant: Sharlot Hall and the Naturalization of Settler Colonialism
(Under the direction of Fitz Brundage)

Sharlot Hall was an author, poet, historian, booster, ranch woman, presidential elector, clubwoman, and development advocate for the territory and subsequently state of Arizona at the turn of the twentieth century. As an influential public figure regionally and nationally, she helped to shape a collective understanding of Arizona's geography, past, and its future potential. Examined holistically, Hall's work is best understood within a settler colonial context. She described a backdrop of an empty, untamed wilderness, which she then peopled with peaceful, hardworking, law-abiding Anglo settlers to the region in her historical writing, preservation, and educational work. When combined with a carefully curated, timeless depiction of Native Americans and her fervent advocacy for Arizona's full and equal inclusion into the nation, Hall's narratives and actions lay the groundwork for the naturalization and justification of a settler colonialist project.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Sharlot Hall's Regional and National Importance.....	9
A Turnerian Landscape and the Founding Fathers of Arizona.....	18
Passing on Arizona's Heritage and Legacy.....	25
Sharlot Hall and The Other.....	38
Arizona's March Towards Modernity.....	45
Conclusion.....	52
Bibliography.....	55

In 1911, forty-one year old Sharlot Hall hired a guide and set out on an expedition to an under-studied, under-explored region of the Arizona territory: the northern strip above the Grand Canyon. The further from Prescott, Arizona she journeyed, the more perils she faced: rickety ferries across the raging Colorado River, poor (if any) roads, an unforgiving high desert environment, intense heat, poisonous snakes, and wild pigs. She conquered them all in proper Victorian attire. As a poet, her diary is full of colorful depictions of the untamed landscape. In her official capacity as territorial historian, she collected artifacts from mining relics to Navajo pottery shards while re-tracing the steps of the region's earliest Euro-American pioneers. Hall romantically fantasized about the tough Native American tribes that must once have lived there, then toured an Indian boarding school and talked condescendingly of impoverished Navajos and Apaches she met. She never connected her two trains of thought. Along the journey, she was particularly interested in the rich economic and agricultural potential of the land, proclaiming the area ripe for development and lamenting the territorial government's current disinterest. Indeed, she worried that Utah might annex this northernmost part of Arizona. She published a serialized account of her journey, creating an armchair adventure tale to encourage tourism, celebrating the pioneers, and highlighting a land rich in resources that should be developed. Upon her return, she toured women's clubs and schools with photographs of her journey while sharing her experiences. The northern strip did indeed remain under Arizona's control, and within a few decades had good roads and established mining and farming ventures.¹

Sharlot Hall was a protean figure in Arizona's evolving cultural and political landscape, acting as pioneer, poet, journalist, politician, historian, booster, ranch woman, presidential

¹ Sharlot Hall, *Sharlot Hall on the Arizona Strip: A Diary of a Journey through Northern Arizona in 1911*, ed. C Gregory Crampton (Prescott: Sharlot Hall Museum Press, 1999).

elector, and clubwoman over the course of her life. Born in Lincoln County, Kansas in 1870 to a poor backwoods family, she moved with her parents to the Arizona Territory in 1882. Despite a debilitating fall from her horse, which fractured a vertebra, she was determined to tough it out, ride on, and pull her own weight. This stubborn persistence would serve her well throughout her life as she forged connections with politicians, lawyers, miners, cattle ranchers, old-timers, clubwomen, and businessmen alike. Though she spent only a few years in school, she taught herself to read, write, and think at a high intellectual level and was publishing poems to help support her family well before reaching the age of eighteen. She was resolutely unique, embracing a Victorian style of dress and manners while also riding off into the desert alone to collect an artifact. She often wrote ambivalently about men and the oppressive regime backwoods men had over their households, yet most of her friends and companions were male. Hall had an ongoing love affair with American Indian culture, yet wrote disparagingly of early Apache encounters with settlers. She deeply loved the open, windswept, rugged Southwestern landscape, yet spoke fervently and frequently about the need for modern infrastructure and the importance of large-scale mining to the economy. Along with her enthusiastic, caring, yet slightly eccentric demeanor (she once wore a copper dress with prickly pear cactus hat to Washington DC), she was beloved by many and remembered by all.

How should we best understand such a complicated, seemingly contradictory figure? And why is she worthy of scholarly attention at all? Beyond her significant regional influence, she is an illuminating example of the political power and public influence Anglo western women had

over their communities and the diverse, interconnected ways they used it.² People's lives are intersectional; their gender, race, class, interests, priorities, relationships, and lived experiences all influence each other. Yet too often existing literature on western women's history examines women's public works categorically rather than holistically, undervaluing the potential explanatory power of an integrated approach. Western women's history originally began as a sub-discipline that combined the methodologies of new western revisionism and women's and gender studies in order to prove that women in the West were, according to Joan Jensen and Darlis Miller, more than sun-bonneted helpmates, prostitutes, Annie Oakleys, or gentle tamers.³ They had a multitude of experiences, and were not only present but active in shaping the contours of the American West.⁴ Perhaps as a result, there has been a plethora of literature on women in politics, charitable reform work, the Indian boarding school movement, even their

² "Western" is a fraught term in modern scholarship, namely whether the West should be considered as a process or a place, and if it is a place, its defining characteristics and limits. For the purposes of this thesis, the West shall be considered a discrete place characterized by a diverse population and a violent conquest-based history, and will specifically address the history of the Southwest, with Arizona as the prominent focus. The Southwest can be clearly defined by its lack of water and desert-like landscape, as well as a legacy of Native American, Spanish, Mexican, and American claims to the land (notably, Southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and parts of Utah, Colorado, and Nevada).

³ Joan Jensen and Darlis Miller, "The Gentle Tamers Revisited: New Approaches to the History of Women in the American West," in *Women and Gender in the American West: Jensen-Miller Prize Essays from the Coalition for Western Women's History*, Eds. Mary Ann Irwin and James Brooks (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

⁴ Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds, *The Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds, *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

literary activism.⁵ Because Sharlot Hall was involved in so many facets of public life during modern Arizona's formative years, she defies easy placement into the existing categories. As such, she is a particularly rich case study to attempt an interconnected study within a state not considered as thoroughly in western scholarship. Indeed, I would argue that it is impossible to understand the underlying logic behind much of Hall's divergent activities without putting them in conversation with one another. Only in a holistic examination do we see how Hall's work could be part of a wider phenomenon known as settler colonialism; she wrote an empty backdrop into which she peopled hard-working white settlers while ignoring Native American claims to the land and highlighting the rich economic potential of the territory.

Settler colonialism's ultimate goal is the acquisition of land. Settlers of both sexes come to reside permanently, and claim the land as their own to develop and to pass on to their children. The permanency of the settlements encourages the development of elaborate political and economic systems that quickly become ingrained into the landscape and the mindset of the burgeoning society.⁶ The cost of such settlement, however, is immensely high for the indigenous population. Their land is stolen from under them, and the settler's structures dominate or replace the indigenous peoples' existing infrastructure, their governing style, their markets, their culture.

⁵ For typical examples of scholarship on literary activism, see Nina Baym, *Women Writers of the American West, 1833-1927* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011); Janet Floyd, *Writing the Pioneer Woman* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002); Brigitte Georgi-Findlay, *The Frontiers of Women's Writing: Women's Narratives and the Rhetoric of Westward Expansion* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996). For Indian education, see Margaret Jacobs, *Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures 1879-1934* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999); Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009). For suffrage, see Rebecca Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004); Heidi Osselaer, *Winning Their Place: Arizona Women in Politics, 1883-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009). For reform, see Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

⁶ Lorenzo Veracini, "Introduction: The Settler Colonial Situation," *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 3.

Thus, though settler colonialism can appear peaceful, it has underlying sinister consequences. According to Patrick Wolfe and Margaret Jacobs, the settler colony's “aim is the replacement of native society...Its governing logic is one of elimination’ rather than the incorporation of indigenous peoples.”⁷ At its most extreme, it can have genocidal repercussions. Even if ethnic cleansing is not the intent or the end result, settler colonialism is an inherently violent project: the land upon which to be settled, the political and cultural institutions to be created, and the resources to be developed are taken and enforced through violence. Since the ultimate goal is permanent settlement, the end result for the indigenous population is erasure; even if not killed, assimilation into the settler society is also a form of cultural and political elimination. Erasure can also take the form of a discursive battle over who gets to control the narrative of settlement and the contours of the evolving society. It is worth noting that settler colonialism is also different from colonialism undertaken for purely extractive purposes. In such cases, the indigenous population remains the majority, are frequently required to provide labor to large-scale projects benefiting the mother country, and imperial government remains more distant.

Settler colonial studies have flourished in former British colonies like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa. Recently, scholars have increasingly come to consider the American West in a similar manner. Though traditionally viewed as the antithesis of a colonial project, indeed as a fundamental feature allowing the American republican experiment to be successful, scholarly studies of the West from the 1970s onward tell a story consistent with an

⁷ Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 2-4.

understanding of the region as a settler colonial society.⁸ Migrants, lured by gold, homestead grants, railroad jobs, military deployments, or simply the promise of a better life, came to the West in droves during the mid-nineteenth century. Specifically, they came to land that the US obtained through a war to expand the empire, the Mexican-American War. Settlement was promoted and funded by the federal government and protected by the military, which remained a consistent presence in the West through the early decades of the twentieth century. A series of smaller-scale conflicts across the region devastated what remained of Native American communities, and forced the remaining population onto reservations. Companies and individuals took the land for homesteads, the railroad, farming and ranching, and mining. The federal government retained undeveloped land and set aside special areas for conservation and preservation purposes. The conquest of the West in the nineteenth century was a settler colonialist project.

A few scholars have begun the work of analyzing women's public roles in the West using a settler colonialist lens, especially in relation to education and Indian reform movements.⁹ Following in their footsteps, I hope to understand the extent to which influential Anglo women like Hall promoted a settler colonialist project. Often settler colonialism is examined on a grand scale to understand broad power dynamics on an imperial or national level. However, power systems, settlement, and conquest are all perpetuated through daily, on-the-ground decisions and realities. Anglo women, viewed in the Progressive era as civilizers and the protectors of a

⁸ See the work of early new Western revisionists like Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: WW Norton & Co, 1987) and Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). Such works critique the frontier thesis laid out in Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920).

⁹ Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*; Floyd, *Writing the Pioneer Woman*; Georgi-Findlay, *Frontiers of Women's Writing*.

cultured domestic sphere, and who often used the language of moral uplift to justify their own participation in politics and reform efforts, can thus be seen as playing an active role in the perpetuation of settler colonialism. Though perhaps not involved in the military campaigns and conquest, I am intrigued by the possibility of analyzing Anglo women's centrality to the discursive battle over how to define and understand the new community and police the boundaries of acceptable society. Specifically, how might women's activities help make a settler colonialist narrative appear inevitable, even invisible?¹⁰

In Hall's case, her authorial, historical, booster, and industrial work all legitimate and naturalize a settler-based understanding of the region that she used to promote a particular set of values, assumptions, and community cohesion. A strong promotional streak ran throughout her work: regardless of the medium, Hall was an advocate for Arizona. Hall provided a Turnerian backdrop of an empty landscape into which the settlers came, then made the old-timers, or the settlers who came to Arizona in the final decades of the nineteenth century, the focus of her preservation and education work. She underplayed the violent, conquest-based part of the territory's history and appropriated selective aspects of a timeless Native American culture without addressing them as historical actors with agency in their own right. The values and invented traditions established in her historical narratives revolved around a peaceful, honorable understanding of the old-timers' work that highlighted the white man's seemingly unquestioned right to and connection with the land. The old-timers' stories became the focal point of the community's historical memory, but through Hall's booster and tourism efforts it also became the story promoted in the East and throughout the nation. Finally, Hall's connection with modern

¹⁰ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 15.

development, infrastructure, and mining can only be understood as logically connected to the rest of her work if we understand it within a settler colonialist framework. If Arizona was to be treated equally and taken seriously by the metropole (the United States government), it had to modernize, embrace its natural resources and its full economic potential to the nation, and prove itself both self-sufficient and worthy to enter the Union on an equal footing.

