AMERICAN INDIANS AND THE GROUNDS OF AMERICAN LITERARY HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

ANGELA CALCATERRA: American Indians and the Grounds of American Literary History
(Under the direction of Eliza Richards)

This study argues that material and intellectual exchanges between indigenous people and Euro-Americans shaped American literature throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Therefore, one cannot analyze literary texts about Indians without attention to Native communities, knowledge traditions, and written and oral forms. Literary critics have emphasized white authors’ stereotypical representations of Indians and have traced a separate Native American literary tradition focused on political engagements. Although this framework importantly reveals that colonial power dynamics influenced literary texts, it obscures a composite literary tradition in which Native people were not simply passive or resistant but actively participated in and shaped the representational modes that characterize American literature. During the eighteenth century, Anglo-Americans in the Southeast and Northeast relied on Native mapping, record-keeping, communications, and political alliances as they attempted to settle the land and represent the various communities who inhabited it. Writings by William Byrd II, Eleazar Wheelock, and Samson Occom (Mohegan) demonstrate that Native kinship networks, tribal histories, ceremonial diplomacy, and knowledge of the land influenced settlement literature as much as drawing boundary lines, cataloguing flora and fauna, and spreading Christianity. During the nineteenth century, U.S. nationhood did not end Indians’ impact on textual
forms, despite the U.S.’s systematic attempts to annihilate Indians physically and
discursively so as to gain access to their land. I trace in the writings of Lydia Sigourney,
Washington Irving, Mark Twain, Charles Alexander Eastman (Dakota Sioux), and
Stephen Crane tensions between localized, fact-based depictions of Indians and the mass-produced sensational and romantic literary figures that served settler colonialism. These
tensions, I argue, generated new representational interests and shifted the grounds of
American literary forms. Considering Indian nations as central to the development of
American literature, “American Indians and the Grounds of American Literary History”
demonstrates that transnational studies need not mean transatlantic or hemispheric, for
local exchanges and contests between Natives and non-Natives both contributed to and
unsettled national identity.
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Introduction: The Native Grounds of American Literature

“America can be revived, rejuvenated, by recognizing a native school of thought. The Indian can save America.”

--Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*

When he wrote *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (1933), Luther Standing Bear (Lakota Sioux) had recently returned to his home reservation in South Dakota, only to witness the physical and mental suffering of his people. Lakotas on the Pine Ridge reservation faced daunting problems: lack of opportunity for employment, loss of children to off-reservation schools, “oppression and poverty,” a “deadened” moral and spiritual life because government agents had prohibited tribal rituals (226). Yet even at this nadir for his people, brought about by exploitative nineteenth-century U.S. governmental policies and white Americans’ greed for “every last bit of human ground,” Standing Bear predicted an Indian cultural resurgence (244). He describes Lakota practices, knowledge traditions, and spirituality in *Land of the Spotted Eagle*, demonstrating that they have retained their history, values, and, most importantly, deep connection to the American landscape. Although they have changed in response to extreme challenges and new interactions, the Lakotas can call upon their deep-rooted, place-based philosophy, art, and practical experience to move forward. Furthermore, Standing Bear asserts, Native knowledge can “save America.” The “ideals and practices” of his people can open American minds to alternative values and make America “cognizant of itself; aware of its identity” (255).
This study is an effort to recognize a “native school of thought” where it has often gone overlooked: in American literature and print media from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although this period saw the decimation of many tribes because of disease and war, the removal of most Native groups from their homelands, and the confinement of Indians on reservations, a range of literary texts and print materials written by Natives and non-Natives demonstrate that Native presences, practices, and knowledge traditions nevertheless influenced American literature and culture. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Indians and Euro-Americans exchanged maps, intermarried, hunted buffalo, disputed land rights, converted souls, bartered baskets, fought wars, and played sports; such events produced natural histories and travel narratives, newspaper articles and boy books, that incorporate the literary and cultural practices of both groups. “American Indians and the Grounds of Literary History” indeed argues that one cannot understand Indians in American literary history without attending to Native points of view. From their impact on William Byrd II’s literary mapping in 1728 to their enabling of Stephen Crane’s critique of intra-national imperialism during the 1890s, Natives integrated their perspectives into eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American literary history.

This is not a study of the idea of “the Indian” in white literary texts, but of actual Indians, in the fabric of American society, that shaped American literary forms.¹ Many scholars have shown that white authors’ ideological constructs—the “noble savage,” the “vanishing Indian,” the Indian “on the warpath”—supported colonizing projects

¹ For studies of “the Indian” in “the white” cultural imagination, see Pearce; Slotkin; Maddox; Scheckel; and Mielke.
devastating to Native people. But colonial power dynamics have lead scholars to separate Native and non-Native intellectual traditions and literary texts to a point that minimizes Native influence. When Europeans arrived in North America, over 2 million people lived across the continent in extremely diverse landscapes and spoke over 400 different languages. Only gradually did they come to think of themselves as “Indian” (Silverman, Red Brethren 5-7) and today Indian nations retain their distinct cultural practices and languages. Local Native communities in particular landscapes impacted particular settler groups and various literary texts. Moreover, Native nations strategically participated in early American imperial contests and maintained national presences resistant to U.S. imperialism, even after the formation of the U.S. nation. While in recent decades scholars have revised our understanding of an insular U.S. literary culture by charting transatlantic and hemispheric readerships and influences, these intra-national connections and contests have gone overlooked. This study demonstrates that transnational need not mean transatlantic or hemispheric, for local exchanges and contests between Natives and non-Natives both contributed to and unsettled national identity.

From the beginnings of European settlement in America, European nations relied on Native nations for information about the land and the diverse people on it. John Smith’s Map of Virginia (1612) provides a salient example of “European” printed material formed through such exchanges (Figures 1 and 2). On the map, Smith marks the limits to the Jamestown colonists’ knowledge with crosses; the place-names beyond these cross are “unequivocally attributable to native cartography” (Waselkov 211). In his General History of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles (1624), Smith explains
to his readers, “as far as you see the little Crosses ... rivers, mountains, or other places have been discovered; the rest was had by information of the Savages, and are set down according to their instructions” (25). The overwhelming map, with countless Indian villages delineated, demonstrates the complexity of Native political organization even within the Algonquian-speaking Powhatan confederacy. As cartographers have pointed out, Smith surely relied on Native informants for information about villages and place names within as well as beyond the limits of the crosses. His cartography, moreover, incorporates symbolism--longhouses and circled dots--common to Southeastern Native maps, demonstrating a more subtle level of influence (Waselkov 212-13).
Such maps are a visible manifestation of the ways in which Europeans relied upon or absorbed Native knowledge into written forms. The map puts into clearer perspective a
process also evident in the form and content of Smith’s writings. Like the map, Smith’s *General History of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* accumulates detail about Indians from multiple authors and points of view; it describes locations and social structures to a point of confusion that works against its attempts to categorize or define. Demonstrating the often overlooked diversity of Native groups, Smith describes “Several Nations of sundry languages” that surround Powhatan’s territories, of which “not any one understandeth another but by Interpreters” (25). His own fragmented and scattered narrative, despite its claims of Smith’s control and authority, might be best encapsulated in Smith’s assessment of trying to gain a footing on the Virginia coast: “how great a matter it was all this time to finde but a Harbour” (21). A reader indeed finds it difficult to navigate Smith’s lengthy depictions of how various Indians plant corn, fight wars, practice religion, hunt deer, and much more, all of which are interspersed with qualifications as to the origins of this knowledge, such as “they say,” “it could not be perceived,” and “we had not language sufficient” (31, 35, 37). These depictions shape the prose itself; the chaos of diverse Indian practices, information, and placed-based identifications (which I will discuss in Chapter 1) guides the narrative’s course through, for example, rivers “inhabited by severall nations, or rather families, of the name of the rivers” (23). Moreover, just as Smith relies upon trade with Powhatan for survival, his text relies upon dialogue with Powhatan to demonstrate Smith’s political savvy. Even while acknowledging that Powhatan’s influence waned and the colonists eventually gained the upper-hand, one can nevertheless locate these processes of exchange integral to Smith’s history.
Multidisciplinary studies of early America have begun to consider the impact of Native networks and knowledge on narratives of encounter. But studies of intercultural exchange in these early texts have not carried forward into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in effect erasing actual Indians from the later colonial and U.S. national American literary landscape. It is tempting to institute a clear divide between white and Indian literature once colonists gained the upper hand, and particularly once the French and Indian War and then the Revolutionary War largely removed Indians’ opportunities for play-off diplomacy with European nations. Sandra Gustafson’s identification of a “disciplinary schism” between early Americanists, who work on the colonial period and early republic, and U.S. Americanists, who work on the national period after 1835, is pertinent here. When it comes to acknowledging Native influence on non-Natives, one can push back the dividing moment even earlier, to the early eighteenth century. Gustafson notes that early Americanists “are moving quickly to develop new histories that are less bound to the nation as a framework of knowledge production, and these histories have much to offer to scholars working in later periods” (“Histories” 108). A more systematic consideration of Native nations, I argue, can bridge this divide between early and later Americanists, for Native nations serve as consistent reminders of the fiction of U.S. national cohesion.

This is not to reinforce the nation-state as the defining category of literary analysis. “American Indians and the Grounds of American Literary History” analyzes

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2 See, for example, Glover, “Channeling Indigenous Geopolitics”; Whitehead; and Cohen.

3 For a concise summary of how Native nations played European nations against one another, see Perdue and Green 36-40. For more in-depth studies, see White, The Middle Ground; and Oberg, Uncas.
interactions on various scales and acknowledges the diversity within nations. In the past several decades, historians have considered Indians to be influential actors in history rather than mere victims—and some have argued that Indians influenced European writers—by focusing on micro-interactions in locales and regions. Indian national and transnational formations necessitate this micro-level approach. As I demonstrate in Chapter Two, the Iroquoian transnational model relies upon each nation playing a particular role in the confederacy based in locale and kinship obligations. Such a model reminds us to “ground” our interest in the transnational in the local differences that shaped practical, everyday interactions necessary to the functioning of diplomacy.

In these local, daily interchanges, Natives often left their mark on literary texts written by Euro-Americans in ways that the authors did not understand and therefore did not draw attention to or explain. Consider, for example, Washington Irving’s hunting tour on the prairies west of the Mississippi in 1832 and the published account of that journey, A Tour on the Prairies (1835), which I discuss at length in Chapter Three. Irving traveled through a “storied landscape” that reflected, among other Native-land relations, Pawnee subsistence practices and Osage place-based histories (Calloway 8). He relied for both his journey and his narrative upon Osage guides and informants, and his text itself mimics the relationship between story, livelihood, and place essential to these plains tribes’ daily lives. A desultory traveler, Irving was less interested in straightforward depiction of Indians than in telling a good story; his text absorbs rather than tries to interpret a landscape rife with the stories of those who had experienced it for many years.

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4 See, for example, White, The Middle Ground; and Kupperman, Indians and English. For work by historians and anthropologists who suggest that Indians influenced Euro-American writers in early America, see Kupperman, Indians and English; and Pointer.
Without an understanding of plains tribes’ ecological, practical, and spiritual connections to this particular landscape—evident in Pawnee horse culture (itself an intercultural formation), Native sacred spaces in the West, and Osage storytelling rituals—one could easily miss the intercultural elements of Irving’s text.

Elsewhere, non-Native authors incorporated Native content in ways that made sense to them but that our current understanding of colonial power dynamics and race relations obscures. William Byrd II’s *History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina* (c. 1730), I demonstrate in Chapter One, draws on Native articulations of tribal history and settlement practices to unsettle dividing lines between social groups—such as Indian and English—that we take for granted in colonial situations. When viewed in light of Byrd’s social and political relationships with particular Indians—which one must glean from colonial legal records, Byrd’s letters and diaries, ethnohistorical accounts of trade relationships, and southeastern Native cartography—Byrd’s *History* begins to resemble in its form southeastern Native maps from this period, which emphasize not accuracy and scale but a dynamic landscape understood through experience and social interaction. Even as it describes a project of colonial boundary formation that would seem to displace indigenous people, the *History*, read in light of these related documents, reveals that Indians were in fact integral to the formation of colonial identities and literature.

As these examples indicate, understanding Native contributions to American literature requires multiple disciplinary practices. Historians developed ethnohistory—history “informed by ethnography, linguistics, archeology, and ecology”—for this very
reason, but literary scholars have yet to follow suit with a consistent interdisciplinary approach to understanding Indians in literature (American Society for Ethnohistory, par. 1). This study offers such an approach, drawing upon the methods and findings of history, Native studies, media studies, anthropology, archaeology, and cartography to locate literary texts in the physical spaces and material relationships between the people, objects, oral exchanges, print materials, and landscapes that shaped them. An emphasis on materiality allows me to avoid binaries of Indian/white, orality/literacy, and traditional/modern. I discuss identity in terms of particular actions and describe the exchange and integration of oral, pictorial, and textual information in space and time. I attend to how Native groups changed over time while still retaining aspects of their tribal or national identities. I look to trade networks and news reportage that kept local concerns at play within an era of national consolidation.

In addition to its interdisciplinary methods, this project draws from both Native and non-Native knowledge traditions. In his work on colonial Latin America, Walter Mignolo asserts that “decolonizing literary history” requires thinking in terms other than literature and history, which are European constructs (Mignolo, “Rethinking the Colonial Model” 186). Mignolo describes a process by which, from the sixteenth century onward, Western civilization produced its difference from indigenous peoples’ verbal practices, creating “literature” and “history” according to European standards and projecting Europe’s “particular or regional genealogy ... to a universal dimension” (176). Mignolo calls on scholars to locate a material ground beneath this universal projection, to ask, “What are the relations and historical connections among place, writing, telling stories,
and producing knowledge?” (163). To Mignolo’s question, this project adds: how did Native people conceive of history, literature, and knowledge production in various times and places, and to what extent did their understanding of these categories impact non-Native writers? What exchanges on the ground participated in or complicated the articulation of literature and history as such?

I focus on place and material encounter in order to rethink literary history in terms of Native contributions. Standing Bear reminds his readers that place is fundamental to many Indians’ conceptions of self and community. I do not wish to suggest that indigenous people have an inherent, static connection to “nature” or “the land.” Instead, following Native scholars like Lisa Brooks, I emphasize “physical, actual, material relationship[s]” to ecosystems and definable places, as well as the “ongoing relationship and responsibility to land and kin” that Brooks calls the “core” of Native identity (xxiv, xxiii). Far from an abstract “contact zone” (M. Pratt 8), the particular spaces in which I locate the production of literary texts demonstrate the diversity and dynamism of Native tribal communities in various historical and geographic contexts. 5 As Linda Tuhiwai Smith observes, space “is often viewed in Western thinking as being static or divorced from time” a view that “generates ways of making sense of the world as a ‘realm of stasis’, well-defined, fixed and without politics” (52). Native groups changed over time, like everyone else, while often retaining a strong commitment to their homelands and communities. A powerful example of this is the Mohegan tribe of Connecticut. The

5 Mary Louise Pratt’s “contact zone” opened up important ways of thinking about interaction in colonial situations. I want to move beyond the abstraction of space and the “contact zone” as largely defined by Europeans’ imposition of their ideas onto others. As Pratt describes it, the “contact zone” is “space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (8).
Mohegans have managed, through early strategic political negotiations with English settlers, the incorporation of both Protestant Christianity and Iroquoian diplomacy, and the building of a Congregationalist Church on their lands in the 1830s, to retain part of their homelands in present-day Connecticut, on which their ancestors are buried and they live as a federally recognized tribe today. Such stories defy the idea of a static “Indianness” or a fixed relationship with the land, an insight that, I argue in Chapter Three, shaped the Indian-related writings of popular nineteenth-century poet Lydia Huntley Sigourney, who grew up just a few miles from the Mohegans in Connecticut.

In my emphasis on material situations and practices, I join a number of critics who have turned away from the idea of fixed cultures or identities to the political, social, and legal impact of Natives’ writings, i.e. to their use of writing to articulate political goals, effect legislative changes, control knowledge, and participate in public spheres. Scholars have recently shown that writers like eighteenth-century Mohegan minister Samson Occom, rather than dwelling debilitatingly “between two worlds” of Indianness and whiteness, lived lives of action engaged with political, legal, and print issues relevant to Native peoples. This move away from Indian/white binaries that romanticize and de-historicize Native peoples and obscure issues of sovereignty central to tribal communities is crucial, as Native scholars such as Craig Womack (Creek) have emphasized. Yet Womack also points out that “politics are not the only factors important to an analysis of Native literature, since artistic imagination is more than a legal case study” (78). At times, foregrounding these writers’ overtly political works or engagement with the

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6 See, for example, L. Brooks; Konkle; and Round.
practicality of publication has led to a devaluing of the literary complexities of their texts. It also tends to return us to fixed Indian and English sides. A compelling recent work on intersections between Native and non-Native communications networks in early New England, for example, polarizes Indians and whites by emphasizing “contests over communication” and the “anxieties” about Indians that disrupt “confident [English] narratives of conquest and settlement” (Cohen 27, 7). The focus on white oppression and Indian resistance minimizes Indian influence, even in a study based on intersections between Native and English writers and audiences.

Without denying that political oppositions exist, “American Indians and the Grounds of American Literary History” considers Natives’ contributions to, in addition to their contestations of, American print culture. By treating Native literatures as part of American literary history rather than a separate canon or “counterpublic” (Round 133), I aim not to enact another form of colonization but rather to demonstrate the ways in which separation has limited our view of dynamic cultural interchange in the development of American literary forms. The oft-repeated literary history of early images of “noble savages,” followed by “vanishing Indians” in the Jacksonian Removal era, followed by little to no literary interest in Indians during the late nineteenth century, does not tell the whole story of Indians in American literary history. For example, the idea of a “Removal era” with a beginning and end is itself misleading, for Indians were removed from their lands long before and after the Jacksonian era, and some Native groups managed to retain their homelands. Moreover, how do Native groups view their own histories, which have of course continued long after removal and the late nineteenth-century? While they dealt
during the period of this study with the very real consequences of U.S. colonialism, Indians had their own ways of conceptualizing events. Following Doreen Massey, I consider space to be “a meeting up of histories” (4), in which both sides’ perspectives on past, present, and future events come into play. Doing so requires attention to multiple ways of conceptualizing “history.”

For an example of Native historiography, consider the Lakota winter counts. As Dakota Sioux philosopher Vine Deloria Jr. has observed, “history” in the winter counts is characterized by a lack of continuous subject matter (Figure 3). These Lakota records depict one important event per year: “One year might be remembered as the year that horses came to the people, the next year might be the year when the berries were extremely large, the year after perhaps the tribe might have made peace with an enemy” (V. Deloria 98). One will not find “a series of political or military events being recorded year after year” in the winter counts, which might not “mention a number of important treaties” or even “the battle with Custer” (V. Deloria 98), a key benchmark in Euro-American histories of the so-called “Indian wars” of the late nineteenth century. This study takes seriously such alternative conceptions of the relations between events, in order to rethink American literary history from perspectives beyond those of Euro-America. As I show in Chapter Five, Indians’ accounts of well-known events made their way into mainstream periodicals and newspapers and offered realist writers like Stephen Crane a platform within the nation from which to critique U.S. imperialism. By attending to such connections, this study aims to combine Native histories with local, regional, and national U.S. historical events and literary expressions.
Many of the Lakota Winter counts that survive today were copied by Lakotas for interested non-Natives at the end of the nineteenth century. The winter counts’ ongoing relevance to Native communities, even after Euro-Americans had removed Indians from “lands sacred to them ... where every mountain and lake held meaning for their identity and faith” (Weaver 12) and had attempted to eradicate their cultural practices on reservations and in boarding schools, attests to the need to consider Native points of view well beyond early narratives of encounter. At the end of the nineteenth century, Indians retained knowledge of events and landscapes that non-Natives could not understand without them, and that knowledge shaped cultural narratives essential to literary expression. In 1892, for example, Olin D. Wheeler, advertiser for the Northern Pacific
Railway, sought information about the U.S. nation’s most iconic battle with Indians—the Battle of the Little Bighorn—from Indian informants. In June of 1876, a group of Lakota and Cheyenne Indians had defeated George Armstrong Custer’s Seventh Calvary at the Little Bighorn River, to the shock of the nation. Because so few members of Custer’s army survived, whites were particularly reliant on Indians for information about what happened on the battlefield. When researching for his article on the battlefield site in the 1893 issue of *Wonderland*, the Northern Pacific Railway’s publication, Wheeler developed a questionnaire for Indians who had fought at the battle and obtained maps from Lakota leader American Horse (Figures 4 and 5). In his published article, Wheeler noted that Indians “have cleared up many things previously unknown, and changed radically the theories at first held regarding the nature of the action” (96).
The maps that American Horse drew for Wheeler, however, defy clear interpretation to a non-Lakota audience. What do the drawings of a horse in the first map and what seems to be a human figure in the second map indicate? These pictures, unlike the other parts of the maps, have not been labeled, and their large size throws off-balance the scale and significance of the battlefield locations and movements. They might represent a type of pictorial record similar to the winter counts. The human figure, moreover, resembles figures on Native maps from distant geographic and historic contexts, such as an early eighteenth-century map drawn by a Native of the Carolina piedmont, which I discuss in Chapter One. American Horse’s maps thus demonstrate the continuation of Native cartographic and historical traditions over centuries and Native informants’ active participation in the creation of knowledge, rather than passive submission to or recording of information for a white audience. As I will show in Chapter
Five, the particulars of the Battle of the Little Bighorn remained open to multiple interpretations for the very reason that Natives could control information about the event. This openness of the narrative shaped Dakota Sioux writer Charles Alexander Eastman’s “realist” depictions of the battle, which resemble Stephen Crane’s ironic dismantling of U.S. national narratives.

In the five case studies that follow, I hope to demonstrate the relevance of Standing Bear’s point that “America can be revived, rejuvenated, by recognizing a native school of thought” to American literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Recognizing Indian influence on American literary forms can revive our study of American literary history, opening up seemingly closed literary and historical categorizations for fresh analysis. The texts I examine here were often created in the presence of uncertainty and required exchanges of information in oral, pictorial, and textual forms between Natives and non-Natives. By recognizing our own uncertainty and engaging in dialogue with those Native elements of literary texts that estrange us, rather than ignoring their existence, literary scholars can uncover a more comprehensive literary tradition grounded in the multiple points of view that have always shaped American identity and literature. Indians merit a space in studies of American literature beyond white authors’ ideological constructs or writing practices, as well as beyond their own resistance to or adoption of those constructs or writing practices. This study offers a preliminary map of that elusive material and literary space where Native presences, practices, and knowledge impacted literary texts, a map that I hope will inspire many others.
A century after Smith drew his map of Virginia, Anglo-Americans continued to rely on Native knowledge of the southeastern coastal landscape and the social, political, and economic interactions on it. Chapter One, “Locating Indians along William Byrd II’s Dividing Line,” demonstrates that Native people in Virginia and the Carolina piedmont, the first locale in this map of American-Indian literary history, both contributed to and contested colonial identities in the Southeast. By the time William Byrd II was commissioned to redraw the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina in 1728, following a dispute that had lasted over 50 years and that had directly involved the Meherrin, Weynoke, Catawba, and Nottoway Indians, these Natives had lost much political power and land. Yet all of these groups had a role in shaping Byrd’s *History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina*, the text that emerged out of Byrd’s journey to redraw the Virginia-North Carolina boundary. When the Weynokes testified to the location of Weynoke Creek, a key point in the boundary-line dispute, and the Meherrins contested the location of the line based on their preemptive position on the landscape, Anglo-American colonial authorities like Byrd worked within Native social structures to develop their own sense of place. I argue that Native land-claims, movements, and maps shaped the *History*’s structure, ironies, and contradictions, indicating that colonial natural histories and travel writings register intercultural subjectivities.

Just as Native groups influenced the literature of settlement in the colonial Southeast, Indians in the late-eighteenth-century Northeast shaped the textual productions
of the missionaries who moved among them. Chapter Two, “Burnishing the Chain: Material and Metaphor in Eighteenth-Century Indian and English Missionary Texts,” argues that Algonquian and Iroquoian Native groups in New England both inflected and resisted transatlantic evangelical literary culture in the late eighteenth century.

Algonquian-speaking Native missionaries trained at Anglo-American minister Eleazar Wheelock’s famous Indian charity school—which later became Dartmouth college—drew upon Iroquoian diplomacy to develop what I call an “Indian transnational” community and communications culture. In the Iroquoian Confederacy, transnational alliances required consistent renewal of diplomatic ties by physical and symbolic means. Wheelock instead wished to convert the Six Iroquois Nations by seamlessly extending ideals of transatlantic evangelicalism and itinerant preaching into Iroquoia. His transatlantic fundraising pamphlets for his school nevertheless rely upon the Iroquoian model in which his missionaries were participating on the ground, despite his own misunderstanding of and distance from that model. His texts include many letters and journals about his missionaries’ experiences that ground transatlantic imagining in the local spaces and precise ceremonies at and by which alliances with the Iroquois must be renewed.