Using Sharlot Hall as a case study can be particularly helpful because she has a rich archive housed in the museum and library that she founded. As an historically-minded person, she collected and purposefully stored important materials related to every aspect of her life. Those materials have been augmented over the next fifty years by dedicated volunteers of the museum who admire Hall's work and want to continue her legacy. As a result, personal correspondences, legal documents, diaries and scrapbooks, manuscripts, newspaper and magazine clippings, fan mail, organizational membership cards, copyright information, Smoki group papers, collections of Hall's articles and journalistic pieces, photographs, her private book collection, official reports as territorial historian, copies of speeches she gave and programs for ceremonies in which she participated, catalogues of items donated to the museum, and more all help to leave a paper trail not often available to scholars of women's history prior to the mid-twentieth century. When combined with the poetry and short stories still in print, one can gain a relatively full picture of her life. Such a concentration of materials in a private archive with a vested interest in Hall's legacy has its own challenges. The presence of material that could possibly be condemnatory, not just laudatory, towards Hall stems some of those fears. By augmenting with a cross-section of local, regional, and national newspapers outside of the archive, and always being aware of the limits of such a collection as I analyze, I hope to

sufficiently address any potential bias. The relatively informal nature of the archive also poses a few logistical challenges, such as newspaper clippings and papers that do not always contain full bibliographic information. In such cases, I have tried to provide as much information as possible while making the document's specific location within Hall's archival collection clear. Despite the limitations, such a rich repository has too much potential to ignore.

Sharlot Hall's Regional and National Importance

Hall was born on October 27, 1870 in Kansas Territory. At age eleven, she and her family moved to a homestead on Lynx Creek in Arizona twelve miles outside of Prescott, the capital city in the territory's northern mountains. After a few years of failed small-scale mining efforts, the Hall family moved to Orchard Ranch near the modern-day settlement of Dewey to grow apples and pears and breed cattle. Though there was a local country school, it was only in session a few months of the year and Sharlot often had to miss class to help her partially crippled father with tasks around the ranch. She did have an opportunity to spend one term at Prescott High School, during which time she earned her first paycheck for a published story. Unfortunately, after that term she had to leave to care for her ailing mother. Back home she continued to educate herself and cultivate a spirit of intellectualism. While her mother was sympathetic, her father scorned her efforts; indeed, her father was the very picture of an uneducated, semi-abusive, backwoods frontiersman whom Sharlot watched slowly destroy her mother's spirit.¹¹

¹¹ Margaret Maxwell, *A Passion for Freedom: The Life of Sharlot Hall* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982), 3-37. For further scholarly information on Hall, see also Charles Franklin Parker, "Out of the West of Long Ago," in Sharlot Hall, *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, posthumously compiled by Josephine Mackenzie (Prescott: Sharlot Hall Historical Society, 1953); Baym, *Women Writers of the American West*, 10, 224, 282; Joe Staples, "'Discovering' New Talent: Charles F Lummis's Conflicted Mentorship of Sui Sin Far, Mary Austin, and Sharlot Hall," *Western American Literature* 40 (2006); Judi Winchester, "So Glad God Let Me Be An Outdoor Woman: The Conservationist Writing of Sharlot M Hall," *Journal of the West* 44 (2005).

The fact that Hall was herself a ranch woman and pioneer legitimated her work to other settlers and ranchers and gave her work a refreshing ring of authenticity to eastern readers. She lived at Orchard Ranch until the final years of her life, entertained guests there, and thus provided a glimpse for many into the world of ranching. She frequently wrote guest articles in the *Ranch & Miner* and *Good Housekeeping* on everything from country cooking and cleaning to animal husbandry.¹² She used familiar vernacular and land-based reminiscences to make the old-timers she interviewed feel comfortable. That same language gave color to her poems about everyday life for the working people of the Southwest and made them appealing to actual ranchers and farmers. Her identity as a ranch woman thus provides a fitting backdrop to the rest of her work and helps to explain the trustworthiness and authenticity that garnered her great regional popularity and national recognition.

Hall also witnessed and lived through a period of immense change in Arizona. The population grew exponentially during Hall's lifetime, from 9,658 residents in 1870 to 499,261 residents by 1940, with the population nearly doubling each decade from 1870-1900.¹³ The completion of the Atlantic and Pacific (later Santa Fe) railroads connected Arizona to the rest of the nation, allowing greater mobility to and from the region. It also broadened the market for Arizona's commodities, making large-scale industries surrounding cattle, silver, gold, copper, and cotton more viable and profitable. Such developments consolidated power in the hands of the railroads, copper company executives, and large-scale cotton farmers and ranchers,

¹² Sharlot Hall, "The Everyday Toilet: Some Interesting and Useful Notes for Busy People," *Good Housekeeping* XXIV, No. 5 (May 1897), 202-203; Sharlot Hall, "The Laundering of Delicate Fabrics," *Good Housekeeping* XXV, No. 2 (August 1897), 60-62.

¹³ US Census Bureau, "Resident Population and Apportionment of the US House of Representatives: Arizona," <https://www.census.gov/dmd/www/resapport/states/arizona.pdf>.

eventually causing labor strife and a largely ineffective fight for unionization.¹⁴ The Apache Wars left a bloody legacy through the 1870s and 1880s, including a horrific massacre at Camp Grant in 1871 that killed more than 100 Apache men, women, and children. After a series of deadly winter campaigns, Geronimo's famous surrender in 1886 largely cemented US military control over the region.¹⁵ Native Americans were forced onto desert reservations like San Carlos (notorious for its poor health and environmental conditions), then later to participate in Americanization programs ranging from individual land allotment to boarding schools for Native American children. Though increasingly a multiethnic society, including not only Anglos and Native Americans, but also immigrants from various European countries, Chinese, Latinos (largely but not entirely of Mexican descent), and a small population of African Americans, Arizona became a cultural battleground about who could claim whiteness, with solidified social, class, and racial lines firmly drawn by the early decades of the twentieth century. Politically, the federal government continued to make its presence known through land grants, the ongoing army occupation, and land preservation through the national parks and forests initiatives.¹⁶ Arizona was incorporated as a state in 1912 and granted women the right to vote the same year.¹⁷ In living through, writing about, and commemorating a truly transformative period, Hall became to many by the end of her life, "a more worthy monument to the old Southwest than any bit of bronze anywhere in the entire area."¹⁸

¹⁴ Thomas Sheridan, *Arizona: A History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 2-3.

¹⁵ Jane Lahti, *Cultural Construction of Empire: The US Army in Arizona and New Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 21-29.

¹⁶ White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own," 119-154.

¹⁷ For an in-depth examination of how women won the right to vote in Arizona, see Osselaer, *Winning Their Place*.

¹⁸ Parker, "Out of the West of Long Ago," 14.

Hall had two distinct phases of her career: one as an author, poet, and booster for the Southwest, the second as territorial historian, the creator of a regional history museum, and preservationist. Hall began by publishing poems, self-transcribed Native American myths, and short journalistic pieces in various regional publications. However, it was not until she met Charles Lummis and began to publish in his magazine promoting the Southwest, *Land of Sunshine* and its later iteration *Out West Magazine*, that her works began to be more widely recognized. Though there is some debate about the extent to which Lummis “discovered” Hall and how much help he was as her mentor, it certainly gave Hall a wider audience, regular pay, and access to professional networks.¹⁹ Particularly with the publication of “The West,” a poem rife with frontier mythology and Manifest Destiny-inspired rhetoric, Hall created a name for herself as a booster of the Southwest and a writer with an eye for depicting the landscapes and animals of Arizona. Indeed, Hall is credited with authoring over 500 published pieces, many of which can be read in the four consolidated volumes still available today.²⁰ She even became editor of *Out West Magazine* and regularly traveled to California to cover for Lummis during his periods of absence.²¹ Her “Arizona Strip” series marked the high point of her writing career in 1911.

Sharlot Hall’s authorial work was well-received across the country, making her a respected household name in both the East and the West. A New Orleans paper perhaps best captured the national sentiment of Hall’s influence and popularity as an author in a 1902 article.

¹⁹ Staples, “‘Discovering’ New Talent”, 175-6.

²⁰ Hall, *Sharlot Hall on the Arizona Strip*; Sharlot Hall, *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, ed. Josephine Mackenzie (Prescott: Sharlot Hall Historical Society, 1953); Sharlot Hall, *Sharlot Herself: Selected Writings of Sharlot Hall*, ed. Nancy Kirkpatrick Wright (Prescott: Sharlot Hall Museum Press, 2013); Sharlot Hall, *Cactus and Pine: Songs of the Southwest* (Boston: Sherman French and Company, 1911).

²¹ Maxwell, *A Passion for Freedom*, 64-77.

In describing the “appreciative criticism” her “virile verse” had won, they highlighted the imagined reactions of both western and eastern readers:

To eastern-read people...the poem carries a breath of ocean salt, of mountain vigor and lusty endeavor; to those who live in the West - and live is used in its full sense - it is a stirring reminder of their heritage, of the dauntless blood of their pioneer father, and the larger freedom that is theirs to maintain...Her charm is the simplicity with which she voices a controversial thought. Unhampered by the overcrowded, overworked atmosphere of cultured cities, so-called, she has breathed the ‘breath of spaces’ and is not afraid to say aloud, or say again, what the world thinks.²²

A particularly fitting example to understand Hall’s recognition and influence is the national response to Hall’s poem and article, “Arizona.” Penned in protest of a joint statehood bill that would have brought Arizona and New Mexico into the Union as a single state, the overwhelmingly positive response indicated that Hall had struck a chord. The *Prescott Journal Miner* praised her keen observational skills and her ability to infuse a “tiny rivulet of romance” into her “prosaic” description of mining and agricultural possibilities in the state, while the *Poughkeepsie Eagle* explained that Hall’s article, “not only elevates Arizona in our estimation, but will be valuable for a long time in the future as giving a record of what the new state is at the beginning of its existence as a member of our Union.”²³ The *New York Sun* agreed, arguing that despite her bias as a “loyal Arizonan...Mr. Hall has demonstrated the fitness of Arizona for the honor and responsibility of statehood.”²⁴ The paper later apologized for assuming Hall was a man, marveling at the fact that “out in this country, the women are more talented and literary in their accomplishments than most Eastern people think it possible for even the men of Arizona to

²² *Daily Picayune*, February 9, 1902.

²³ *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, February 23, 1906; *Prescott Journal Miner*, July 29, 1905.

²⁴ “Arizona Today”, *NY Sun*, February 28, 1906.

be. Therefore, in this instance, it may be construed that Miss Hall has been complimented by being called Mister.”²⁵

Thus, a variety of newspapers across the country had read Hall’s work, thought it significant enough to run an article about it, came away with an enhanced knowledge of and appreciation for Arizona, favorably reviewed her literary capabilities, and in a bizarrely backhanded manner found it appropriate for her as a woman to put forward a politically-motivated description of Arizona’s economic assets. In short, readers across the country came to view Hall as an expert on the Southwest whose work was easy and enjoyable to read. It sounded consistent enough to westerners with their own experiences that her work resonated with them. To eastern readers, it was full of romantic images of the West yet infused with a touch of realism not often seen in popular eastern imaginings of the West.

In 1910, Hall accepted a position that would define the latter half of her career: she was appointed the territorial historian of Arizona, becoming the first woman in the territory to hold a salaried government position. Though she had long been interested in Arizona’s past, learning Native American myths and talking with some of the first Anglo settlers in the area, this job greatly expanded her historical appetite, knowledge, and resources. During her tenure, she traveled widely, gathered hundreds of artifacts and oral histories, photographed landscapes and people, and completed ethnographic and ecological surveys of each region. Though she accomplished much during her short tenure, she was not re-appointed as state historian after

²⁵ “Out West Article Pleases Sun,” *NY Sun*, date unknown, Box 13.9, Sharlot Hall Collection, Sharlot Hall Museum Library and Archives.

Arizona's admission to the Union due to a change from Republican to Democratic leadership and an ill-timed series of public letters written by Hall to smear her opponent.²⁶

Despite the messy ending, Hall's appointment as territorial historian demonstrates the high level of popularity she had throughout the territory. The legislature created the position in 1909 with a yearly salary of \$2,400.²⁷ The governor initially appointed a local newspaperman and politician, Mulfred Winsor. Hall, however, enjoyed a tremendous groundswell of support from women's clubs, the workers and owners of mining operations she had visited, respected old-timers, even the occasional politician. Letters poured in, highlighting Hall's qualifications and historical experience, praising her work ethic and trustworthiness, and demanding her immediate appointment to the position. As a prominent New York lawyer, Frank Rudd's description of Hall of her excessive devotion to Arizona's history, her enthusiasm, and her real-life experience is typical.²⁸ A letter from the Mining and Assay Office of AM Macduffee (a mining operation in Chloride), though written later to request Hall's re-appointment, better captures the fervent, colorful nature of her support base:

Yesterday morning I started out with a Petition to the Gov' asking that you be retained in your present Office, and all were GLAD to sign it with the exception of one old scotchman, who said he was a Republican, and 'wouldn't ask any favors of a Democrat'; now wouldn't that jar you?...I mailed out Petitions to friends of mine at Kingman, Gold Road and Oatman...asking them to get all the signatures and mail to the Gov'nr, so you may look for quite a pull from 'Old Mohave' and if that don't hold good we will go down to the Capital in a body and demand 'our rights'.²⁹

²⁶ Maxwell, *Passion for Freedom*, 78-130.

²⁷ "Historian of Arizona: Miss Sharlot Hall Succeeds to That Office Today," *Arizona Republican*, October 1, 1909.

²⁸ Frank Rudd to Governor Sloan, November 12, 1909, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.7.

²⁹ AM MacDuffee to Sharlot Hall, February 8, 1912, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.7.

The outpouring of support, along with her Republican tendencies, pressured Governor Richard Sloan to appoint Hall, ousting Winsor just months after he accepted the position. Newspapers throughout the Southwest covered the takeover favorably. The *Santa Anna Register* announced that Hall, as a talented writer of the Southwest and a resident of the territory for 26 years, deserved the position and trumpeted the appointment as “a fitting tribute to womanhood.”³⁰ Even newspapers critical of Winsor’s dismissal portrayed Hall herself in a positive light. The *Arizona Democrat*, always critical of the Republican governor, described Sloan’s actions as having “stooped to the very narrowest of partisan actions” while calling Hall an “able young lady” and wishing her well in her new office.³¹ In short, Hall was appointed as territorial historian because of widespread support from people of multiple classes, levels of influence, and geographical locations. This support, cultivated through personal relationships and years demonstrating a tireless work ethic, gave Hall a highly influential political and cultural position, which she would utilize to the fullest in the coming years.

As territorial historian, Hall wielded a significant influence on the perception of Arizona’s past to the territory’s residents and the nation as a whole. Politicians and members of the elite wrote letters asking her for historical information or her opinion on the historical implications of a particular policy decision.³² Women’s clubs across Arizona and Southern

³⁰ *Santa Anna Register*, October 20, 1909.

³¹ “Partisanship of a Narrow Governor,” *Arizona Democrat*, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.7.

³² Barry Goldwater to Sharlot Hall, October 1939, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Eugene Donald Jerome to Sharlot Hall, May 1938, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Carl Hayden, US Senate, to Sharlot Hall, February 1940, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Henry Ashurst, US Senate, to Sharlot Hall, February 17, 1914, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.1; Assistant Forester, US Department of Agriculture, to Sharlot Hall, August 1926, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Mr Daniels, US Geographic Board, to Sharlot Hall, February 17, 1914, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.1.

California asked her to come and speak or be part of special historical ceremonies, and she was a full member and leader of the Arizona Pioneers' Society, an otherwise all-male organization.

Hall did experience a dark period from late 1912 through the early 1920s. Her mother died, she returned to the ranch full-time to care for an ailing father towards whom she felt duty but not affection, and she had just lost her job. She had increasing troubles with debilitating back pain from her childhood riding accident, she searched widely for solutions to her suffering (eventually transitioning from a Freethinker to a Christian Scientist), and continued to experience bouts of grieving for a long-dead lover, a fellow Freethinker named Samuel Putnam. Though she continued to produce poetry, some of her most haunting works filled with melancholic musings about loneliness, the vast majority of the time she retreated into herself and took on the full burden of operating the ranch.

Following her period of isolation, Hall began to look for alternative ways to preserve Arizona's past. Two events pulled her out of her self-imposed retreat. Her father passed away in 1925, freeing her from old responsibilities, and she gained renewed recognition after being designated an Arizona elector in Calvin Coolidge's 1924 election. As one of Arizona's representatives, she met the president and his wife while infamously wearing a copper dress with a matching prickly pear hat to represent Arizona's economic and ecological contributions to the country. She also used the opportunity to travel and talk with many of the region's most famous domestic house museums to gather ideas for what would become her life's work. She dedicated the last decades of her life to restoring the Old Governor's Mansion with land and funds given to her by Prescott's city government, eventually opening a museum of regional history that attracted tourists from around the country. When Hall passed away in 1943, she left behind a legacy of a

thriving museum of regional history that continues to be known as one of the best museums in the state.³³ Thus, Hall's understanding and presentation of Arizona's history reached across the country, was legitimated by local and state authorities, allowed her to become one of the prime spokespeople for Arizona to the federal government, and was used to introduce younger generations to their heritage.

In other words, Hall had the legitimacy of herself being a pioneer and ranch woman, and gained national recognition through poetry and prose that spoke to western and eastern readers alike. She enjoyed widespread popularity in the territory as an enterprising, trustworthy woman which enabled her to occupy a position of political and cultural influence, and in so doing shaped a particular regional and national understanding of western culture and history. Hall is worth paying attention to because her beliefs and interpretations of Southwestern history spread across the country; the narratives and discourses she wove had a direct impact on how Arizona understood its own past and how the rest of the country viewed Arizona. And one of the first things they learned from her work was that the West was a wild, open, unchanged, largely uninhabited land, a blank canvas for incoming white settlers.

A Turnerian Landscape and the Founding Fathers of Arizona

Hall's love for the unique landscapes, ecology, animals, and flora of the Southwest, particularly Arizona, imbued both her authorial and historical work. It served not merely as the setting but another character in her historical work, and a good deal of her poetry and prose focused exclusively on painting a picture of the Southwest. Her descriptions clearly portrayed a Turnerian vision of the West. With an empty, untamed environment as the backdrop, Hall created

³³ Maxwell, *Passion for Freedom*, 152-186.

historical narratives focused on the stories of the old-timers, making them in a sense the founding fathers of Arizona. She was a meticulous historian with a distinct methodology, but eventually chose to present narrow, specific aspects of the past she uncovered. Her landscape descriptions and historical narratives together presented honest, hard working settlers coming to, claiming, settling, and developing land there for the taking, hiding messier aspects of the historical narrative while highlighting those that celebrated a settler colonialist narrative.

Hall did not have one fixed definition of the region about which she wrote.³⁴ Very occasionally she wrote sweeping works like “The West”, alluding to the Rocky Mountains, the Great Plains, the Sonora Desert, and mighty forests as an all-encompassing West. The West’s defining features in works like these were its moral qualities and the effect it had on the people who moved there. In “The West”, the personified West “cried to the Old World cities that drowse by the Eastern main: ‘Send me your weary, house-worn broods, and I’ll send you Men again! Lo, here in my wind-swept reaches, by my marshalled peaks of snow, is room for a larger reaping than your o’er-tilled fields can grow; Seed of the Man-Seed springing to stature and strength in my sun; Free, with a limitless freedom no battles of men have won.’”³⁵ That is, she described the frontier as an empty proving ground that cultivated independence and self-reliance. Her West thus fits what Colin Calloway calls a process- rather than place-based conception of the region.³⁶ The vast majority of her writing, however, was rooted in the particularities of the Southwest landscape. Even poems describing a more generalized human experience utilized references to

³⁴ In order to analyze Hall’s conception of the West given the varied settings for her work, I utilize the overlapping Wests model put forward by Baym, *Women Writers*, 6-8.

³⁵ Hall, “The West,” *Cactus and Pine*, 4.

³⁶ Colin Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 14-20.

the Southwest to provide a sense of place.³⁷ Most of her work explicitly focused on the Southwest's animals and landscapes.³⁸ When Hall situated her work in a particular locale, the setting was almost always Arizona, especially the northern mountains, forests, and canyons. In short, while Hall was versed in wider western rhetoric, she mainly operated within a very place-based regionalism similar to other "local color" writers of the Southwest.³⁹

In most of Hall's writing, particularly her poetry, she celebrated the expansiveness, openness, desolation, exoticism, and wildness of the land. In those qualities she found beauty and peace. For example, in a poem entitled "To a Home in a Cañon" she wrote, "Peace of white, silent peaks against the sky, And silence of far deserts gray and wide; Freedom of winds that blow in earth's lone places, And the brooding rest of night above the pines, Are in these walls; eternal as the hills, The desert, and the wind that goes between them."⁴⁰ Hall similarly reveled in depicting the vibrancy, diversity, and tenacity of life within otherwise barren landscapes. She was particularly captivated by springtime in the desert with blooming flowers and an alluring glimpse to the end of summer droughts. In an essay aptly entitled "Spring in the Desert", she described how:

Every desert shrub and tree has its own springsong, translated into leaf and flower and sweet odors for the enlightenment of duller souls. No cherry tree of Japan is more fairylike delicately exquisite than the palo verde in its spring robe of golden frost flakes,

³⁷ Hall, "For Jack," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 26; Hall, "Companioned," *Cactus and Pine*, 155-156; Hall, "Drouth Time," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 54; Hall, "Dry Bones," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 55-56.

³⁸ Hall, "Roadrunner," *Sharlot Herself*, 27; Hall, "Greasewood," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 43; Hall, "Spring in the Desert," *Sharlot Herself*, 47-54; Hall, "God's Country," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 35-38.

³⁹ Audrey Goodman, *Translating Southwestern Landscapes: The Making of an Anglo Literary Region* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002), xiv-xv.