Alongside Wheelock’s narratives, I analyze letters written by Wheelock’s famous Native pupil Samson Occom (Mohegan). Occom’s writings demonstrate a strengthening of ties across distances through the use of the Iroquoian symbolic system, whereas Wheelock’s texts fail to integrate the transatlantic evangelical community with the attention to place-based diplomacy, symbolic kinship, and regular communications
required in Iroquoia. As much as any ideological distance from Indians, Wheelock’s physical distancing of his project from Native diplomatic networks led to the failure of his project and his eventual shift to working with Anglo-American, rather than Indian, pupils.

U.S. nationhood did not end Indians’ impact on textual forms; rather, Indians consistently grounded the development of a U.S. national identity in the local. Although myths of vanishing Indians and savage warriors accompanied literary expressions of nationhood and expanding communications technologies, counter-narratives arose from ongoing interactions on the ground. Chapter Three, “Lydia Sigourney and Washington Irving’s Coeval Indians,” describes how, when Jacksonian Removal-era authors were representing Indians as a static race of the past or degraded race of the present in contrast to the progressing U.S. nation, texts by Lydia Sigourney and Washington Irving became caught up in the detail of local Native communities that were still “living” according to their particular locales and traditions, even as they changed over time. Borrowing a term from anthropologist Johannes Fabian, I demonstrate that these Native groups’ “coevalness”—their “simultaneity and contemporaneity” with white Americans even as they remained distinct—interrupts the conventional narrative of Indian disappearance in Sigourney and Irving’s writings. The complexity of Mohegan Indian gender roles, political decisions, and sacred spaces directly impacted the Indian-related writings of Sigourney, who grew up only a few miles from the Mohegans in Norwich, Connecticut. In particular, the Mohegan Congregational Church, which Mohegan and white women

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7 I would like to thank Timothy Marr for suggesting this concept’s relevance to Sigourney and Irving’s writings.
built in the early 1830s and which stands on Mohegan lands today, became a recurring image in Sigourney’s writing, helping her to understand and represent Native sacred landscapes, political decisions, and gender roles in poetry and prose. Washington Irving’s *Tour on the Prairies* (1835) entangles itself in plains tribes’ dynamic relationships with prairie ecology, sacred landscapes, and storytelling, so that as he travels over the prairies he can only describe how these practices affect his journey and thus portrays Indians “living” simultaneously with whites. His Osage guides, moreover, demonstrate to him the connection between story and landscape that his tale of “every-day occurrences” on the prairies enacts in its very form.

The final two chapters argue that during the later nineteenth century, when Indians faced blatant U.S. colonial aggression in the form of so-called “Indian Wars,” Indians actions’ on the ground both informed and confused the consolidation of regional and U.S. national identities and literary expressions. The Civil War coincided with the development of mass communications technologies--the telegraph, the steam-powered printing press, the railroad--that paradoxically both displaced Indian groups and kept fact-based information about Indians circulating throughout the country. Sensational and romantic representations of Indians competed with more faithful representations of Indians’ situations and histories. Chapter 4 de-centers the Civil War from the North/South divide, suggesting that it should be considered in light of many civil wars with Indians throughout the later nineteenth century. Similarly to the Virginia-North Carolina border dispute in Chapter One, Indian participation on both sides of the Civil War and western Indian nations’ resistance to the U.S. during the war--for example in the Dakota Sioux
“uprising” of 1862--shaped Union and Confederate conceptions of self and other. Union newspapers reported on diverse Indian-related events and Indian participants in the war to align the Confederates with Indians, even suggesting that they had instigated the Dakota “uprising,” while Confederates identified with the Indians’ modes of warfare and the invasion of territory they faced from the U.S. These polarized depictions, I argue, demonstrated to reader the shifting nature of representation and implied a deeper “reality” about Indians. Alongside newspaper coverage, I read two post-war texts that reflect upon the news coverage: Charles Wesley Alexander’s *General Sherman’s Indian Spy* and Mark Twain’s *Roughing It*. While the former uses adventurous romance to try to obscure Union “savagery,” the latter humorously presents all information about Indians in the West as suspect. Both, however, imply a “real” Indian presence that can only be romanticized or racialized in the consolidation of national identity. In exposing this process, they begin to demonstrate how news coverage of Indian-related events impacted realist representations.

The analysis of Twain’s *Roughing It* (1872) provides a bridge between Chapters 4 and 5, for it rejects the Civil War as the sole event of 1860-65, turning to Twain’s travels in the West, where the U.S. sent its army during and immediately following the Civil War. As Twain recounts his time spent in the West during the Civil War, he implies a “real” Indian beyond the “information” about Indians circulated through railways, mail routes, and sensational stories. Twain’s irony and humor leaves room for uncertainty and interpretation--for contemplation of the “real.” Chapter Five claims that the ongoing tension between sensation and fact-based reportage in the later nineteenth century created
a more systematic intercultural realism in the works of late nineteenth-century writers. Charting realism as an intercultural phenomenon, I analyze Indian-related writings of both Stephen Crane and Charles Alexander Eastman (Dakota Sioux). These authors drew upon conflicting news coverage and memorialization of late nineteenth-century U.S.-Indian conflicts to create narratives that reveal the processes behind U.S. national consolidation. They accumulate newspaper stereotypes to the point of preposterousness, demonstrating both the impossibility of finding factual representations of Indians in the textual production of Indian wars and implying that a reality about Indians can only be gleaned from the space between conflicting reports. As they write about the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the U.S.-Lakota Ghost Dance conflict, “Indian-fighters” in the West, and even college football, these authors demonstrate the pervasiveness of mass-produced stereotypes about Indians even as they retain the Indian “real” in their published texts by leaving a gap in knowledge about Indians. Implying that information about Indians cannot be detached from the places in which Indians cultivate their own knowledge and histories, Crane and Eastman do not offer “realist” representations of Indians but indicate that “reality” lies behind mass-produced information.
Chapter 1: Locating Indians Along William Byrd II’s Dividing Line

The *History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina* (c. 1730), William Byrd II’s revised narration of the 1728 Virginia-North Carolina boundary line survey, begins by emphasizing the multiple players who shaped both boundary lines and histories in colonial America.\(^1\) While Byrd constructs his home colony of Virginia as a natural entity, claiming that in the “early Days” all of British North America “went at first under the General Name of Virginia,” he quickly undermines this preeminence by describing the complex interactions between various European and Native groups that defined Euro-American settlement (1). In particular, Byrd qualifies Virginia’s established settlement in America based on relationships with American Indians. Byrd notes that the early English settlers at Roanoke were “either Starved or cut to Pieces by the Indians,” and that the predecessors to Jamestown chose to search for “Wild Fruits” rather than plant Indian corn, which “Exposd them to be knockt on the head by the Indians” (2-3). Though Byrd grants that the Virginians and the Indians eventually established some kind of peace, he quickly asserts that this peace did not last because the English “disdained to intermarry” with the Natives (3). Byrd posits intermarriage as the only way to “civilize” and “convert” Natives to Christianity, and to “blanch” their skins (3-4). Yet, again, he

\(^1\) In contrast, the *Secret History of the Dividing Line*, the journal-like narrative Byrd wrote during the surveying journey, begins abruptly with the 1727 royal order to survey the Virginia-North Carolina boundary line. Byrd later revised the *Secret History* to create the *History*; both documents circulated in manuscript form during Byrd’s lifetime, though the *History* was not published until 1841 and the *Secret History* until 1929 (Adams xxi; Bauer 188).
qualifies this ideological claim of “white” superiority with attention to particular colonial relationships. According to Byrd, the Quakers, who have treated the Indians with justice and kindness, as well as the French, who have adopted a policy of intermarriage, are the only Europeans who have fostered successful relationships with Natives (10). Thus, even as it touts European and specifically Virginian preeminence in America, Byrd’s introduction grants Natives a central role in the creation of Euro-American history and place, and by extension in Byrd’s own narrative project, the “history” of a “dividing line.”

This tension between foregrounding a Euro-American landscape and stressing the material, multilateral dynamics of that landscape’s creation and maintenance shapes The History as a whole and points to the significant role of American Indians in its formation. Yet it has been obscured by scholarly tendencies to divide European and Native American histories and literacies and to approach the History along disciplinary lines. Literary criticism has positioned Byrd narrowly as one of Virginia’s colonial elite and a European man of wit and letters, detached from the material relationships with Indians that significantly shaped his colonial experience. Such readings are particularly limiting considering that just a quick look into Byrd’s background reveals his continuation of the legacy of his father, the prominent trader William Byrd I, through consistent interactions with both Tributary Indians in Virginia and other, more distant Native groups like the

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2 Indeed, although several scholars have argued that Byrd undercuts a project of imperial cartography in the Histories by making visible the shifting nature of the dividing line, they have given little if any attention to the interactive (and, I argue, intercultural) nature of Byrd’s narrative itself. See Anderson 702-707; Bauer 194; and Parrish, “William Byrd II” 371. Additionally, those few literary scholars who do treat Indians in Byrd’s History focus on Byrd as “the” white, privileged colonizer and reductively group Indians in the History under a binary of colonial exploitation and victimization: “whites” who want land versus “Indians” from whom they take it. See, for example, Jehlen 108 and Nelson 32.
Cherokees. By contrast, historians acknowledge Byrd’s exchanges with Indians yet tend to divorce historical Indians from the literary nature of the text and take passages about Indians at face value, while the History’s ironies and subtleties necessitate rigorous textual analysis. Separately, these approaches have not considered that actual Indians might have influenced the History’s textual complexities. Yet instead of instituting a divide between “white” and “Indian,” or literature and history, Byrd’s History reminds us that these categories are not closed or static. Indeed, Byrd’s History evinces the instability of subject positions, the multiple and mutable identifications possible in a colonial situation.

This chapter argues that a careful reading of Byrd’s History must take into account what I call its “intercultural materiality”: the History’s consistent indications of material relationships with Indians that disrupt its boundaries as a solely Euro-American text. Byrd’s History points to interactions with Natives in the material spaces of the colonial southeast, with results like human contact, the exchange of goods, and the transmission of oral and textual information. The influence of these interchanges and their results can be traced in the form, style, and content of the text itself. Indeed, the

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3 Tributary Indians were those Native groups in Virginia who had agreed after the Powhatan Wars to let the English appoint their leaders, to contribute to the security of the colony, and to pay tribute to the Crown in beaver skins (Robinson, VA Treaties 1607-1722 65). On the lack of critical attention to Byrd and his father’s Indian affairs, see Merrell, “Some Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians” 104-5.

4 See Godbeer, “Eroticizing the Middle Ground” 95-101; Perdue 73; and Merrell, “Our Bond of Peace” 291.

5 I use the term “intercultural” to indicate a space between or among cultures on which individuals and groups meet and exchange and where “culture” dissipates as a strict mode of identification. Joanne Rappaport defines “interculturalism” in a modern political context as “the selective appropriation of concepts across cultures in the interests of building a pluralistic dialogue among equals” (5). While I am not arguing that Byrd was interested in a pluralistic dialogue among equals, I wish to emphasize the fluctuations of identity and processes of negotiation among cultures that informed both the boundary dispute and the History.
History resembles Native oral narratives and Native maps from this period that describe a dynamic landscape understood through experience and interaction. Like these narratives and maps, Byrd’s History emphasizes what Abenaki scholar Lisa Brooks describes as “a physical, actual, material relationship” to a definable ecosystem that is characteristic of Native place-based histories (xxiv). The History consistently complicates its ostensible subject, the history of a single Euro-American cartographic delineation, by narrating a broader spatial frame of material exchange and by allowing the histories of various peoples to shape its representations of the landscape. Further, in its both cartographic and literary form, the History reflects the fluid relationship between pictorial and textual maps that scholars have identified as characteristic of Native written forms.⁶ The History draws on Native models to articulate its narrative map of the southern colonial landscape, presenting an interactive colonialism through an intercultural text.

To locate Native authorship and influence, we need to look to the material practices that inform the History, including surveying, trade, hospitality, treaty formation, natural history, and narrative creation. A material frame allows for consideration of multiple literacies and histories; it expands our notion of literacy to include various oral, pictorial, and written forms, and it attends to the interchanges between diverse individuals

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⁶ Lisa Brooks points out that for Native groups as diverse as the Abenakis, Mayans, Mixtecs, and Ojibwes, “writing and drawing are both forms of image making,” and Native writers “spin the binary between word and image into a relational framework” (xxi). Native peoples of the Americas practiced various forms of writing, from the Mayan codices to the birch bark scrolls of Northeastern groups. G. Malcom Lewis notes that, although “[f]ar more spatially organized information was communicated by speech ... than by graphics,” Natives also created written maps that drew on both an “indigenous pictographic method for leaving messages and recording cultural traditions” and, after encounter, some characteristics of European cartography (75, 3).
and groups that influenced these forms. Thus, while intercultural materiality resembles in part Walter Mignolo’s concept of “colonial semiosis,” which encourages readers to look to the language of texts like Byrd’s Histories to locate complex intersections among cultures, it also requires readers to look beyond language to the material spaces and exchanges that shaped that language. Though we do not have access to a pure “reality” beyond these texts, we can expand our readings by locating processes of exchange in local spaces and contexts, processes that point us to alternative, influential records of history and place and thus create a more comprehensive view of American literature.