⁴⁰ Hall, "To a Home in a Canon," *Cactus and Pine*, 58.

and no lilac was ever sweeter; though in this there lingers a haunting strangeness, like the wild beauty of untamed places.⁴¹

She also adeptly used personification to make the wonderfully haunting, strange place she described more welcoming and comfortable, whether writing an ode to a particularly loyal dog or lamenting the loss of a family's trusty mule.⁴²

Hall's figurative yet down-to-earth language was designed to transport the reader to a particular, yet seemingly timeless, place. As a local color writer and Arizona booster, she took pride in highlighting what made the area unique and what would draw tourists, which was on the upswing in the early twentieth century. As Audrey Goodwin argues, "the dominant, commercial identity of the Southwest was constructed out of rhetoric promoting the 'Southwestern Wonderland' rather than land grants, imagined scenes from the ancient past rather than practical settlement in the present."⁴³ To create social and cultural authenticity for Anglo settlers and tourists she had to stake a claim in a timeless region exemplified in an untamed, unchanging landscape. Regional tourism and conceptions of the land itself were built on a Turnerian open landscape that made invisible other competing claims to the land. The stage was set for an appropriate cast of characters to people the tantalizingly inviting land. And as a territorial historian, she could create the historical narrative that would be played out upon that stage.

In Hall's official capacity as territorial historian, and therefore a paid government employee, she was treated as a professional. She had no formal training or advanced degree but she took her job very seriously, learning or intuiting many of the professional techniques

⁴¹ Hall, "Spring in the Desert," *Sharlot Herself*, 52.

⁴² Hall, "St. Lazarus of the Dogs," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 25; Hall, "For Jack," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 26.

⁴³ Goodman, *Translating Southwestern Landscapes*, xxvii.

expected of trained historians. She traveled extensively throughout the territory collecting artifacts, gathered oral histories for hundreds of old-timers, took the time to maintain decades-long correspondences with at least twenty different pioneers and received periodic updates from many more, and spent thousands of hours poring over the existing scholarly histories of Arizona and the Southwest, drawing extensively upon the private collections of Dr. J. A. Munk in Southern California.⁴⁴ Her final report as territorial historian included a brief summary of the existing historiography with works listed by order of importance, her reasoning for that order, and the various libraries to which she had access. Her bibliography included ten pages of books she had read and added to the territorial historian's library. In her report, she also clearly outlined her methodological approach to analyzing the wide variety of primary sources she collected, including manuscripts, photographs, personal papers of influential figures, historical maps, physical objects from pottery to lamps to mining tools, government publications and reports, tourist booklets and advertising publications, law journals and acts of legislation, reports of former governors, reports and publications from the University of Arizona and local school districts, newspapers, and popular magazines.⁴⁵ Hall had a rich, deep understanding of Southwestern history by the time she left office, had adhered to professional standards in her work, and people trusted her as an expert on the region's past.

Hall's successful tenure as territorial historian is particularly surprising given her upbringing and gender. As Bonnie Smith convincingly argues, history itself was almost exclusively a masculine profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Female

⁴⁴ "A Historian of Arizona," unknown newspaper and date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8.

⁴⁵ Sharlot Hall to Hon. Richard E Sloan, Governor of Arizona, Report of Arizona Historian, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.9.

amateurs were thought to produce a different, inferior type of history.⁴⁶ Hall did not neatly fit either category. She had limited access to education and was never fully comfortable or accepted in the scholarly world, yet she clearly had a knack for and love of intellectualism and the niceties of academia. She occupied a traditionally male position, indeed ousted a man to get the job, and engaged in typical research activities. Yet her work was distinctly personal, relational, and local, and her writing was always tinged with a hint of romance. As we shall explore later, the way she framed her work also took on a distinctly female moral reformer cast, separating the ultimate purpose of her historical work from that of her male counterparts.

Hall focused her work primarily on the old-timers: the small-scale miners, the ranchers and farmers (both men and women!), the ex-military men, the elite of Phoenix society, the early governors, mayors, and businessmen. Hall described men like Charles Genung, one of the first (and only) men to work in a large-scale gold mine utilizing the quartz mining technique in Yavapai County and who corresponded with Hall throughout his later years because he was convinced that his life would make a great action adventure tale if only she would consent to write it.⁴⁷ She lavishly praised the work of Charles Poston and Mr. Downing, early Arizona poets.⁴⁸ Mathew Riordan was another long-time pen pal, an ex-military man who had personally known General Crook, and became actively involved in expeditions surveying the landscape for local governments.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Bonnie Smith, *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1998).

⁴⁷ Charles B Genung to Sharlot Hall, 12 May 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.10.

⁴⁸ Sharlot Hall, undated short story, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.4.

⁴⁹ Mathew Riordan to Sharlot Hall, August 1910, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.8.

Despite the depth and breadth of her research, the stories she chose to publicly share were relatively limited and always served a wider purpose. To be fair, the picture she painted of the old-timers' lives was not always rosy. She often described the bare-bones subsistence lifestyle the early farmers led, the high mortality and illiteracy rates that plagued the territory, the harmful effects of isolation and instability, and the abuse women and children faced from their husbands and fathers.⁵⁰ But Hall also made sure to highlight the honor and dignity in their labor-filled lives, the sacrifices they made to 'civilize' the area, and the individualism, determination, and neighborliness that such an environment created.⁵¹ Notably missing was the seedy underbelly of the territory popularly romanticized through eastern literature: the prostitutes, the saloon owners and chronic gamblers, the train robbers and gangs of bandits, the Wyatt Earps and the Jesse James of the Old West. She wanted to prove that Arizona was primarily a law-abiding, civilized, industrious land. She believed that the East needed someone born and bred in the West to provide a corrective to the widely available yet wildly inaccurate literature.⁵² While not entirely absent, descriptions of the Mexican-American War, Tucson's and Southern Arizona's involvement with the Confederacy, and the Apache Wars were dramatically under-represented; indeed, the majority of her histories began in the 1870s and 1880s, therefore circumventing the need to seriously

⁵⁰ Hall, "Love Led Me Into the Wilderness," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 22; Hall, "The Dead Fore-Runner," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 23-24; Hall, "Dry Bones," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 55; Hall, "The Old Ranch Mother," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 76-78.

⁵¹ Sharlot Hall, "The Gold Snake's Hoard," manuscript, date unknown, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 8.4; Sharlot Hall, "Prescott in the Days of the Gold-Hunters," short story, date unknown, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.5; Sharlot Hall to Alice Hewins, August 2, 1912, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.16; Sharlot Hall, "Prescott in the Days of the Gold Hunters," undated short story, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.6; Sharlot Hall, "Wood? Man's Closest Friend," undated short story, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.6.

⁵² *Lower Valley Correspondence*, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; Texas Folk-Lore Society to Sharlot Hall, June 1929, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2.

address the violent, conquest-based beginnings of the territory.⁵³ While the former can reasonably be seen as correcting an imbalance in the available literature, it is difficult to view the latter as anything but deliberate erasure given the vast number of oral histories and old-timer letters she collected that described the wars, tensions, and violent encounters between whites, Latinos, and American Indians throughout the nineteenth century.⁵⁴

All together, then, Hall presented a history of Arizona that lauded the individualistic, moral, hard-working old-timers as the true founders of the region. Their example and legacy guided the rest of the settlement process and should, according to Hall, be granted central billing in Arizona's past. In underplaying or ignoring the violent, conquest-based nature of settlement, she also helped to naturalize the "civilizing process," indeed to make settler colonialism invisible and thus encourage an eventual collective forgetting of the real origins of the territory.⁵⁵ She accomplished her goal in a variety of ways, utilizing multiple kinds of educational opportunities.

Passing on Arizona's Heritage and Legacy

Hall used her historical narrative as a basis for preservationist, educational, community building, and touristic activities. She rooted her rhetoric and actions in a firmly Progressive-era understanding of women's role in the public sphere to uplift society through motherly nurturing in order to protect middle-class family values. She also took advantage of her relatively unique

⁵³ Sharlot Hall, "A Lecture on Early Arizona," Jan. 1903, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.4; Roster of Pioneers, June 5, 1905, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.6; George Barnard to SH, 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.6.

⁵⁴ Charles Genung to Sharlot Hall, May 12, 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.10; John Riggs to Sharlot Hall, October 20, 1911, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.15; Matthew Riordan to Sharlot Hall, ongoing correspondence 1905-1910, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.15.

⁵⁵ For more on the politics and memory theories surrounding selective remembrance and public secrecy, see Michael Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999); Steve Stern, *Battling Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

position of influence and her keen business and political sense to extend the reach of that rhetoric through all aspects of Arizonan society and the public face it presented to the world. In so doing, she physically re-wrote the landscape, used old-timers' stories to inculcate white middle class values, reinforced the settler experience as a cohesive force binding the community together, and strategically used a pioneering heritage to promote tourism.

Hall is perhaps best known for her efforts to preserve the old Governor's Mansion in Prescott, which eventually became a full-fledged museum commemorating the settler past. She initially planned to restore the old log cabin that had fallen into disrepair in the hands of the city government. Hall requested a life lease and complete artistic and entrepreneurial control in exchange for creating a regional history museum and donating her entire personal collection of artifacts to kickstart its holdings. In doing so she and the city could keep many of Yavapai County's relics in the area and prevent them from ending up at a university library or even in Washington DC.⁵⁶ Given Hall's prominent reputation, the city of Prescott agreed. Her stated goal was to "make this building and the grounds around it a center of historical and literary interest and a sort of civic center for the pioneers of Yavapai County and such organizations of young people as might be benefitted or inspired by its ideals and purposes."⁵⁷ Specifically, she envisioned:

surround(ing) the good-sized area on which the old house stands with a log stockade like the original Ft. Whipple...In the grounds I would like to have...an old-time arastra⁵⁸ and set up a string of sluice boxes and a rocker and a long Tom⁵⁹ - and perhaps a 'Dobe

⁵⁶ Sharlot Hall to Mr. Douglas, July 10, 1926, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.12; Sharlot Hall to Mr. West, May 28, 1927, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.12.

⁵⁷ Hall to West, Sharlot Hall Collection.

⁵⁸ A primitive mill to grind and pulverize gold or silver ore.

⁵⁹ Trough-like device used in small-scale gold mining.

smelter.' I would like to add one of the old arastra forts...and use it as a mineral exhibit permanent and chiefly of Yavapai County. I would like to move 'Old Fort Misery' and the old school house to a corner of the ground and preserve them - also the old stage coach now neglected at the Fair Ground...I would like to make of the grounds a little park of northern Arizona trees, shrubs, and flowers.⁶⁰

The actual restoration is an inspiring story; Hall oversaw all of the work on a shoestring budget, often pitching in on the manual labor required to complete the project, living in the construction, working long hours, and endlessly promoting her project to any and all who would listen.

Between the city's lease and limited financial aid, her own resources and thriftiness, a large number of small monetary donations, and occasional help from New Deal work relief programs, the museum opened.⁶¹

The museum's exhibits and buildings visually presented her carefully honed old-timers' history of Arizona. It highlighted the small-scale miners who first emigrated to the area in the 1870s, the early cultural institutions of the town, the centrality of mineral interests to the region's economy, and relics from everyday pioneering life, the "old books, old pictures, old furniture that came to Yavapai in covered wagons - old cooking utensils - all the homely things of our everyday life when railroads were far away."⁶² Even Fort Misery was symbolic of the early white collar community in Prescott, despite its misleading name: it served as the first law office, general store, Protestant house of worship, boarding house, and courthouse in Arizona. Any hints of violent conflict, or even of the military's early role in the settlement of Arizona and its ongoing presence, were downplayed or outright ignored. Though Hall did include her Native

⁶⁰ Hall to Douglas, Sharlot Hall Collection.

⁶¹ Sharlot Hall, undated/unspecified notes on construction of Governor's Mansion, c. 1940s, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.13; Sharlot Hall, list of needed materials and costs, date unknown, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.13; Monday Club, fundraiser notes, 1930, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.1; Edith Thomason to Sharlot Hall, 1930, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.1; Mrs. Y.B. Young to Sharlot Hall, June 1930, Box 7.1.

⁶² Sharlot Hall to unknown recipient, date unknown, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.13.

American artifacts (mostly pottery, beadwork, jewelry, and rugs), they had no place in the central narrative of the museum and were displayed primarily for their artistic value. On the other hand, the museum clearly celebrated the lives of ordinary people, and was designed to show the dignity and value in the hard work it took to eke out a basic living in such a harsh environment. The interior exhibits particularly celebrated and acknowledged the key role that female settlers played in creating a homey environment, and highlighted the challenges (and sometimes even the thanklessness) of performing basic household tasks in the early decades of the territory. Most importantly, the museum holistically promoted a peaceful sense of progress: it was physically charting the “civilizing” process of Arizona’s past.

Though the museum was her pet project, and the biggest she ever undertook, she was also involved in other preservationist activities. She petitioned the state government on multiple occasions to create a cemetery for all of the old-timers, including re-interring those buried elsewhere, to honor their legacy.⁶³ She frequently exhorted towns and cities to preserve their architecture, to obtain oral histories from their older citizens, and to even consider re-naming certain streets in honor of the original pioneers.⁶⁴

Through her museum and preservation efforts, Hall wielded significant discursive power and helped to shape popular historical memory. Owen Dwyer and Dwight Alderman call those with the influence and ability to make decisions about monuments “memorial entrepreneurs”; such individuals have the power to make their narrative the dominant one by physically imposing

⁶³ AH Pavour, State Senator, to Sharlot Hall, March 11, 1931, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.15; Office of the Governor to Sharlot Hall, August 1931, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.1.

⁶⁴ Sharlot Hall, “All Together for Yavapai!” unknown publication, June 11, 1919, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8; “Growing Work of Arizona Historian,” *Arizona Republican*, December 18, 1909; Sharlot Hall to Major McClintock, “To Mark the Graves of Dead Pioneers,” reprinted letter, June 5, 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; “Sharlot Hall Named on Centennial Board,” unknown newspaper and date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; Sharlot Hall to Mr. Orme, 1938, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2.

it onto the landscape.⁶⁵ And when such individuals have the support or authority of the government behind them, they can use the physical remnants of the past that they choose to retain, restore, and publicize as a way to “convey (and thus to teach the public) desired political lessons...to promote privileged narratives of the national experience and thus attempt to form a particular kind of national consciousness.”⁶⁶ If we understand Hall as a memorial entrepreneur, she enshrined and thus naturalized a settler-based historical memory, providing a daily visual reminder of the area’s past, one that eventually became so familiar as to no longer encourage critical thinking or questioning but rather to be an almost invisible part of the landscape.

Hall also gave lectures, engaged in educational promotion, and toured the women’s club circuit. Regional and state newspapers from the 1910s through the 1930s are filled with reports of presentations and lectures she gave, with a particular upswing after her trip to Washington DC as an elector in 1924. Though many of these lectures were for women’s clubs (easily arranged as she was an honorary member of the Arizona Federation of Women’s and Professional Clubs), there are also a plethora of references to presentations at local libraries, elementary and high schools, civic events, even guest lectures and an awards service in her honor at the University of Arizona, the state’s flagship university.⁶⁷ She made sure she spoke to every class and education level in Arizonan society. Even during her secluded years at Orchard Ranch, she began an

⁶⁵ Own Dwyer and Derek Alderman, *Civil Rights Memorials and the Geography of Memory* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College, 2008), 3-30.

⁶⁶ Sanford Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 10.

⁶⁷ “Stereopticon Lecture by Historian,” *Tucson Arizona Star*, March 5, 1911; “Miss Hall Gathering Data,” *Arizona Examiner*, June 17, unknown year, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.11; *Tucson Arizona Citizen*, March 11, 1911; “Frank Lockwood to Give Lecture,” unknown publication, October 26, 1938, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; “Importance of Arizona History Recognized in Federation Work,” unknown publication, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; “Poet, Historian of AZ, Dies,” *Prescott Courier*, April 9, 1943; Amanda Thompson, Corresponding Secretary of Jerome Women’s Club to Sharlot Hall, October 3, 1923, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.6.

informal *Little Men* style boys' club for the local children whom she thought needed opportunities for cultural enhancement. Through the club she hoped to cultivate an appreciation for the past and the duties of citizenship they would not otherwise receive in a poor, uneducated farming community.⁶⁸ In her later years, she became an outspoken advocate for an improved educational system, citing the importance of history and citizenship studies, as well as the necessity of exposing children to culture, creating opportunities for advancement, and cultivating a love of learning seldom to be found in backwoods ranches and farms.⁶⁹ Without such reform, she argued, how could the community expect people to act as good, moral, upstanding, informed citizens once they became adults? It was only in the final few years of her life with rapidly deteriorating health that she pulled away from her presentations and lecture circuit tours.

She frequently opened her speeches with a reiteration of the larger purpose of studying history. She argued that, "our most helpful lessons, our finest inspirations, come to us out of the past history of our kind - men and women whose work-worn hands have fallen to dust still spur us on to finer and finer endeavor that we may help to realize the eternal ideas of the race - the great unceasing struggle toward a true brotherhood of mankind."⁷⁰ Within that understanding of history, local heroes, whom she argued were just as worthy of admiration and appreciation as the grand historical figures in national tales, took on a special significance. She cautioned,

We must not forget the romance and courage and patience and fortitude nearer home - the history that is in the most intimate sense our own - this history in the appreciation and preservation of which we can all share. We may be sure that the better we know our

⁶⁸ Sharlot Hall to Alice Hewins, February 13, 1944, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.16.

⁶⁹ Sharlot Hall, "The Dulltown Village Improvement Society," manuscript, date unknown, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 8.4; Sharlot Hall, "Education in Arizona: School Exhibit Opens Eyes to the Visitors: Crossroads to the University," *Arizona Republican*, November 10, 1911, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8.

⁷⁰ Sharlot Hall, speech, undated, p. 2, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.4.

own history the better Arizonans we shall be - and the better Arizonans we are the better citizens of our country and of our larger country, the world, we shall be.⁷¹

There are a few key ideas to unpack here. First, she understood history as a series of examples and inspirations from which to guide decisions and behavior. Thus, the type of behavior expected of contemporary citizens was dependent upon their understanding of the past and the examples provided to them. Second, by using language like “our kind”, the “eternal ideas of the race”, and a “true brotherhood of mankind”, she promoted a sense of community and purpose based on a shared inheritance. It is unclear from this speech alone whether the shared inheritance was based on the entire community’s essential humanity, or whether it was more specifically racially coded. In the wider context of an old-timers’ oriented history, however, it becomes difficult to dissociate this language from a promotion of an Anglo-centric common purpose, identity, and mission. Hall also used the local figures to highlight the values of hard work, courage, patience, fortitude, an engagement in an unceasing struggle to better humanity. Such values bolstered a middle class, individualistic understanding of American character while simultaneously challenging visions of a lawless West full of bank robbers, roving landless men, and prostitutes.

Most significantly, Hall explicitly linked a deeper understanding of history with an improved quality of citizen locally, nationally, and in the world. Thus the study of history simultaneously had moral and political benefits. In so doing, she also posited that Arizona’s history was part of a national past, and that understanding Arizona’s local heroes would illuminate a larger national story. It also imposed a sense of obligation on the audience: what should one do or how could one use the knowledge and insights history provided to be a good citizen? The importance of good citizenship, and what citizenship meant, was a recurring theme

⁷¹ Hall, speech, Sharlot Hall collection, p. 3.

in her talks. In a speech to the Phoenix Women's Club in 1926, Hall provided one answer. After sharing a series of stories about local historical figures, she explicitly exhorted the women to get involved in citizenship programs, especially to train themselves as teachers in order to "establish classes in Americanization and citizenship among the foreign element and the poorer class of people."⁷² Through such programs, she believed, "the unpleasant aspects of lawlessness and restlessness would soon disappear, and citizenship would, in fact, become a synonymous term for brotherly love."⁷³ In a different address, she defined citizenship as "our attitude toward town, state, nation and the world, and political affiliation means nothing when it is in question...it is our business to try to find out what the world is thinking, and to remember that human love and joy and sorrow is the same all over the universe, and if we, as citizens, stand splendidly and strongly for the best, we shall make of our young people what we want them to be."⁷⁴ Far from a biological determinist outlook, then, she affirmed a belief in the possibility of assimilation and Americanization. Thus, notions of citizenship and accepted societal values could be formed through a shared understanding of history based firmly in a settler past that reinforced white middle class norms.

Hall reinforced a shared identity rooted in a common past not only through education, but also through community activities. Specifically, Hall was deeply involved with the Arizona Pioneers' Society. The Society was founded in 1864 to keep alive the bonds of friendship and camaraderie among the earliest Anglo settlers, and flourished throughout Hall's life. At one point

⁷² "Citizenship Discussed by Miss Sharlot Hall in Address to Women's Club," *Arizona Republican*, October 10, 1926.

⁷³ "Citizenship Discussed," *Arizona Republican*.

⁷⁴ "Miss Sharlot Hall Discusses American Citizenship Tuesday Before Woman's Club Meeting", unknown newspaper, February 10, 1926, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 12.1.

she even became vice president of the organization despite the fact that women were typically relegated to membership in the Auxiliary Pioneers Society, a support group for the all-male pioneer society.⁷⁵ As vice president, she helped to plan the annual reunions, sent out newsletters and updates, and engaged in commemorative projects on behalf of the organization.⁷⁶ Thus Hall happily participated in and for a period of time actively shaped a statewide group designed to maintain a cohesive identity based around a shared past. Though relatively minor in comparison to her other work, such an imagined community provided a prime example of how one particular narrative of the past could become the framework that bound people together with a shared sense of purpose, ignoring or eventually forgetting other pasts that could have provided an alternative cohesion.⁷⁷

Finally, Hall intended her historical narratives not only to benefit Arizona's population, but also to draw in tourists. Though never the tone she used in her public speeches or persona, her letters reveal a keen businesswoman who early understood the monetary incentive and potential payoff of a heritage-based tourism operation. Combined with the stunning natural landscape of northern Arizona, particularly the Grand Canyon, she correctly surmised that with better transportation, infrastructure, and marketing Arizona would become a major tourist destination.⁷⁸ Consider one letter she wrote to Mr. Watson, a prominent citizen of Wickenburg (a

⁷⁵ Sharlot Hall, "A Tribute to Pioneers," *Tucson Arizona Citizen*, January 6, 1910; *Tucson Arizona Star*, December 30, 1910.

⁷⁶ Hall, "A Tribute to Pioneers," *Arizona Citizen*; *Tucson Arizona Star*, 1910; Hall to Orme, Sharlot Hall Collection; Sharlot Hall to Erna Fergusson, April 1940, Box 7.2; Office of the President, Arizona Pioneers Society to Sharlot Hall, July 1932, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.1.