Intercultural materiality can also extend and complicate comparative work that has emphasized the multifaceted knowledge forms created in the culturally and geographically varied colonial experience but has stopped short of locating intercultural formations. Ralph Bauer and Susan Scott Parrish, for example, treat Natives not as actors that impacted colonial American literatures but as rhetorical figures that serve the expression of Creole identities in contradistinction to imperial centers. Neither scholar interprets representations of encounters with Indians in Byrd’s History as a testament to that text’s formation in the material intercultural encounters of a contested or shared terrain. Finally, we need to expand the study of early Native writing in North America

7 The anthology Early Native Literacies in New England (2008) gestures toward such a frame; its editors write, “Our decision to include material objects as well as products of “pure” alphabetic literacy reflects our sense that an overly strict definition of literacy unnecessarily restricts the full exploration of all early American literature, especially early Native literature. Moreover, it is important to recognize the fluid intersections of various ways of writing” (Bross and Wyss 5). In its focus on literacy and textuality, however, the anthology overlooks the material practices that informed processes of textual creation and point to Native influence on non-Native texts.

8 Mignolo’s “colonial semiosis” involves dialectics between “a plurality of signs from different cultures” and between “official stories” and “suppressed voices” (“The Movable Center” 262).

9 See Bauer 179-99; and Parrish, American Curiosity 220-1.
beyond colonial New England, where scholars have turned to missionary contexts to locate Native authorship because of the availability of Native texts or, most recently, have situated early English settlement texts within contests over communication. Rather than cording off Native authors and presences from non-Native writers or placing these in opposition, intercultural materiality encourages scholars to consider Native and non-Native texts within an intercultural context of material exchange that can expand our frameworks for locating and deconstructing early American literary identity.

In reading Byrd’s *History*, we need to assess the influence of those whose presence on the American landscape long preceded that of the British colonies. Native Americans had their own cartographic and narrative engagements with both the landscape and the boundary lines drawn on it, and it would be presumptuous to assume that Native writings, oral narratives, maps, and histories did not affect non-Native creations of place, narrative, and text. By taking Native perspectives into account as much as possible, we can better understand the role Indians played at the intersections of literature, history, and geography in early America. American Indian presences require us repeatedly to shift, remap, and cross over dividing lines in order to draw out complex networks of exchange and interaction in early American literature.

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10 See, for example, Bross and Wyss; J. Brooks, *American Lazarus*; and Wyss. On communication networks in early New England, see Cohen. In his compelling work that combines book history and Native studies, Cohen comes closest to treating early American texts interculturally, and yet his emphasis on the anxieties produced within the marginalia and visual structures of texts that “unsettle” English narratives creates a sense of a peripheral “Native” ideology disrupting an “English” one (148). I hope to show that the knowledge, communication and inscription methods, and material practices of various Native groups were integral to the very form, content, and style of certain texts authored by Euro-Americans.
Native Histories of the Dividing Line

In the History of the Dividing Line, Byrd plays up the difference between Virginia and the newer, less organized North Carolina colony, touting Virginia’s preeminence and order and emphasizing the Carolinians’ backwardness. Indeed, Byrd lays a seemingly natural, ideological dividing line over the physical boundary that he and his party survey, positioning himself as a Virginian in location, body, and mindset. Yet his text emanates from a border space in which the division between the two colonies becomes murky: the Virginia men revel in a disorderly backwoods lifestyle, several persons’ properties cross over the dividing line, and Byrd draws various overlaps between Virginians and North Carolinians, such as “both in Virginia and Carolina, ... those who take care to plant good Orchards are, in their General characters, Industrious People” (58, 88, 110). Thus, as Bauer puts it, “the American landscape resists the utopian reason of the Line, as local knowledge of the landscape conflicts with the logo-centrism of imperial geography” (194). But the History’s simultaneous imposition and disruption of a colonial dividing line stems not only from Byrd’s “parody” of “historiographic authorship” within a transatlantic context, as Bauer contends (193). Additionally, the Virginia-North Carolina boundary line and its disruption were influenced by Native American presences, histories, and concepts of space and place.

Byrd’s disdain for North Carolina, as expressed in the History, stems from the long history of the boundary dispute prior to the 1728 dividing line survey, a history contingent on parties of American Indians. The debate over the location of the dividing line, in which Byrd participated as a member of the Virginia Council from 1708 onward,
had been ongoing for over 50 years by 1728. The quarrel had escalated when Native elders in Virginia and North Carolina offered testimony about the location of the boundary line and Meherrin Indians submitted complaints about settler encroachment on their lands to the two colonies. Documents surrounding both of these situations reveal how Native Americans influenced Euro-American settlement practices and modes of identity formation. Martin Brückner has shown that “in theory and practice the construction of the American subject was grounded in the textual experience of geography” (6). According to Brückner, colonists integrated themselves into the land through geographic and textual practices like surveying, which helped them gain “a sense of place and entitlement” (12). During the boundary dispute between Virginia and North Carolina, each colony attempted to establish its identity and authority by delineating itself from its neighbor. Yet the drawing of the boundary line required interchange between colonial surveying practices and Native narratives of the land based in events and experiences, as colonists relied on Native testimony to locate the boundary and reacted to Native settlement practices that emphasized the contingency of Euro-American place and identity. During these processes of exchange and interaction, Natives intensified the ideological divide between the two colonies that so powerfully shapes Byrd’s *History*. They also forced each colony to question its place on the American landscape and to take account of the Indians’ own geo-historical identifications. Indeed, the boundary dispute reveals the practices of colonial cartography, identity formation, and textual creation that informed works like Byrd’s *History* as interactive and intercultural.
The controversy over the Virginia-North Carolina dividing line began with confusion related to distanced, imperial imposition of colonial boundaries. Two separate charters delineated the bounds of North Carolina in 1663 and 1665; the 1665 charter extended the boundary northward by about 30 miles, adding a strip of land to North Carolina that some Virginia settlers already inhabited (Boyd xxix). As taxes in North Carolina were cheaper, inhabitants of the region in question who held Virginia land titles began to refuse to pay rents to Virginia, leading to action by Virginia to settle the dispute. The first step was to determine the location of Weynoke Creek, which the 1665 North Carolina charter included as part of the boundary. The name of this creek had changed over time among the Indians and the English, and it was no longer recognizable as Weynoke creek. While the Carolinians tried to demonstrate that Weynoke Creek was the same as the Nottoway River, the Virginians tried to identify Weynoke Creek as Weycocon Creek, located 30º south of the Nottoway River (M. Parker 746; Robinson, *North and South Carolina Treaties* 49). Each colony wished to attach the name of Weynoke to the river or creek that would include the disputed land area within that colony’s own boundaries.

In order to locate Weynoke creek, the colonists turned to the oral testimonies of Indians, enacting what G. Malcom Lewis identifies as a common colonial practice of incorporating Native word maps into European cartography (75). In 1710, the Virginia Council (including William Byrd II) specially appointed commissioners to settle the boundary dispute and gave them authority to examine Tributary Indians about the
location of Weynoke Creek (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 167).\(^{11}\) Weynoke Creek had been named after the Weynoke Indians, who had lived there at one time. The commissioners thus engaged with the Weynokes’ history as they sought out the origins of this place name, observing the connection between a specific landscape and a people’s history that Native scholars including Lisa Brooks and Vine Deloria, Jr., cite as integral to Native space (Brooks xxiii). Take, for example, a piece of the recorded testimony of Jenny, Betty, and Mary, the three Weynoke Indians interviewed:

> ... the Wyanoke Indians removed from James River to Roanoke River to a place called by the Wyanokes to-Way-Wink, where they first planted Corne and bought all the Hunting Ground from thence to the mouth of Roanoke River, Up Chowan River to the Mouth of Maherin River, together with all the Beasts upon the Land and fish on the said River. From thence they Removed into a forke at the head of a Creek named by Wyanoak Indians, Wicocons which in the Wyanoke language signifies a little River or Creek, during theyr abode there their chiefe Towne and fort was in that forke, but they had corn fields in severall places downe the creeke and along Chowan River ... . (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 168)

These women’s narrative, like the other recorded testimonies, gives details of their people’s place-based experiences and references the boundary dispute only obliquely. In fact, only one deposition includes consistent, specific commentary on the boundary, for in that case the commissioners asked questions about the history of the Weynoke people, such as “What doe you know of ye Wyanok Indians leaveing James River & Whither did they goe & how long did they live at each place?” (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 169). By adopting the Indians’ narrative forms and concepts of place, the colonists were better able to obtain the desired information. Further, the commissioners worked within

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\(^{11}\) At the time of the call for depositions regarding the boundary line, Tributary Indians in Virginia included the Nottoways, Nansemonds, Meherrins, and Saponies, among others.
Native social structures as they gathered these oral histories from Indian elders, who were then and are today viewed by Natives as possessing the knowledge of their peoples (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 168-70). The words of the Indians interviewed created intercultural testimony that emphasizes what Sandra Gustafson describes as “the flexible boundaries and considerable overlap between oral and textual forms” in early America and the role of various verbal forms in the performance of social power and authenticity (*Eloquence Is Power* xviii). North Carolina commissioners likewise recorded Native oral testimonies to prove their authority; both colonies gleaned the testimonies for the answers they sought and concluded that their informants were the most authentic (M. Parker 748). While the colonists thus relied on Native testimony for colonial power, the Indians reiterated their own place-based identities and authority, both separate from and intertwined with Euro-American concerns.

The involvement of the Meherrin Indians in the Virginia-North Carolina boundary dispute reveals additional intercultural processes of geographic delineation and identity formation in colonial America. The Meherrins, tributaries of Virginia, consistently added momentum to the Virginia-North Carolina quarrel as they claimed lands in the disputed territory between the two colonies. After the Powhatan Wars of the early seventeenth century, the Meherrins had lived south of Virginia, below the boundary line then set between the English and the Indians. In 1705, increasing pressure from English settlers led the Virginia government to delineate a clear tract of land for the Meherrins around which the English could settle. Yet the Meherrins had located themselves in the disputed territory between Virginia and North Carolina, which led to problems of North Carolina
settlers refusing to observe the Meherrins’ land boundaries (Binford 167-69). The Meherrins’ complaints about these settlers and active presence in the disputed territory alternately played into and disrupted each colony’s sense of entitlement to a controlled space on the American landscape.

From the beginning of the Meherrins’ involvement in the boundary dispute, each colony attempted to base its authority in the contested territory on its relationship with these Natives. Virginia expressed its annoyance with North Carolina settlers based on the Meherrins’ “having been tributaries to this Government long before the Charter of the proprietors of Carolina” (Robinson, *VA Treaties, 1607-1722* 149). The Carolinians challenged back that the Meherrins had encroached on Carolina lands, in reaction to which the North Carolina government had negotiated a treaty with the Meherrins stipulating that the Meherrins should move. Virginia scoffed at this supposed treaty that “should Create a Title to [the Meherrins’] Lands or be a pretence of exacting Tribute from them who were long before Tributary to her Majesty Dominion of Virginia” (Robinson, *North and South Carolina Treaties* 47-50). While the Meherrins may well have negotiated with the North Carolina authorities in attempts to keep North Carolina settlers off of their lands, the Virginians were either unwilling to accept this possibility or unwilling to admit to Carolina that they even suspected the Meherrins of having taken an active role in such a treaty. Each colony’s authority depended on its knowledge of the Meherrins’ actions and its exclusive ability to negotiate with these Indians.

Yet rather than offering stable authority to either colony, the Meherrins’ presence caused the colonies’ self-identifications to shift as easily as the unstable land boundaries.
The North Carolinians moved from treaty negotiation with the Meherrins to brute force: by September of 1707, the Virginia Council had received information that Colonel Thomas Pollock and several armed North Carolinians had “in a hostile manner sett upon the Maherine Indians Settlement and having taken 36 of the said Indians prisoners kept them two dayes in a Forte till with the excessive heat and for want of water they were almost Destroyed” (Robinson, *VA Treaties, 1607-1722* 150). Pollock’s attempt to oust the Meherrins from the disputed territory outraged the Virginians, who argued that the Virginians “might with as much justice treat those who possess the adjoining Lands (and pretend to belong to Carolina) with the same severity as you have used those poor Indians since we have at least as much Reason to believe [the North Carolinians] within the bounds of Virginia as you have to imagine the Maherine Indians to be within yours” (Robinson, *North and South Carolina Treaties* 51). The Virginia Council’s remarks place material engagement with the local landscape and its inhabitants above a connection based on shared European ancestry, indicating the contingency of colonial identity on particular situations rather than such abstract cultural categories as “European” or “Indian.” Indeed, the multi-party boundary situation reveals colonial identity formation as a complex process resulting from daily interactions on a specific landscape.

The Meherrins continued to shape the Virginia-North Carolina dispute up to the time of Byrd’s 1728 surveying journey. In 1723, Meherrins and Nansemonds complained to the Virginia Council that North Carolina settlers had encroached on their lands: “our Land is all taken from us,” the Meherrins lamented, “and the Englesh do say that thay
will come and take our corn from ous ... and we cannot Live at rest, Except your most
onrable hiness do order Sumthing to the Contrary” (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1723-1775* 5).
The Virginians sent these complaints to North Carolina in exasperation, wondering why,
“notwithstanding the repeated Orders of this Government for securing to [the Meherrins
and Nansemonds] the possession of their Lands whereon they have for many Years past
been seated,” the Carolinians continued to settle in the disputed area (Robinson, *VA
Treaties 1723-1775* 6). In 1726, the Meherrins appealed to the North Carolina
government for protection as tributaries, claiming that they had lived peacefully on their
land “long before there were any English Settlements near that place or any notion of
Disputes known to them concerning the dividing bounds between this Country and
Verginia” (Robinson, *North and South Carolina Treaties* 79). In a similar manner to the
Virginians’ claiming preeminent colonial authority, the Meherrins cited their preeminence
over both colonies, noting the arbitrary nature of the boundary dispute and of English
land settlements in general. Their words emphasize multilateral impact and connections
across cultural lines, in a situation where all parties exchanged strategies and played off
of one another’s actions in order to exert power and authenticity.

In Byrd’s *History*, the one mention of the Meherrins is also one of the few
references to Indians that Byrd barely revised from the *Secret History* to the *History*.
When three Meherrin Indians come to visit Byrd’s company along the dividing line, Byrd
makes use of the occasion in both texts to explain that they have been “reputed the most
false and treacherous” of all the Indians toward the English (106). This assessment may
well be a result of the Meherrins’ negotiations with North Carolina during the boundary

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dispute and their general willingness to take matters into their own hands, beyond each colony’s attempts at cartographic control. Indeed, at a 1715 meeting at which Byrd was present, the Virginia Council charged that the Meherrins had “settled at the mouth of Maherine River in the bounds now in Controversy between this Colony and Carolina, and by their frequent disobedience to the orders of this Government, have given just cause to suspect their future behaviour” (Robinson, *VA Treaties, 1607-1722* 229). Yet despite the Meherrins’ disregard for Virginia’s stipulations in their choice of settlement, in a statement absent from the *Secret History* Byrd adds to the *History* that the Meherrins have been “hardly [i.e. harshly] used by our Carolina friends” (106). Like the history of the boundary dispute, here Byrd’s *History* centers on the colonies’ relationships with Indians. The textual insertion points to the multiple intercultural interactions and identifications that, I will argue in what follows, shape in large part the form, style, and content of the *History*. Bringing the previously described histories to the *History*, the next section will look to the material of the *History* that disrupts its boundaries.

**The Intercultural History of the Dividing Line**

In 1721 a Native American resident of the lower Catawba valley in the Carolina piedmont gave a deerskin map to South Carolina Governor Francis Nicholson. The map depicts a dense network of central piedmont Native villages, connected by trails and delineated by circles, a symbol of the “‘fire’ of Native polity ... by which Southeastern Indians referred to a community bound by political, genealogical, and ceremonial ties” (Galloway 224). Trails also connect these Native groups to Virginia and Charleston,
and yet the European settlements have angular shapes: Virginia appears as a plain rectangle while the town of Charleston, though smaller in actuality, is pictured as a larger, rectangular grid. The central village on the map is labeled “Nasaw,” which Mary Elizabeth Fitts identifies as a Native group that later coalesced with others into the Catawbas, a group Byrd discusses in *The History of the Dividing Line* (49-50). This map falls into the second of two categories of southeastern Native maps described by Gregory Waselkov. While the first category related “village locations to river courses, paths, and other landscape features” and thus were “most readily understood” by Europeans, the second category “conveyed primarily social and political relationships” (206-7). Through these maps, “native cartographers could graphically evoke degrees of ethnic relatedness, limits of political control, and networks of cooperating or competing groups”; they did so “by varying the relative size of circles ... and by manipulating distances and directions between the circles,” and in this case by delineating Euro-American groups in rectangular forms (207). This type of cartography hinges on social networks and dynamic relationships, rather than accurate landscape representation and consistent direction and scale.

Both the Catawba map and the intercultural testimonies and complaints discussed in the previous section link history and space in local settings, a practice common in Native American cartography among diverse groups. For example, a sixteenth-century Native map that depicts the area around Metlatoyuca, Mexico includes human figures at

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12 Waselkov and Galloway cite two other surviving maps with similar features to the 1721 Catwaba map: a Chickasaw map collected by Governor Nicholson in 1723, and a 1737 map drawn by Mingo Ouma, a war leader of the Chickasaws, and recorded by French engineer Alexandre de Batz (Waselkov 216; Galloway 224).
its center that “show the lineage of important families.” The map thus “embodies conceptions of both space and time” and is both “a geographic representation and a historical narrative” (Short 22). Native maps from early America created “fluid pictures of a dynamic landscape, a geography in which experience shapes the past and present of the land” (Warhus 139). In contrast to such connections between local space and local history and experience, European cartography from this period has generally been understood as imperial, universalizing, and abstract, intent on accurate landscape representation in order to clearly define fixed boundaries and ownership. Neil Safier points out that imperial mapping took other forms than the cartographic image to further these ends; population charts, natural histories, and poems “allowed for a more expansive portrayal” of territories and incorporated Native inhabitants to better serve “the administrative, aesthetic, and ethnographic purposes of the empire” (177-78). Yet Byrd’s History, which could be categorized as one of the “other forms” of imperial mapping that Safier mentions, includes Natives not solely or even primarily for the purposes of empire but rather as integral to its spatial representation. Byrd’s experiences of the local landscape and interchanges with its inhabitants shape the History’s narrative map, and the History thus presents an instance of fluidity between Native and European cartographies. Indeed, his project both enacts imperial cartography and maps Indian histories, cartographies, and verbal forms.

As I have shown, Byrd had experienced the type of intercultural discourse and interactive identity formation that shaped the history of the boundary dispute, during

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13 On Euro-American mapping from this period, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 162; and Warhus 139.
which colonists engaged with Native presences, actions, and place-based narratives in order to delineate a colonial boundary and develop colonial identities. Byrd was also an experienced negotiator with Indians who enjoyed relationships with Natives beyond the political. Though Byrd spent the majority of his early life in England, when he returned to Virginia after his father’s death he participated in the deerskin trade, debated Virginia’s Indian policies as a member of the Council from 1708 onward, participated in the Tuscarora War, and achieved the post of Indian agent in the House of Burgesses (Merrell, “Some Thoughts” 105). Byrd’s diaries also cite regular, personal interactions with Indians at his plantation that I will describe later on. The History, I argue, textually maps the various intercultural exchanges resulting from these experiences. The History’s ironies, contradictions, and complications indicate layers of intercultural material that is at times visible and at others obscured, requiring in both cases awareness of the dynamic landscape and material relationships that the text maps. The History consistently displays Byrd’s immersion in various intercultural scenarios that appear in the text as a map of spatial and historical knowledge and a narrative enabled by intercultural exchange.

One can best understand the type of colonial mapping that interested Byrd by contrast with those attempts to organize the land and its inhabitants that he critiqued. Byrd disdained quixotic attempts to displace Indians through distanced colonizing projects that lacked familiarity with actual Indians and neglected the dynamics of local space. In a 1729 letter, he attacked Scottish philosopher George Berkeley’s plan to build a seminary for young English and American Indian students in Bermuda. Berkeley had in fact never been to Bermuda but cited the island’s ideal climate and location as reasons
to establish a school there. Byrd’s letter calls Berkeley’s scheme “a very chimerical errand” and wonders how this project will “thrive in a country where there is no bread or any thing else for the sustenance of man. Neither is there one Indian within eight hundred miles of that island” (Tinling 394). Byrd was correct about the island’s lack of Indians: Bermuda was in fact uninhabited prior to European colonization. Berkeley had planned to ship Indians to the island in a project of displacement and unengaged interest in Indians whom he did not consider attached to their homelands. Byrd called this plan as “meritorious ... as it was formerly to go [to] the Holy Land, and much about as wise” (Tinling 394). Byrd’s experience with Natives in Virginia and beyond had surely taught him that most Native groups would strongly resist such a project.

Byrd also opposed Virginia Governor Alexander Spotswood’s policy of controlling Indians by removing them from their homelands and peoples. Byrd disagreed with Spotswood’s Indian policies following the Tuscarora War of 1711-1713, a violent response from the Tuscaroras to encroachments on their lands by Carolina settlers. When the war ended in 1713, Spotswood attempted to reconstruct Virginia’s southern border by placing the Tributary Indians on new grounds that would better protect Virginia

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14 Another critic of Berkeley’s design and founder of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Thomas Bray, pointed out that the Indians with whom he was familiar, who refused to send children “Forty or Fifty Miles” to be educated at William and Mary, surely would not send them six hundred miles overseas for education at Berkeley’s seminary. Bray concluded that the fundamental problems with Berkeley’s scheme must have arisen simply from his “want of Experience” with missionary projects in America (qtd. in Gaustad 16).

15 The Tuscarora War began when the Tuscaroras took Baron Christoph von Graffenried, a member of a Swiss land company who planned to settle families in North Carolina, and John Lawson, surveyor general for the colony, as prisoners. The Tuscaroras burned Lawson at the stake but later released Graffenried (Robinson, VA Treaties, 1607-1722 42). In the History, Byrd writes that the Indians took out their anger “a little too severely upon Mr. Lawson,” but allows that Lawson “had encroacht too much upon their Territories” and that the Tuscarora attack resulted from “some Injustice the Inhabitants of that Province had done [the Tuscaroras] about their Lands” (290). The Tuscaroras were eventually subdued by allied Euro-American and Indian forces; however, the repeated Tuscarora attacks forced North Carolina to call for help twice from Virginia and proprietary South Carolina.
from hostile Indians. Each treaty he negotiated with a Tributary group stipulated a new tract of land for the group, a temporary party of English men to reside among them, and a schoolmaster to be established at Sapony Town where each group would send its children to learn English and receive a Christian education (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 213). Yet the Saponies were the only group that moved to the allotted land, forcing Spotswood to redraw his map of the southern border, and the majority of the Indians refused to send their children to be “educated.” Indeed, the Indians did not allow the treaties to enforce their strict delineations of space, revealing the impracticalities of Spotswood’s attempted relocation of Native groups.

In the *History*, Byrd directly critiques Spotswood’s policies of Indian displacement. Byrd laments the “bad success” of funds that brought Indian children to the College of William and Mary both to be educated in Christianity and to serve “as so many Hostages for the good Behaviour of the Rest” (118). After these young men returned home, Byrd writes, “they ... immediately Relapt into Infidelity and Barbarism,” and some used the “Knowledge they acquir’d among the English, by employing it against their Benefactors” (118). Byrd also sardonically acclaims Spotswood’s “great Prudence” in placing Mr. Charles Griffin as a schoolmaster among the Saponies after the Tuscarora War. Byrd calls Griffin, an immigrant from the West Indies who was reported to have fallen into immorality, “a Man of good Family, who by the Innocence of his Life, and the Sweetest of his Temper, was perfectly well qualify’d for that pious undertaking,” and indicates sexual manipulation of his pupils: “he had so much the Secret of mixing

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16 England eventually repealed the act that allowed for Spotswood’s Virginia Indian Company, which provided for Indian education (Robinson, *VA Treaties 1607-1722* 166).
Pleasure with instruction, that he had not a Scholar, who did not love him affectionately” (118-20). In short, according to Byrd’s biting assessment, Griffin had “no other Effect but to make [the “educated” Indians] something cleanlier than other Indians are” (120). By singling out Griffin, Byrd indicates the problems with “educating” Indians through a precipitate, post-war program of hostage-taking that fails to enact a fundamental peace and understanding between the Indians and the English.