⁷⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁷⁸ Sharlot Hall, "What We Will Find at Prescott," short story, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.5; "You Will See These in Prescott This Summer," short story, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; "Sharlot Hall is Wonder Woman to Coast Visitors," *Prescott Journal Miner*, June 17, 1923.

town about 60 miles from Prescott) embittered by Hall's apparent favoritism to Prescott. He should not complain about Prescott receiving more funds to improve its infrastructure and resent it for its better resources, she argued, because "it is not the hatred or ignorance of Prescott or any other town, but the blindness of her own inhabitants to things unique and interesting, things which a California town, for instance, would play up as a big advertising asset, which has retarded her publicly to those who pass by."⁷⁹ Only through intense cultivation with a keen eye to "emphasize every fine thing in a locality" would a locale begin to appeal to travelers, which would in turn bring in revenue and resources.⁸⁰ She had similar discussions with many towns and organizations throughout her career, and actively collaborated with Grace Sparkes, a mover and shaker at Prescott's Chamber of Commerce, to create promotional materials and advertise the frontier heritage and natural beauty of the area.⁸¹

Through her leadership in heritage tourism, community building, and educational work, Hall helped to forge an imagined community through a shared appreciation of invented traditions centered around the old-timer experience. First coined by Benedict Anderson, imagined communities are typically applied in studies of nationalism, where "the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" which creates the necessary fraternity for a diverse group of people who would otherwise have little to nothing in common to live together harmoniously.⁸² Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger expand on Anderson's idea, arguing that invented traditions help to forge the bonds of that comradeship. Invented traditions are traditions

⁷⁹ Sharlot Hall to Mr. Watson, June 1924, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.10.

⁸⁰ Hall to Watson, Sharlot Hall Collection.

⁸¹ Hall to Mr. Orme, Sharlot Hall Collection; Sharlot Hall to Grace Sparkes, February 1930, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Grace Sparkes to Mr Frank Kuehn, DDS, cc. Sharlot Hall, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2.

⁸² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6-7.

or cultural norms that are deemed to be very old but are actually curated, at times even invented, in order to promote a shared past and set of values.⁸³ Understood in this context, Hall's lectures, work with the Pioneers' Society, and tourism ventures all created an imagined community where the bonds of comradeship and invented traditions were formed around the old-timers' experience. Those who could relate and bought into the old-timers' historical narrative were part of the community; those who rejected it or did not consider it their past were excluded.

Hall was an influential woman, and the historical narratives she presented had a wide-ranging impact. Tourists from all over the country visited her museum and left positive feedback, with many explaining that they had a new or enhanced appreciation for Arizona's past.⁸⁴ Even those who did not visit the museum could scarcely miss it, as it garnered prime real estate just off Courthouse Square, the social and business hub of the town. The University of Arizona gave her an honorary degree, women's clubs created Sharlot Hall Days and continued to proffer invitations to speak at their events, and she was even granted the privilege of being buried in the Pioneers' Cemetery as an old-timer herself.⁸⁵ The oral histories and artifacts she collected from her sojourns across the territory became foundational materials for later state historians.⁸⁶ Old-timers sang her praises and entrusted her with their stories, frequently asking her to make a short

⁸³ Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

⁸⁴ Sharlot Hall, undated/unspecified notes on construction of Governor's Mansion, c. 1940s, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.13.

⁸⁵ "Poet, Historian of AZ, Dies," *Prescott Courier*, April 9, 1943; "Sharlot Hall Named on Centennial Board," Sharlot Hall Collection; "Frank Lockwood to Give Lecture," unknown newspaper, October 26, 1938, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; *Arizona Citizen-Tribune*, April 22, 1910, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8.

⁸⁶ Hall, Official Report, Sharlot Hall Collection; O Rexford to Sharlot Hall, February 1929, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 7.2; Copy of Territorial Papers Act, February 28, 1929, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 16.10; Kansas Historical Society to Sharlot Hall, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.1.

story or essay about their own particular life history.⁸⁷ In short, her message resonated with a large segment of the population and her historical narratives were generally accepted as both accurate and uplifting.

Though Hall acted as a professional historian, the activities in which she engaged and her wider historical goals largely fit within accepted gender norms of the time. Historical house museums in the United States were typically women's domain, certainly during the nineteenth century, as celebrating domesticity and home life reinforced a separate spheres ideology.⁸⁸ While she presented in many locales, her primary lecture circuit consisted of Arizona and Southern California women's clubs, which supported her and promoted her to other women's clubs. Her understanding about the larger purpose of history fit within an emerging Progressive-era ideology among reform-minded women that they could enter the public sphere in order to speak out on issues pertaining to women and children, and that they were uniquely qualified to do so as women.⁸⁹ In Hall's case, she framed history around educational activism, emphasized the importance of values, and used historical figures primarily as role models for the young. It is important to note, however, that she also always had multiple ideas about the usefulness of any given historical activity, and her use of domestic rhetoric should in no way overshadow her pragmatic, booster-oriented outlook.

⁸⁷ John Riggs to Sharlot Hall, February 1, 1912, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.15; Charles Genung to Sharlot Hall, May 12, 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.10; Mr. and Mrs. Silas St. John to Sharlot Hall, January 7, 1910, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 1.9; Charles Pope to Sharlot Hall, September 28, 1905, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.1.

⁸⁸ Patricia West, *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museums* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999).

⁸⁹ Osselaer, *Winning Their Place*, 80-114.

Hall's activities also worked to naturalize a settler colonialist project, eventually making it seem inevitable, even invisible. Street names, museums, memorials, and cemeteries physically wrote a settler-dominated narrative onto the landscape, providing a constant visual reminder of the old-timers' past. Key pillars of community cohesion and bonding centered around celebrating and honoring their memories and experiences. Old-timers' examples reinforced accepted Anglo middle class behavioral expectations and morality. More importantly, a peaceful history based on settlement of open land in which individuals proved themselves worthy by their hard work and ingenuity became the dominant narrative. It was the story passed on to the next generation, taken back East by tourists, and reinforced in both cultural and academic circles. Domesticity, settlement, civilization - these were the historical moments worthy of commemoration in the region's history museum. Conquest, Native Americans as historical actors, indeed even the involvement of the federal government, were underplayed or ignored. In short, historical discourses like the ones Hall wove, while not in and of themselves explicitly engaging in violence or usurpation, popularized a settler-based narrative to the point of ubiquity; in its familiarity, it became naturalized. The fact that such work, and certainly the activities in which Hall engaged, were distinctly gendered highlights the important role Anglo women played in a wider settler colonialist project. While not necessarily on the front lines of colonial activity or conquest, neither were they passively along for the ride. Indeed, as scholars like Margaret Jacobs have shown, Anglo women were key in Americanization programs like the boarding school movement, but the creation and appropriate usage of historical discourses can also carry with it

potent cultural power.⁹⁰ Perhaps it is easier to understand the full colonialist implications of the rhetoric when put in conservation with Hall's attitude towards Native Americans.

Sharlot Hall and The Other

Hall had a complicated relationship with Native Americans. In her poetry and prose, the vast majority of Native Americans who appeared were stereotypical Apache savages, provided as a foil for the heroic actions of the protagonist.⁹¹ Yet in her historical work, she elided most discussion of violent encounters between white settlers and Native Americans by starting her histories in the 1880s. Her personal collections of Native American artwork, particularly from the Navajo and Hopi, her transcription of many Native American children's stories and myths for a white public, and her almost ethnological work for a few magazines was a testament to her deep appreciation for Native American culture.⁹² On multiple occasions, she expressed the confident view that if properly educated in citizenship, Native Americans could be assimilated into mainstream American society.⁹³ Yet none of her feelings or admiration ever overshadowed her primary goal to advocate for a white settler-based Arizonan past and future. Indeed, her appropriation of the Native American culture she so admired actually bolstered settlers' claims to the cultural legacies of and historical ties to the region.

⁹⁰ Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*.

⁹¹ Hall, "Two Bits," *Cactus and Pine*, 12-13; Hall, "The Mass of Mangas," *Cactus and Pine*, 61-63; Hall, "The Mercy of Na-Chis," *Cactus and Pine*, 28-30; Hall, "The Trip to Roosevelt," *Sharlot Herself*, 36.

⁹² Sharlot Hall, "The Prehistoric Ruins and Remains in Arizona," article of unknown publication status, undated, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.4; "Sharlot Hall Club Speaker," unknown publication, January 10, 1933, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; "Sharlot M Hall: Historian of Arizona and Deep Student of Indian Life and Customs," unknown publication and date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8; Hall, "Hopi Prayer at Evening Watch," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 92.

⁹³ "Miss Sharlot Hall Discusses American Citizenship," Sharlot Hall Collection.

The complexities of Hall's relationship with Native Americans are perhaps best encapsulated by her association with the Smoki organization. The Smoki were a group of prominent white businessmen and professionals in Prescott who decided to create an Indian tribal identity for themselves, complete with myths and traditional dances that they would charge people to watch them perform. They collected Native American artifacts, artwork, pottery, and jewelry, and displayed them in their headquarters. Hall became deeply involved with the Smoki: she wrote them an origin story, she carried a ceremonial gift from them to the newly appointed First Lady in Washington DC, and early copies of her will reveal that she had originally pledged her entire personal collection to them.⁹⁴

At a time when actual Native American tribes were forbidden from engaging in ceremonial dances out of a reactionary fear against the political Ghost Dance, this kind of appropriation seems not only bizarre, but also sinister. Yet it was far from an anomaly. A few societies composed of white elites appropriated Native American culture by embracing an invented Indian culture in the mid- to late nineteenth century, most notably the Grand Order of the Iroquois. A group of young eastern college men modeled themselves after the Iroquois confederacy, met in secret to dress up in headdresses and "utter the 'war whoop,'" which they used as a release valve from behavioral expectations and the imminent obligations of adulthood.⁹⁵ Unlike the Grand Order of the Iroquois, the Smoki members were well along in years and were some of Prescott's most respected civic leaders. As such, Arizona historian Thomas Sheridan views their activities not as an escape from adulthood but rather part of a larger

⁹⁴ Mrs. Coolidge to Sharlot Hall, thank you note, unknown date, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 16.1; Sharlot Hall's Last Will and Testament, January 1925 edition, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.4.

⁹⁵ Robert E Bieder, "The Grand Order of the Iroquois: Influences on Lewis Henry Morgan's Ethnology," *Ethnohistory* 27 (1980): 350-352.

phenomenon encompassing the growth of dude ranches and secretive, mystic fraternal orders that spoke to ambivalence towards and dissatisfaction with the “mundane materialism of modern life”.⁹⁶ While undoubtedly true, such an interpretation underplays the racialized aspects of performative appropriation; at first glance societies like the Smoki seem to have more in common with blackface minstrelsy groups than dude ranches. A long-standing practice in the United States that has historically been considered a form of racial domination, recently scholars have begun to re-think blackface as an unstable process of identity formation.⁹⁷ Yet the Smoki were engaged in more than a stereotypical race-based mockery, and so neither does their work exactly mirror blackface.

Consider instead the similarities to the Society for the Preservation of Negro Spirituals (SPS) in Charleston, South Carolina. Founded by members of the white Southern elite, generally from long-standing plantation families, the SPS preserved and performed traditionally African-American spirituals, using the dialect of a stereotypical Gullah South Carolina low-country slave. They claimed that they had the authority to preserve and speak for what they saw as a vanishing people and tradition through their families’ historically intimate ties to their slaves.⁹⁸ As Fitz Brundage describes the society’s activities, “because too few ‘authentic’ blacks existed, concerned whites had to appropriate their culture in order to preserve it.”⁹⁹ Stephanie Yuhl argues that such appropriation worked to paternalistically reinforce existing racial and class hierarchies

⁹⁶ Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 250-251.