Byrd’s History works against such attempts to relocate Indians from their place-based histories and rather incorporates them into a combined social and spatial mapping of the southeastern colonial landscape. As a colonial official and planter, Byrd was certainly interested in forwarding Virginia’s authority on the American landscape and cultivating his position as a prominent landowner there. Yet for Byrd, Virginia’s history, present, and future were intrinsically connected to its policies and practices regarding Indians. Byrd’s History most obviously maps such connections through discussions of trade, in which it, like the Catawba map, makes extremely clear or even exaggerates the distinctions between certain groups. Byrd distinguishes Virginia from all of its English neighbors to the south, including both Carolinas and Georgia, based on trade relationships with Indians. Early Virginia traders like Byrd’s father had established trade networks with southern Indians like the Cherokees long before these other colonies appeared on the scene. With his father’s and his own expertise, Byrd was surely aware of the necessity of working within Indian social and legal structures in order to maintain

17 The Virginians established trade in deerskins with the Carolina Indians in the mid-seventeenth century, while North Carolina did not become involved in the trade until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. William Byrd I “sponsored expeditions to the coastal and piedmont regions of northern Carolina and established trade with the Tuscaroras, Catawbas, Cherokees, and various Algonquin tribes” (Styrna 113).
these successful trade relationships. As John Phillip Reid reveals, the British had to alter their application of law in their trade with the Cherokees in particular. While later in the eighteenth century the Cherokees would become dependent on European trade goods such as ammunition, during the early part of the century the Cherokees’ intractability in pursuing their interests led to British adaptability, rather than vice versa. The South Carolinians eventually had to replace their unilateral approaches to trade regulations with bilateral policies that gave attention to Cherokee politics and social structures. Virginia’s success in the Indian trade, particularly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when Byrd’s father was a prominent trader, were based on such attention to the southeastern Indians’ “existing cultural fabric” and legal structures (Merrell, “Our Bond of Peace” 282).

The *History* creates a map of trade relations in the southeast in order to contest efforts on the part of newer, less experienced colonies to regulate the Indian trade. As he describes his party’s attempt to identify a shortcut to the Cherokees, Byrd points out that such a route would greatly benefit Virginia, as Georgia has just “made an act obliging [Virginia traders] to go 400 miles to take out a License to traffick with these Cherokees, tho’ many of [the Cherokees’] Towns ly out of their Bounds, and we had carry’d on this Trade 80 years before that Colony was thought of” (246). Byrd’s resentment is all the more inflamed because of the power of the Cherokees: “Such a Discovery would certainly prove an unspeakable Advantage to this Colony, by facilitating a Trade with so considerable a nation of Indians” (246). The Cherokees, Byrd insists, would surely appreciate the Virginia traders because they could undersell both the Carolinas and
Georgia. Byrd thus marks Virginia as an established, superior colony and Georgia and the Carolinas as inexperienced newcomers. In doing so, he both buttresses and diverges from the cartographic project at hand (the drawing of a single colonial boundary line) as he creates a more comprehensive map of colonial relations.

Byrd further establishes Virginia’s strong connections with Indians by emphasizing other colonies’ mistreatment of Indians and abuse of trade regulations. Byrd was directly involved in reporting the abuses of South Carolina traders to Virginia. In 1715 Virginia trader David Crawley wrote to Byrd about South Carolina traders killing Indian hogs and stealing their corn. If “the Indians grumbled or seemd discontented,” Crawley claimed, the traders “often did beat them very cruelly,” or “brag[ed] to each other of debauching [the Indians’] wives” and sometimes raped them (Tinling 288-89). As Merrell points out, while Crawley was “by no means an impartial judge,” South Carolina’s records confirm such abuses by traders and “spin their own tale of Carolina traders’ theft, extortion, enslavement, and murder” (Indians’ New World 65). Byrd reported such injustices, as is evident in a 1716 letter from South Carolina traders to North Carolina that cites the “prejudice” of Virginia towards those colonies further south and defends the Carolina traders against Byrd’s claims that they abuse the Indians. The letter justifies Byrd’s critique as it admits South Carolina’s desire for domination in its trade relationships: “if [the Indians] were to have a good supply of goods at Virginia rates they would soon be our Masters, no people keeps their Indians in so much subjection as the Spaniards and only by keeping them poor.” The speaker also resents Byrd’s assessment of Virginia’s Indian relations as superior, arguing that Virginia was able to
control its Indians because they were so few (M. Parker 251-2). While Byrd was in part able to claim the success of Virginia’s Indian relationships because nearby Indians were less of a threat to the Virginians than previously, the History reveals Byrd’s continued interest in diplomatic relations with Indians as a part of Virginia’s future.

In the History Byrd dramatically iterates the Carolinians’ domineering and unilateral approach to the Indian trade as he voices the cruelties and abuses of the Carolina traders and directly connects them to Indian uprisings. Byrd describes the long journey the Virginians must make to reach the Catawbas and the sincere “Courtesys to the VIRGINIA Traders” that these Indians express, for the Virginians “sell them better Goods and better Pennyworths than the Traders of Carolina” (302). In contrast, Byrd points out, many Carolina traders reside among the Catawbas and pretend to Exercise a dictatorial Authority over them. These petty Rulers don’t only teach the honester Savages all sorts of Debauchery, but are unfair in their dealings, and use them with all kinds of Oppression. Nor has their Behavior been at all better to the rest of the Indian Nations, among whom they reside, by abusing their Women and Evil-entreating their Men; and, by the way, this was the true Reason of the fatal War which the Nations roundabout made upon Carolina in the year 1713. (302)

Byrd justifies the Catawbas’ participation in attacks on Carolina settlers based on incompetent trade practices and shameful abuse by the Carolinians, or “little Tyrants,” as he subsequently calls them. He defends the Catawbas’ violent responses to such practices and by implication those of other tribes like the Yamasees who similarly retaliated. The text lays bare Native interests and actions in trade relationships that distinguish Virginia from all other colonies.
Such straightforward differentiation of colonial groups based on trade with Natives, however, is not the only map of Native-Euro-American networks in the *History*. Other sections of the text map such connections less directly, and the reader must keep in mind Byrd’s material relations with Indians in order to successfully analyze these more heavily stylized portions. For example, Byrd insists more than once in the *History* on intermarriage as a way to “blanch” Indian skins in a few generations. Yet his trade experience indicates that Byrd would have been familiar with “a broad spectrum of intercultural scenarios” related to sex and marriage (Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution* 203). Sexual relationships between Natives and non-Natives were intertwined with trade relationships.\(^{18}\) Anglo-Indian sexual encounters included “violent coercion at one extreme and respectful, loving unions at the other,” as well as long- and short-term relationships between English traders and Native women, brief sexual encounters in situations of exchange or hospitality, and probably a plethora of other types of relations (203). Additionally, as Theda Perdue explains, English traders and Indian women in the southeast often married and, in matrilineal societies like that of the Cherokees, the children were brought up among the Indians.\(^{19}\) Byrd, familiar with the Indian trade and various southeastern Native groups, would have known of such intercultural relationship dynamics that created a much more complex picture than intermarriages that would

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\(^{18}\) Indeed, these relations continued well beyond Byrd’s lifetime. On early U.S. policy regarding intermarriage, and on the agency of Native women in such relationships, see Perdue 76.

\(^{19}\) John Lawson noted in 1709 that traders with Indian wives “soon learn the Indian Tongue” and “keep a Friendship with the Savages.” He lamented that the children stayed with their mothers and that many of the traders remained “constant to their Indian Wife, and her Relations ... without ever desiring to return again amongst the English” (192).
eventually make the Indians white.\textsuperscript{20} Indeed, one can only read such statements in the 

*History* as part of Byrd’s aesthetic of irony and satire.

Similarly, the description of Byrd and his party’s stop at Nottoway Town in the 

*History* obscures Byrd’s social connections to the Nottoways because of this section’s complex, stylized, and seemingly contradictory nature. One must look to Byrd’s private writings, not the *History*, for evidence that he exchanged socially with the Nottoways and other Indians on a regular basis. Byrd’s diary indicates that visits with Nottoways occurred often in his daily existence and that Byrd conceived of these interactions as a significant aspect of his routine. In March, 1721, for example, Nottoway Indians came to dance “country dances” with Byrd and his friends and, on a separate occasion that month, Byrd gave “rum and victuals” to seventeen of this group who stopped by his plantation (Byrd, *The London Diary* 503-10). Byrd’s diaries reference a variety of Indian individuals and groups who stopped by his plantation regularly; for example, a visit from the Sapony Indians occurs during this same month (Byrd, *The London Diary* 410, 503-518). Such occurrences are listed rather than embellished or discussed at length and are followed with mention of such mundane events as evening walks. Yet this only emphasizes their importance to Byrd, for in the extremely concise, “securely bounded” days that Byrd delineates in his diary, each included detail reveals its own significance (Anderson 708).

\textsuperscript{20} Byrd’s diary indicates that he participated in such sexual relations. During the Tuscarora War in October, 1711, Byrd helped muster troops outside of Nottoway Town as a visual demonstration aimed at keeping the Indians in line. According to Byrd’s diary, before Byrd reviewed the militia gathered at Nottoway Town, he and some others took “a walk about the town to see some Indian girls, with which we played the wag.” The next night, Byrd and some of his troop went “into the town to see the [Nottoway] girls and kissed them” (Byrd, *Secret Diary* 423-24).
In the *History*, however, distanced, ethnographic description, rather than familiarity, seems to dominate the Nottoway scene. In the *Secret History*, Byrd’s party’s stop at Nottoway Town appears as a paragraph-length account of that event, while in the *History* the brief description has morphed into a several page interlude that concludes the first leg of the surveying journey and the first half of the book. The expanded version includes generalized remarks on intermarriage and Indian education and seems aimed at cultural description and social commentary; it thus echoes works of other colonial British-American natural historians and travel writers, such as John Lawson and Byrd’s brother-in-law Robert Beverly.21 Yet Byrd’s hyperbolic and parodic tone during the scene at Nottoway town suggests that he assumes a generalizing, outsider colonial persona only to ironize it. The *History*’s version of the Nottoway visit includes a detailed description of the Nottoways’ fort and cabins, as well as of the men and women’s appearances, all of which are condensed in the *Secret History*. Byrd interlaces these descriptions with amusing, imprecise analogies. The Nottoway cabins have a fire in the middle, “According to the Hibernian Fashion”, which keeps “the whole family Warm, at the Expense both of their Eyes and Complexion”; the ladies’ “Mehogony Skins” show through their clothing “in Several Parts, like the Lacedaemonian Damsels of old”; the blue peak the women wear has greater value than white peak, “for the same reason that Ethiopian Mistresses in France are dearer than French, because they are more scarce”; and Indians discharge their guns “insidiously ... from behind a Tree, and then retire as

21 In *A New Voyage to Carolina* (1709), Lawson advocates intermarriage for “the ordinary People, and those of a lower Rank” (244-5). In *The History and Present State of Virginia* (1703), Beverly argues that intermarriage with Indians in Virginia would have prevented bloodshed, increased the colony’s population, converted Indians to Christianity, and preserved those Indian groups who had “dwindled away” (qtd. in Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution* 170).
nimbly as the Dutch Horse us’d to do now and then formerly in Flanders” (115-116). Cumulatively, these analogies to diverse and remote groups remove the reader across space and time from the actual people at hand; through exaggeration, they emphasize the ironies of distanced observation even as they enact it.

These ironies appear more blatant as the scene at Nottoway town ultimately depicts the practicalities and pleasures of intercultural exchange on a local level. Byrd notes that the Nottoways could not offer his company bedfellows because his men were too many (116). As Richard Godbeer points out, the offering of bedfellows was part of the “notion of reciprocal exchange” that “was universal in Native American cultures, providing a fundamental structure with accompanying rituals of civility for any interaction, including courtship” (Sexual Revolution 192). In contrast with someone like former Virginia Governor Spotswood, who wished Indians to adopt English culture completely, Byrd textually revels in the Nottoways’ culture of exchange.

Byrd and his men visit Nottoway Town on a Sunday, after their chaplain attempts to have a sermon and christenings for the surrounding settlers but “the Likelihood of Rain” inhibits the “Devotion” of these border inhabitants (112). Such rituals of the Sabbath, however, are easily replaced with the ritual “War-Dances” of the Nottoway men, and Christian rules lose importance in light of the “Indian Rules of Hospitality” that might dictate bedfellows

22 In Virginia, the offering of bedfellows to English men had been customary since interactions among John Smith’s company and members of the Powhatan confederacy. Kathleen Brown points out that Powhatan’s “provision of women to entertain English male guests was a political gesture whose message seems to have been misunderstood as sexual license by the English” (59). Powhatan likely wished to evoke a “transcendent male political bond” through such offerings, or perhaps to diminish the Englishmen’s “military potency” by encouraging their sexual activity (59).

23 In 1717, Spotswood asked Indian headmen from the Carolinas who were visiting Virginia’s Fort Christiana to adopt English culture. A colonist recorded that the Indians “asked leave to be excused from becoming as [the English] are for they thought it hard, that we should desire them to change their manners and customs, since they did not desire [the English] to turn Indians” (qtd. in Fitts, 10-12).
for male visitors (114-16). While Byrd humorously plays up the contrast between his men and the Nottoways (on leaving Nottoway town, he and his men congratulate each other on their “Return into Christendom”), his participation in Nottoway customs and hospitality, from offering rum to borrowing corn for horses, from watching Nottoway men dance to seeking female bedfellows, shows his immersion in a structure of exchange (122). Similarly, though Byrd’s lament in the History that “Tho’ these Indians dwell among the English, and see in what Plenty a little Industry enables them to live, yet they chuse to continue in their Stupid Idleness” might seem to indicate a disparagement of Nottoway culture, his immersion in and enjoyment of Nottoway practices flattens out the hyperbolic “Stupid Idleness” to indicate only frustration at the Natives’ unwillingness to adopt “a little Industry” and thrive among the English (116). The narrative map reveals proximity to and ease of exchange with the Nottoways in a section of the text where ironies are formed through intercultural material in tension with revision and rhetorical play.

The Nottoway scene and other interactions with Indians that Byrd describes in the History reveal that the English did not simply co-opt Indian knowledge for their purposes or study generalized Indian “culture” from afar, but rather that actual Natives influenced to various degrees non-Native narratives and knowledge about them. The text reiterates this in its inclusion of Sapony Indian Ned Bearskin in its narrative mapping. On the second half of the surveying journey, Byrd’s company takes on Bearskin to help them hunt: “By his Assistance”, Byrd writes, “we were able to keep our men to their Business, without Suffering them to Straggle about the Woods, on pretence of furnishing us with

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Necessary Food” (160). Byrd figures Bearskin as more dependable than the Virginia and North Carolina men and thus more crucial to the surveying project, again emphasizing the limits of culture as a determinant of the colonial networks that shaped cartographic production. Bearskin not only takes part in the survey by keeping the men on track, however, but also participates in the History’s narrative creation. Indeed, Bearskin’s presence in the text points to Native influence on aspects of the History that have been previously solely attributed to Byrd as surveyor, natural historian, and man of wit and letters.

During the period of the text when Bearskin travels with the company, Byrd’s narrative map foregrounds Native place names based in local experience of the land rather than distanced imperial designations such as “Virginia” and “Carolina.” The surveyors at one point cross a creek that, Byrd writes, “the Indians call’d Massamoni, Signifying, in their Language, Paint-Creek, because of the great Quantity of red ochre found in its banks” (164). Then, “About three Miles and a half farther,” the company comes “to the Banks of another creek, call’d, in the Saponi Language, Ohimpa-moni, Signifying Jumping Creek, from the frequent Jumping of Fish during the Spring Season” (164). Bearskin and others in the company also debate over certain locations, such as when the line intersects a “large stream four times” that, Byrd writes, “our Indian at first mistook for the South Branch of Roanoke River; but, discovering his Error soon after, he assur’d us ‘twas a River called Hicootomony, or Turkey-Buzzard River, from the

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24 Byrd’s reference to “Indians” in the plural here seems to be an editing error and appears as “Indian” in the Secret History; he notes in the History that though his company and the Saponies originally agreed that “two of the most expert” Sapony hunters would accompany the surveying party, one of them fell sick soon after, and so only Bearskin remained with the group (160).
great Number of those unsavoury Birds that roost on the tall Trees growing near its banks” (168). While the History indicates that Bearskin changed his mind and determined the correct name, the Secret History version emphasizes the inconclusiveness of the debate: “Ned Bearskin informed us at first, that this Creek was the South Branch of Roanoke River, but I thought it impossible, both by reason of its Narowness & the small Quantity of Water that came down it. However, it past so with us at present til future Experience cou’d inform us better” (169). The revision of the History suggests that Byrd later determined the correct Native name for the river from either Bearskin or another Native informant; both passages emphasize an intercultural process of geographic and narrative mapping. Like the Native narratives recorded earlier in the boundary dispute, Byrd’s inclusion of Indian place names reveals his recognition of the value of Native spatial knowledge that intertwines local experience and landscape and thus creates a more comprehensive map than cartography based solely on top-down, imperial designations.

Bearskin’s presence in the narrative also indicates Native influence on the History’s natural history. Though Susan Scott Parrish argues that “Indian knowledge” does not “seem wholly legitimate” to colonial naturalists “because it does not preserve the proper epistemological distance between the observer and the observed,” Byrd rather immerses his text in such knowledge and makes Natives fellow observers of the natural world (American Curiosity 230). When Bearskin joins Byrd and his company in the second half of the surveying journey, references to Indians in descriptions of plants and animals begin to abound in the text. The shift may result from Bearskin’s direct sharing of information or from Bearskin’s visibility as a reminder to Byrd of exchanges with
other Natives. For example, Byrd explains past and present Native methods of making arrows from local materials: wild turkeys’ “Spurs are so Sharp and Strong that the Indians used formerly to point their Arrows with them, tho’ now they point them with a Sharp white Stone” (150). To describe wild geese, Byrd notes that Indians call them “Cohunks, from the hoarse Note [they have], and begin the year from the Coming of the Cohunks, which happens in the Beginning of October” (206). Byrd also describes English borrowing of Native uses for flora and fauna. The English employ Indian methods of treating deer skins: “The Indians dress them with Deer’s Brains, and so do the English here by their example” (274). Additionally, the Natives use silk grass for baskets, which is “much Stronger than Hemp,” and thus Byrd has “no doubt but Sail Cloth and Cordage might be made of it with considerable improvement” (276, 286). Similarly to the History’s citations of Native place-names, the natural history of the text creates an intercultural colonial landscape by drawing on local knowledge from Natives.

Finally, Byrd and his company’s interactions with Bearskin point to Native involvement in the creation of the History’s humorous tone. Bearskin participates in the witty banter of the English, and Byrd creates his own humor from the exchange. For example, when Byrd asks Bearskin “the reason why few or none of his Countrywomen were barren,” Bearskin replies,

> with a Broad grin upon his Face, they had an infallible SECRET for that ... if any Indian woman did not prove with child at a decent time after Marriage, the Husband, to save his Reputation with the women, forthwith entered into a Bear-dybet for Six Weeks, which in that time makes him so vigorous that he grows exceedingly impertinent to his poor wife and ‘tis great odds but he makes her a Mother in Nine Months. (252)
Byrd then adds his own witty morsel to this exchange: “And thus I am able to say, besides, for the Reputation of the Bear Dyet, that all the Marryed men of our Company were joyful Fathers within forty weeks after they got Home” (252). Bearskin also cracks a joke when he asks one of the company what makes the noise of thunder. The man responds that “The God of the English was firing his great Guns upon the God of the Indians,” to which Bearskin, “carrying on the Humour,” replies “that the Rain which follow’d upon the Thunder must be occasion’d by the Indian God’s being so scar’d he could not hold his Water” (204). To create additional humor, Byrd documents a dispute over Bearskin’s “superstition” that boiling venison and turkey together will prevent the men from being able to kill any other animals because “the Spirit that presided over the Woods would drive all the Game out of our Sight” (178). Though Byrd calls this belief “an Idle Superstition” and argues that the Englishmen’s “repeated Experience at last, with much ado, convinc’d” Bearskin of his error, Byrd mentions the superstition repeatedly for comic effect: “But, after all, if the Jumbleing of two Sorts of Flesh together be a Sin, how intolerable an Offence must it be to make a Spanish Ole, that is, a Hotchpotch of every kind of thing that is eatable? And the good People of England wou’d have a great deal to answer for, for beating up so many different Ingredients into a Pudding” (194). Such images of jumbling flesh and mixed-up pudding might well be taken as metaphors for the texture of the History itself that incorporates Native knowledge of place and the natural world and reveals Native impact on Euro-American literary creation. Here, the History shows that Natives shaped a mode of expression that scholars have isolated in a European context of wit and satire without consideration of Native humor. Throughout the History,
Byrd’s form, content, and aesthetic depend in part on Native involvement in the surveying and narrative project, and his text figures Bearskin in particular as an insider rather than an “other” on the margins of colonial delineation.

Reading between and beyond the lines of the *History of the Dividing Line* for its intercultural materiality allows one to view Indians as part of a dynamic process of history-making, cartographic delineation, and literary formation on the North American landscape. While scholars have positioned Byrd as a distanced colonist with exceptional wit and artistry, Byrd’s *History* in effect destabilizes itself as the product of a unified colonial-settler sensibility and emphasizes the intercultural possibilities inherent in colonial American texts and cartographies. As I have shown, American Indians shaped the text through their actions within and reactions to the colonial situation in Virginia, North Carolina, and beyond. The complex, subtle, sometimes seemingly contradictory nature of the *History* speaks to its various influences and requires readers to look within and beyond its pages for the material colonial networks that converged to create it. Indeed, the *History* reflects the ways in which cartographic and literary creation depended on interactive relationships that allowed for multiple agencies on the colonial landscape and in early American settlement literature.
Chapter 2: Burnishing the Chain: Material and Metaphor in Eighteenth-Century Indian and English Missionary Texts

In June of 1772, Eleazar Wheelock, located in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he had recently founded Dartmouth College, sent missionary David Avery to determine the religious inclinations of the Oneida Indians, located in present-day New York state. During a meeting with the Oneidas at missionary Samuel Kirkland’s house, Avery recorded the sardonic response of Thomas, an Oneida headman, to Wheelock’s queries. “Our great father [Wheelock] is really to be pitied!,” Thomas reminded the other Oneidas present, explaining,

He resides yonder at a great distance, in the woods as well as we, & knows nothing what is done & doing here among us Indians. There he sits & thinks--& longs to have all the Indians become an holy people--& does not conceive or imagine any great obstacles in the way, because his heart is so full of benevolence towards the Indians, & thinks that they must view his good designs in the same light as he does. (McCallum 280)

Wheelock, who in the 1750s had founded Moor’s Indian Charity School at Lebanon, Connecticut, had long wished “to have all the Indians become an holy people”; he sought to achieve this goal by training Native and non-Native missionaries to send among the Oneidas and other Iroquois Nations. As Thomas indicates, Wheelock had recently distanced his school from the Six Iroquois Nations. While in southern Connecticut the school was further away from the Iroquois in terms of mileage, when Wheelock moved the school to Hanover, New Hampshire in 1770 he removed it from Native networks in which it had become an established node. Wheelock’s Algonquian Indian pupils and non-
Native missionaries had long built relationships with the Iroquois out of the school in Lebanon. Although Wheelock claimed that he still intended to teach primarily Native students when he relocated the school and renamed it Dartmouth College, the Indians grew discontent with the new location and Wheelock increasingly developed a largely white college.

Thomas’s speech captures more than Wheelock’s move to Hanover and reduced number of Indian students, however. In claiming that Wheelock is “in the woods as well as” the Oneidas and “does not conceive or imagine any great obstacles in the way” of Christianizing them, Thomas points to a distinction between the Iroquois’ and Wheelock’s approaches to transnational community. The Iroquois Confederacy, who call themselves Haudenosaunee, was created when five “tribal configurations, unified by linguistic and historical similarities ... formed a loose political alliance in the seventeenth century” (Norton 4). These five nations became the “Six Iroquois Nations” in the eighteenth century, when the Iroquois adopted the Tuscaroras of North Carolina following the Tuscarora War described in the previous chapter. The confederacy helped present a “sense of a unified political and cultural response” to Europeans but maintained the “localized character” of Iroquois life (Norton 5), reflected in their isolated villages composed of 30 to 150 longhouses. Each nation—the Senecas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Oneidas, Mohawks, and Tuscaroras—maintained its internal kin networks and language and had a particular role in the confederacy based on its location, even as it consistently demonstrated alliance with the others through ceremonial practices.1 In Haudenosaunee

1 I will use the terms Six Nations, Iroquois, and Haudenosaunee interchangeably throughout this chapter to refer to the Confederacy.
diplomatic traditions, derived from clan and village relations, alliances required ongoing renewal, a process which, among many other steps, involved symbolically clearing the path between two parties by removing any obstacles (Fenton 22): hence the “great obstacles” Thomas cites here. This symbolic clearing of the eyes, ears, and throat would occur during a ceremony “at the Wood’s Edge,” on the outskirts of the village of those receiving a message, before a council occurred within the village (Foster 107-108).