⁹⁷ Stephanie Yuhl, *A Golden Haze of Memory: The Making of Historic Charleston* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 130.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 130-132.

⁹⁹ Fitz Brundage, *Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 216-217.

and power structures. It helped white society negotiate changing cultural dynamics and present an alternative answer to the “Negro problem,” assuaged anxieties about modern America by returning to a sanitized agrarian ideal with whites firmly at the top of the social ladder, and thus presented a “therapeutic performative commodity” easily consumed and accepted by white society.¹⁰⁰ When understood within a wider context of groups like the SPS or Grand Order of the Iroquois, the Smokis were not merely a group of men playing Indian, but a cultural force that simultaneously reinforced white superiority, claimed authority over Native American history and culture, presented a closely curated version of their history that precluded consideration of the violent aspects of white-Native American relations or the ongoing political and humanitarian concerns of contemporary tribes, and escaped from anxieties surrounding the rapid modernization of Arizona while using the profits from their dances to promote the very development spawning such anxieties.

Sharlot Hall’s defense of the Smoki utilized language that reinforces this interpretation. Given the large numbers of people who would attend and the overwhelmingly positive reviews from regional periodicals like *Arizona Highways*, most of the white population enjoyed and responded enthusiastically to the performances.¹⁰¹ Some at the time, however, found the Smoki’s proceedings disturbing, or at the very least inappropriate, and was most clearly expressed in the *Los Angeles Times*’ coverage. Hall responded to the *Times* in a scathing article with the following statement:

The Smoki have been accused recently in the Los Angeles Times of giving burlesques of religious ceremonies held sacred and holy by the Indians themselves, and of exhibiting a

¹⁰⁰ Yuhl, *A Golden Haze of Memory*, 130-155.

¹⁰¹ Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 251.

very low order of mentality and purposes. This is absolutely untrue - no Smoki dance is a burlesque, or a travesty upon any religion. All are chosen and worked out with the utmost care, and given with dignity and sincere feeling. As spectacles of sheer beauty, full of rich color and vivid and picturesque movement, no thing approaching them has been developed in pageantry anywhere. Artists, writers, and musicians, who have witnessed the dances as given in the beautiful setting of the natural amphitheater at Prescott have said freely that here was not only a theme of immediate inspiration but a thing whose possibilities for future development were greater than any present forecast might venture to go.¹⁰²

In addition, she argued, all the reporters were told from the outset that these were not authentic Indian dances, though the fact that artist Kate Cory, regionally renowned for her portraits of Native American life, should indicate that the dances were created out of an in-depth knowledge of Native American culture. Finally, she claimed that the Hopi themselves did not resent the dances; she had spoken to them and they were excited about the possibilities of the Smoki dances garnering public interest in Native American dances, which might eventually help their own cause.¹⁰³ The veracity of her final statement is difficult to determine. While she rarely, if ever, wrote an outright falsehood in her articles, Sheridan has noted that most Native Americans responded with “outrage and contempt,” not exactly an optimistic outlook about the potential to use an appropriative performance to improve Native American living conditions.¹⁰⁴ Finally, Hall acknowledged in the opening lines of the article that, “it is now conceded by the greatest ethnologists that this continent possessed a civilization as highly developed, in some aspects at least, as that which produced the objects found in the recently opened tombs in Egypt... There are many indications that the Indian ceremonies upon which the Smoki base their pageants, and the

¹⁰² Sharlot Hall, Notes on the Smoki People, response piece, undated, p. 2-3, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.8.

¹⁰³ Hall, Smoki People, p. 4, Sharlot Hall Collection.

¹⁰⁴ Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 251.

symbols and imagery used in them, are links in the chain between that far-away, wonderful lost civilization and the present day.”¹⁰⁵

From this diatribe actually comes a wealth of information. She clearly loved and had a deep appreciation for Native American traditions and history, and though the Smokis eventually used it to their own ends she also acknowledged the long history of Native American tribes and their ancient connections to the land. If her account can be believed, she visited reservations and spoke with Hopi individuals, trying to understand their perspective. Within a peaceful, ahistorical context, it was possible to appreciate certain aspects of Native American culture. Yet it is dangerous to oversimplify her perspective. First, she deemed appropriative actions acceptable since a great deal of care and attention had been paid to studying the practices and traditions of actual tribes. Indeed, such attention to detail allowed the Smokis to improve on the practices they studied, making their shows the best works of pageantry ever presented. Thus she claimed the right to performance through expertise, not through birth. In such a way, whites not only had the right to such practices, but could improve upon sacred traditions; they were furthering not only their own civilization but also that of the Native Americans they had displaced. This benefited the settler population in two ways: it allowed them to create a sanitized, selective historical memory about the Native American population that focused on rituals, dances, and artistry, not on conquest or displacement. It removed such practices from any sort of specific geopolitical context, and thus could not be interpreted politically or used for ends that would disrupt the status quo. It also allowed the white population to feel that they were participating in a beneficent, harmless ritual that eased their modern anxieties. It could actually root them in an

¹⁰⁵ Hall, Smoki People, p. 1, Sharlot Hall Collection.

ancient past, bolstering their right to the land by assimilating and claiming an almost mythical, timeless connection to the region's past.

Finally, it is important to note the quick reference to future development potential: the business of heritage and cultural tourism is never far from Hall's mind. Yes, cultural tourism was linked (however tenuously) to a Native American, not an Anglo settler, tradition. Yet the only way to effectively mobilize such traditions was to have white people present them, divorce them from the historical contingencies and politics surrounding actual Native American dances, and incorporate their cultural capital into a primarily white heritage. Hall's relationship with the Smoki thus worked to perpetuate a settler colonialist project by fusing their history with a timeless Native American past, claiming ownership of their cultural practices and therefore taking away their position of cultural authority over their own traditions, erasing contemporary Native American concerns or presence, all while appearing to be benevolent saviors of a dying culture.

Hall gave a special consideration to Native Americans; other racial minorities were not granted the same privilege. Hall had a particularly pronounced prejudice against those of Mexican descent, and refused to consider their place in Arizona's history and present society.¹⁰⁶ She did occasionally reference the Spanish heritage in the region, referring back to a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century colonial history, but then abruptly jumped forward to post-Civil War Arizona.¹⁰⁷ From works like Linda Gordon's *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*, it is clear that immigrants from different backgrounds comprised a sizable minority of Arizona's

¹⁰⁶ Sharlot Hall, "My Life as a Galvanized Greaser," manuscript, date unknown Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 8.4.; Hall, "The Eagle of Sacramento," *Cactus and Pine*, 72-76; Hall, "The Hash-Wrangler," *Cactus and Pine*, 101.

¹⁰⁷ Sharlot Hall, "A Lecture on Early Arizona," Jan. 1903, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.4; Hall, "The Legend of the Heliotrope," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 33-34; Hall, "From the Spanish," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 102.

population, and that definitions of whiteness were relatively fluid compared to Eastern cities.¹⁰⁸

In Hall's work, one only gets the most liminal hints about immigrants, namely in a few poems that feature an Irish ranch hand.¹⁰⁹ Though there was a well-documented Chinese population in the early twentieth century, the only times Hall referenced them were in derogatory off-hand remarks about "the Coolies".¹¹⁰ Similarly, as the presence of a few African-American women's clubs in Phoenix during this time period attested, there was a small minority of African-Americans which Hall ignored; given her widespread connections with the women's clubs association, it is unlikely that she would be unaware of their existence.¹¹¹ While Hall had a complex, nuanced understanding of Native Americans, even if she eventually utilized selective aspects of their history and culture for settler-oriented ends, she did not give the same consideration to other racial groups. Such erasure paved the way for a mainstream, white, middle-class vision for a modern Arizona moving into the twentieth century.

Arizona's March Towards Modernity

Perhaps the most surprising, even potentially contradictory, aspects of Hall's public work were her strong stance for modern large-scale economic endeavors and her justifications for Arizona's prominent, equal place in the nation. She advocated on behalf of large copper mining corporations, early understood the importance of and lobbied for modern infrastructure and roads throughout the state, and was a firm believer in new scientific agricultural techniques and professionalism. Politically, she assumed Arizona's equal and independent status, and she used

¹⁰⁸ Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

¹⁰⁹ Sharlot Hall, "A Christmas Tale of Early Arizona," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 16, 1900, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 14.2; Hall, "Lynx Creek Mack," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 82.

¹¹⁰ Hall, "A Christmas Tale," Sharlot Hall Collection; Hall, "Lynx Creek Mack," *Poems of a Ranch Woman*, 82.

¹¹¹ Osselaer, *Winning Their Place*, 54-79.

Arizona's economic potential, the American yet uniquely western values of her citizens, and their participation in national imperial projects as proof. If we consider Hall's primary goal in all of her work as an advocate for Arizona, and remember Hall's keen business and political sense, then her work does not seem contradictory but rather the next logical step to Arizona's full incorporation into the nation. Hall's work and rhetoric surrounding Arizona's standing in the nation both further demonstrate Arizona's position within a settler colonial world, how such a project could be justified, and one woman's role in doing so.

Hall was a particularly strong advocate for the mining interests in the territory and state. Though it was gold that originally drew settlers to the area, particularly northern Arizona, most small-scale placer mining efforts failed. A few larger mines, such as the Vulture Mine outside of Wickenburg, flourished, and the occasional valuable silver deposits such as those at the Silver King Mine made Arizona a solid low-level player in the national silver industry. Arizona's true riches, however, came from copper. Copper mining is an expensive endeavor, and unlike gold mining, cannot be done on a small scale. It thus encouraged, even demanded, large corporations such as the United Verde Copper Company and Phelps Dodge to dominate the industry. By the time Arizona became a state, nine companies controlled most of the copper deposits, over one quarter of the state's population worked on a copper mine, and Arizona had become the nation's leading copper producer.¹¹² Hall quickly realized the immense economic importance of copper to the area, and cultivated relationships with dominant businessmen like Andrew Clark, the owner of United Verde Copper Company.¹¹³ In a way, she became the face of the copper industry in the

¹¹² Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 145-186.

¹¹³ Sharlot Hall, "Sharlot Hall Photos with Family and Friends," photos with the Clarks, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 19.

early decades of the twentieth century. She wrote in-depth newspaper articles explaining the technologies and techniques used in the copper mines, she went to an exposition in Southern California to host an exhibit on the copper industry, and she frequently noted the economic value Arizona could bring to the nation through its copper deposits in her correspondences with statesmen throughout the country.¹¹⁴ Even Hall's infamous copper dress was commissioned especially for her by the United Verde Copper Company in order to visually demonstrate copper's importance to the president and Congress when she travelled to DC.¹¹⁵

It was not only copper mining that Hall believed would forge a modern Arizona, but also infrastructure, science, and professionalism. She frequently exhorted farmers to take advantage of scientific farming techniques being perfected in newly established agricultural colleges, particularly by the 1920s and 1930s. She worried that uneducated small-scale farmers would cling to traditional methods that quickly exhausted the soil or were ineffective in a desert environment because they were distrustful of book learning or did not know about the resources available to them.¹¹⁶ She was especially excited about a government-funded opportunity for young professionals recently trained in the agricultural colleges to offer their expertise for free to

¹¹⁴ Sharlot Hall, "Arizona's Biggest Gold Mine," *Land of Sunshine* (Aug. 1899), 148-159, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 14.2; Sharlot Hall, "Yavapai County," *Arizona Magazine* (Oct. 1906), 77-82, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 14.2; Arizona Small Mine Operators Association, Membership card and certification document, August 31, 1938, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.2; Sharlot Hall, "It Makes Us Mad to Think We Have to Change Our Ways and so We Go Out on Strike," *Prescott Jr. Miner*, May 19, 1920; "Mines of New State Fine Display at the Territorial Fair," *Arizona Republican*, November 12, 1911; "Exhibit to Show Arizona Copper," unknown publication, c. 1920s, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.8.

¹¹⁵ BB Caddle, Copper & Brass Research Association to Mr. PG Spilsbury, Arizona Industrial Congress, February 2, 1925, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.2; Whiting & Davis Company to Sharlot Hall, April 8, 1925, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 15.2.

¹¹⁶ Sharlot Hall, fragmented article, c. 1907-1936 on new poultry farming techniques, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8; Sharlot Hall, "What Our State Agricultural Experts Can Do For Us," *Journal Miner* August 27, 1919.

farmers who applied during the early years of the Depression.¹¹⁷ Her interest in scientific matters also expanded into the health field. Indeed, an exposé she wrote on the practical challenges associated with large numbers of consumptive settlers traveling to the Southwest circulated internationally; the chief British health officer of New Zealand personally wrote her a response about similar challenges they were facing in Wellington.¹¹⁸

Hall also understood the importance of well-maintained, extensive infrastructure throughout the state. While railroads were key, she focused most of her attention on roads, particularly after automobiles became more readily available and she herself discovered the joy and freedom associated with owning a car.¹¹⁹ She believed that good roads were the key to continued economic development because they connected Arizona with the growing population centers in California and encouraged tourism. After all, she reasoned, who would go out of their way to do business or to visit if they had to drive a poorly maintained dirt road that took twice as long when there were other, easier locales they might choose instead? She even went so far as to argue that she could determine which of the towns in a county would become tourist destinations not by the quantity or quality of their attractions, but by the quality of the roads into town.¹²⁰

Arizona's mining-based economic strength, the potential such riches could offer the nation, and her citizens' healthy western individualism formed the basis for Hall's argument that Arizona should have a full say in national policies and decisions being made about it. For

¹¹⁷ Sharlot Hall, "All Together for Yavapai!" unknown publication, June 11, 1919, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8; Sharlot Hall, "What Our State Agricultural Experts Can Do For Us," *Journal Miner* August 27, 1919.

¹¹⁸ JM Mason, NZ Department of Public Health, to "Sir" Sharlot Hall, March 19, 1908, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 6.5.

¹¹⁹ Sharlot Hall, fragmented article, August 13, 1919 on information about new road being voted on, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8.

¹²⁰ Sharlot Hall, "Roads - And How They Make Us What We Are," unknown publication, June 11, 1919, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 13.8.

example, she tried to kill the Hamilton Bill debated in Congress in 1905, which would have admitted New Mexico and Arizona to the Union together as a single state despite the fact that the majority of the population in both territories vehemently opposed the idea. Her poem and article, both entitled “Arizona” and placed on each Congressmen’s desk, drew on three themes to prove that Arizonans should be the ones making such important political decisions about their future. Her sixty-three page article highlighted each of Arizona’s major industries, designed to educate the reader about the economic power of the territory. Her poem drew on the rhetoric of westerners as the fulfillment of the independent ideal American, perhaps even superior Americans to easterners, thus utilizing the same kind of language President Theodore Roosevelt often used to glorify the West to undermine his own bill.¹²¹ She opened with the line, “No beggar she in the mighty hall where her bay-crowned sisters wait...No child, with a child’s insistence, demanding of a gilded toy,” promising that Arizona would “make ye the mould of an empire here in the land ye scorn; While ye drowse and dream in your well-housed ease that States at your nod are born.”¹²² Arizona was not dependent or degraded, and therefore not a subordinate forced to do whatever she was told to do by the government. She went on to argue that Arizonans were undertaking the physical work of empire-building, hence acknowledging the colonial aspects of westward expansion, and argued that Arizonans were better examples of the American spirit and more closely tied to the founding fathers’ vision because they were not fettered by eastern urban problems. While a romantic portrait of the region, her point was clear: Arizona deserved to be an

¹²¹ Richardson, *West from Appomattox*, 307-342.

¹²² Hall, “Arizona,” *Cactus and Pine*, 95-96.

autonomous, equal political unit due both to her economic power and potential and the moral qualities her citizens possessed.

Hall also justified Arizona's full and equal inclusion in the Union through the prominent role Arizonans played in the Spanish-American War. She was particularly fascinated by Bucky O'Neill, one of the Rough Riders that charged San Juan Hill under Roosevelt's leadership. As a settler who came to Arizona in the late 1870s, spent some time in Tombstone associating with the Earp brothers, moved to Prescott and held a variety of white-collar positions (eventually even mayor), was a volunteer and Captain during the war, and was killed by the Spaniards in Cuba, he was the perfect example of a local history hero who could simultaneously be used to lobby for Arizonan valor and sacrifice on behalf of the United States. Hall wrote a short story about him and was instrumental in getting a memorial statue erected in Courthouse Square. She convinced Solon Borglum, who had earned a national reputation for his romantic depictions of frontier life and stereotypical portraits of Native Americans, to design the statue. Hall organized the unveiling event and wrote a news article describing the ceremony for those unable to attend. She emphasized the valor and character of the entire regiment that O'Neill represented, saying, "the idea of a cavalry regiment of western men originated with O'Neill...his dream was to raise the entire regiment in Arizona. A thousand men had been enrolled when it became known that only 210 would be allowed from Arizona."¹²³ O'Neill's record "from the day he left his home town tells of his devotion to duty - his care of his men, his modesty which made him avoid all display of authority; his courage and good humor when things were uncomfortable."¹²⁴ Always mindful

¹²³ Sharlot Hall, "The Rough Rider Monument and Captain O'Neill," unknown newspaper article, 1924, Sharlot Hall Collection, Box 10.7.

¹²⁴ Hall, "Rough Rider Monument," Sharlot Hall Collection.

of harnessing tourist potential, she also made sure to emphasize that O'Neill's Prescott now "wears a star" as a city nationally recognized for a particularly noteworthy monument or artistic work. Noble Arizonans as embodied by Bucky O'Neill had fought valiantly for the United States; they had participated in, nay led, the battle for the American values of liberty and independence in Cuba. The memorial, erected by small individual donations from hearty farmers and miners, had been designated nationally significant.¹²⁵ Arizona had proved itself not only as an equal but a leader in America's new imperial project.

In contrast to Hall's other artistic and historical work, it is difficult to categorize her efforts to modernize Arizona and justify its new equal position in the nation within any sort of general pattern of women's activism. She made no effort to couch her activities and demands within domestic language, or in terms of the benefits it could bring to the family. She proved herself cunning in tactical business decisions that would enhance Arizona's reputation and potential tourist revenue. She understood the inner workings of mining technology and could clearly explain it in laymen's terms. She became an advocate for large corporations. She was interested in the nitty-gritty details of infrastructure improvements and scientific crop management. She showed a keen grasp of wartime rhetoric. Hall was not just a sweet, nostalgic woman mourning a quickly fading romantic Old Western frontier - she was actively involved in paving the way for a fully modern, integrated Arizona.

Hall's work in these arenas also helps to illuminate others way in which the West was in fact a settler colonial society, and how women like Hall helped to justify it. First, her rhetoric can best be understood within the fundamental ambiguities posed by those in a colonizer-colonized

¹²⁵ Hall, "Rough Rider Monument," Sharlot Hall Collection.

position as put forward by Marilyn Lake.¹²⁶ In a settler colonial model, there is a triangular relationship between the metropole, the settler, and the colonized people. Thus the settlers struggle with fundamental ideological tensions. They are themselves the colony of the metropole, placing them in an inferior position, yet white citizens of the colony were simultaneously engaged in a colonizing project, giving them power over racialized others. In Arizona's case, as a territory (and a relatively unpopulated and seemingly barren territory at that) it was subordinate to the United States government and not granted the same rights and privileges as a full state, and based on Hall's language they were apparently trying to overcome an inferiority complex. By demonstrating that they led an international struggle for freedom, as they saw it, and by claiming moral equality or even superiority based on their western heritage, they pushed back against the perceived power differential. In advocating for Arizona's modernization, Hall also helped, if unknowingly, to provide a classic justification for a settler colonialist project. The settlers were taking full advantage of the natural resources available in the area, creating material improvements, and increasing agricultural efficiency and production levels. They could claim that they deserved the land as they more fully (to their minds) exploited its potential. At the same time, as all the trappings of western civilization became ensconced in the area, the visual signs of physical conquest and of those who were displaced by its coming slowly disappeared.

Hall's work thus naturalized and legitimated a settler colonialist project. By presenting loving, romantic portraits of an untamed landscape, she promoted the understanding that the old-timers peacefully claimed the land as their own; in developing it, they had a God-given right to

¹²⁶ Marilyn Lake, "The Australian Dream of an Island Empire: Race, Reputation, and Resistance," *Australian Historical Studies* 46, no. 3 (2015): 410-424.

it. Through Hall's historical and preservationist work, the old-timers became the founding fathers of Arizona, and their history was reinforced through a variety of mediums. When it was physically inscribed onto the landscape, becoming a familiar sight to all, when it was taught to children and used to promote a particular set of values, when it was used to bring a community together, and when it was used to give tourists and readers nationwide that same picture, the story became so familiar as to appear the natural, inevitable course of events. Such an understanding could be reinforced by ignoring or selectively forgetting the violent aspects of conquest, and by relegating Native Americans' place to an ode to their timeless culture woven into the background. Simultaneously, Hall's commitment to Arizona's modernization and the steps it needed to take to become a fully autonomous yet equal participant in the United States reinforced the realities of the triangulated nature of settler colonial societies.

Modern Prescott is a town fully ensconced within its settler past. The town's business and entertainment hub continues to revolve around Courthouse Square, where the 1901 courthouse acts as the focal point for the district. Rows of American flags march toward the entrance to the courthouse, while on the ground one can trace Arizona's history through a timeline that leads to the courthouse doors. The Bucky O'Neill statue is now joined with memorials to local soldiers who participated in more recent conflicts. On one side of the square lies Whiskey Row, where turn of the century saloons vie for patrons' business and celebrate the lawless, seedy, exciting Old West of cowboys and prostitutes. The most famous, The Palace, still has several visible bullet holes from various gunfights that erupted in the saloon, and proudly displays the original bar hand-carried out by devoted citizens during a 1900 fire that destroyed most of the business district. A block down lies the Sharlot Hall Museum with the original buildings still intact and its

commitment to domestic, peaceful, law-abiding citizens as strong today as it was during Hall's lifetime. The town's biggest event each year is the Prescott Rodeo, the world's oldest continuously operating rodeo. Held annually around the Fourth of July, it celebrates the life, skill, grit, and courage of cowboys and ranch hands. The Smoki association continues to attract members today and even operates a local museum about their history and to display their collections, though they do now acknowledge the more problematic aspects of their past. Meanwhile, one of the few physical indicators of a continuing Native American presence is the Yavapai-Apache reservation on the outskirts of town, specifically two casinos with neon signs beckoning visitors to enter. The battle for the true legacy of the Old West, that of lawless renegades and romanticized individualist masculinity or hard-working, law-abiding, enterprising citizens and homesteading families, still rages today. But the unquestioning acceptance of a settler-based heritage has clearly won; Hall's and others' work laid a successful foundation for a white, settler colonial understanding of the region's past and character.

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