Thomas’s words thus put Wheelock in his place, so to speak: from his distant position where he “sits & thinks,” Wheelock neither understands the grounded transnationalism of the Iroquois Confederacy nor realizes that he, too, is in the woods like the Oneidas and must meet them at the woods edge, clearing obstacles to mutual understanding from the outset.

That Wheelock, from a distance, “longs to have all the Indians become an holy people” demonstrates his transatlantic evangelical sensibility that he seeks to extend seamlessly to Iroquoian territory. During the 1740s religious revivals known as the “Great Awakening,” itinerant evangelicals like Wheelock had “cut across boundaries to challenge directly the deferential, face-to-face relationships which had traditionally fixed the members of the community in clearly defined roles” (Hall 77). The famous English minister George Whitefield embodied this boundary-crossing. Whitefield conducted seven preaching tours in America from 1739 to 1770; he published his journals in American newspapers and received and wrote thousands of letters from and to those who had either experienced or heard of his inspiring preaching (O’Brien 816; Hall 83). He declared “all places equal to [him]--in America as in England” and disregarded
“geographical or denominational boundaries” (Hall 33-34). Well after the Awakening, as is evident in a fresh outbreak of revival following Whitefield’s 1763, post-French and Indian War tour of the colonies, revivalists “continued to act and write as though the world’s open fields were still ripe for the Spirit’s harvest, awaiting laborers bold enough to enter them” (Stevens 109). Laura M. Stevens has connected this unity among “a disparate group of people, far away from and largely unacquainted with each other” to missionary work in particular, which generated shared “feelings for Indians” and thus evoked “emotionally connected rather than geographically bounded communities,” a process that continued long after the American Revolution (109).

This ideal of “a mobile, dynamic, expansive, potentially unbounded community held together voluntarily by a common spirit among individual members of every locale” (Hall 7) contrasts the careful differentiation among members of the alliance in the Iroquoian transnational model. In the Haudenosaunee “longhouse,” the Mohawks were the keepers of the eastern door and the Senecas of western door; their responsibilities included “matters of trade, security, and diplomacy with neighboring Indians that concerned the Confederacy as a whole” (Norton 6). At the center, the Onondagas “ensured the continuation of the council fire and the associated ceremonial” (6). The “Younger Brothers,” the Cayugas and Oneidas, “provided the reflection and reaction required to make informed decisions” (6). The Tuscaroras, adopted into the Confederacy in the early eighteenth century, were also made “Younger Brothers.” The Six Nations thus combined transnational alliance with careful attention to relationships based in locale and networks of relations; they maintained alliances through ceremonial practices with which
Wheelock, where he “sat” and “thought,” consistently failed to engage. The use of wampum, or purple and white shell beads woven into strings and belts, exemplifies how these alliances were maintained. Wampum was meant to help sustain friendship and remind both sides of their obligations; gift-giving and exchange of wampum at councils demonstrated “mutual commitment” in alliances that “were constantly being reevaluated, refined, renewed, and kept alive in ritual form” (Becker 33). The wampum literally carried the message of a council, held the sacred words of an agreement, and had to be physically delivered; the physical object, which often served as a mnemonic device, worked together with the message to demonstrate both long-term commitment and the need to meet in order to address changes in relations over time.

This chapter examines the ways in which Iroquois and Algonquian Indians in northeastern missionary networks reasserted the precision of locale and ceremonial interaction within the transatlantic evangelical discourse of Wheelock and other Anglo-American missionaries. Generally, scholars have viewed Wheelock’s ethnocentrism as the reason for his eventual abandonment of Native education. By analyzing Wheelock’s writings alongside those of his famous Mohegan missionary, Samson Occom, I demonstrate instead that the physical distance Wheelock maintained from Native nations and networks led to a transnational myopia that proved the downfall of Wheelock’s missionary endeavors. New England Natives at times embraced the universalizing discourse of evangelical, Protestant Christianity, but they also practiced the precise diplomatic ceremonies and communication methods that enabled them to materialize evangelical metaphors, to ground the ideals of a transatlantic community of saints within
the physical parameters of Indian nations and networks. This Indian transnational framework shaped Wheelock’s rarely-discussed transatlantic publications, creating in them a record of the disjunction between his transnational ideals and theirs. Wheelock published nine fundraising Narratives of the Indian Charity School that he circulated in New England, England, and Scotland. Even as they testify to and reach out to a transatlantic evangelical community, the narratives record information from locales where Native diplomacy, kinship networks, knowledge, and communication systems shape missionary work. Wheelock could not integrate the two textually, so that his narratives read like two separate arguments, one for the power and coherence of his missionary project and one for the need to carefully understand complex Native networks, which made missionary work time-consuming, difficult, and dependent on Native concerns and practices. This incoherence in Wheelock’s narratives increases over time, so that in the later texts the second argument overturns the first. Like Iroquoian diplomatic practices, Wheelock’s narratives, albeit unwittingly, consistently represent transnational communication as embedded in locale. Because Wheelock failed to engage with those locales through northeastern Native practices of reciprocality and renewal, the community of Indian “holy people” he envisioned could never be realized. Instead, his Native missionaries cultivated their own Indian transnational community that drew upon local experience in New England.

Scholars have long noted that the universalizing promise of itinerant evangelicalism appealed to Indians: the “great undifferentiated crowds” itinerants gathered offered new leadership opportunities for women, Native Americans, and
African-Americans (Hall 6). The Awakening allowed Indians to practice Christianity in more satisfying roles than previously and to obtain English educations, which would serve them not only in ministerial practice but also in the political and legal struggles of their people. Lisa Brooks observes that “Algonquians conceptualized Native space as a network of villages connected by rivers and relations,” while “Haudenosaunee construction of space was more complicated and less fluid” (138). As evidenced by Wheelock’s first pupil, Mohegan Samson Occom, the Algonquians were likely more open than the Iroquois to the model of interaction offered by itinerant ministry; it is thus no wonder that they served as interlocutors between Wheelock and the Six Nations. Occom himself experienced “spiritual stirrings” when he heard the preaching of itinerant minister James Davenport during the 1740s; he subsequently sought out an education from Wheelock, whom his mother knew from her work as a domestic laborer in Lebanon (J. Brooks 14). After his education and several missionary trips to Iroquoia and elsewhere, Occom became a well-known minister throughout New England, among Natives, African-Americans, and whites, and he even preached what became a bestselling published sermon: *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian* (1772). Whitefield and Occom met during Whitefield’s 1763 tour of the colonies, and Whitefield suggested that Occom embrace his view of transnational community by embarking on a fundraising tour for Wheelock’s school in England and Scotland. The tour brought Occom transatlantic fame, and he was proud of the over £11,000 he raised, but his letters written during the tour express his regret over leaving familiar networks at home. For
Occom, local itinerancy complemented long-standing relations, but transatlantic travel created too great a distance.

Where Wheelock believed that “separation from the kinship community was essential to the affair of ‘Christianizing’ and ‘civilizing’ the Indian” (Graham 10), Occom worked within a number of kinship communities and diplomatic traditions in order to cultivate Native Christianity. He spoke both Mohegan and English fluently and managed to communicate among Native groups who, according to his own accounts, spoke as many as ten different languages (Peyer 99). In his ministerial and political work, he traveled with ease between what fellow Mohegan missionary Joseph Johnson would come to call the “Seven Towns” of Algonquian Natives in New England: Mohegan, Farmington, Niantic, Pequot (Grotton), Stonington, Narragansett, and Montauk. He not only drew on long standing Algonquian and Algonquian-Iroquoian networks for economic and political support, as Lisa Brooks and Bernd Peyer observe, but also on the Iroquoian symbolic system to enhance his use of English letters. Indeed, his correspondence aims to achieve similar goals to those of Haudenosaunee wampum, beaded belts which both contained messages and required ceremonial delivery, reciprocity, and renewal.

This chapter will analyze first what I call the “Indian transnational” community that the Iroquois, Occom, and other Native missionaries created, in order to demonstrate the nuances of Native missionary work that Wheelock records but does not integrate into his own transnational vision. It will then discuss Wheelock’s transatlantic publications

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2 The Pequots, Montauks, and Niantics spoke Occom’s own Mohegan language. The Narragansetts and Nipmucss spoke another Algonquian language, Narragansett. Each of the Six Iroquois Nations had its own language.
about his school, which depended upon this Indian transnational in ways Wheelock did not understand. Imperial contests in the northeast, most significantly the French and Indian War (1755-1763), made Iroquoia a particularly appealing spot for the spread of British interest. Should one of the Six Nations accept a mission, it might persuade the others to do so as well and increase English alliances. Yet Wheelock left diplomacy to his missionaries, focusing his efforts on creating texts that would gather donations to the cause. Similarly to his model of bringing Indian children to his school rather than working among them, Wheelock collected letters and journals from his missionaries to publish in his Narratives. The fact that Wheelocks’ narratives record much “evidence” he clearly does not understand, and that he did not raise sufficient funds to enlarge his school until Occom traveled to England along with the third Narrative of the Indian Charity-School (1763), demonstrates that Native missionaries and nations continually grounded Wheelock’s imagination of an Indian “holy people” within the localized interactions necessary to build and maintain such a community.³

³ Funding for the school came from charitable contributions. Wheelock received money from such sources as the Marquis of Lothian, the General Assemblies of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, churches in New York, John Phillips of Exeter, and ministers in New England (McCallum 18). In 1763, Wheelock published his first Plain and Faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress and Present State of the Indian Charity-School at Lebanon, in Connecticut in Boston; he revised and reprinted the Narrative eight times before the Revolutionary War. The Connecticut colony “on two separate occasions (in 1763 and 1766) authorized the reading of briefs in the Churches” (McCallum 18). Occom and Nathaniel Whitaker’s trip to England was by far the most successful fundraising effort.
Samson Occom and the Indian Transnational

Since the “recovery” of Samson Occom as a significant early American writer, scholars have analyzed the effects of his troubled relationship with Wheelock and other white missionaries on his written voice. Recently, Lisa Brooks (Abenaki) and Joanna Brooks (no relation) have revised this limited understanding of Occom, emphasizing that, in Joanna Brooks’s words, “Occom and other English-language literate American Indians of his era viewed literacy as a tool to be subscribed in the service of American Indian communities” (141). Lisa Brooks in particular has encouraged scholars to focus less on Occom’s relationship with Wheelock—“as if this was Occom’s primary relationship” (xli)—and more on his Native network of relations. Joanna Brooks’ recent edition of Occom’s complete writings (Collected Works, 2008), which includes letters, journals, petitions, and prose works in English that speak to Mohegan and pan-Indian political, social, and economic issues, substantiates this view of Occom as embedded within Native concerns and communities. Joanna Brooks notes that Occom’s diaries in particular, which describe Native hospitality and ongoing visits among kinship networks, remind us that “a distinctive sense of indigenous space and social responsibility shaped his life and his writings” (“This Indian World” 35). Lisa Brooks claims this “ongoing relationship and responsibility to land and kin” as the “core” of Indian identity, as opposed to obvious markers of a “pure” or “authentic” Indian-ness.

This portrait of Occom as a tribal leader in a network of Native relations has offered a crucial revision to earlier readings of his life that view him as dependent upon

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4 For examples, see Elliot; Elrod; and Nelson, “(I speak).”
an English benefactor and a colonizing religion. Yet it tends to privilege his overtly political texts over the rest of his vast body of writing, and it overlooks Occom’s influence on his many non-Native colleagues and friends. Occom’s writings reveal that he valued a number of relationships with both Natives and non-Natives. To draw Occom out of his relation with Wheelock is to diminish his ongoing investment in and guidance of Wheelock’s project, as well as his critique not of that project’s ideals but its methods. While Occom did indeed adapt Anglo-American writing conventions and Christianity to his own purposes in order to serve Native communities, he also combined Algonquian, Iroquoian, and English models of human interaction to develop a powerful critique of Wheelock that, I argue, eventually led Wheelock to give up on his project. Occom’s interactions with other Algonquians, with the Iroquois, and with Anglo-Americans, his writings indicate, led him to develop an ideal model of alliance and an idiom in which to articulate a critique of English transnational sentiment detached from the materialities of Native locales and networks.

Occom’s incorporation of Iroquoian diplomatic metaphors into his correspondence with other Natives demonstrates his awareness of the distance created between two parties when relationships are not regularly and reciprocally renewed. Jacob Fowler (Montauk) and his wife Esther Poquiantup, former students of Wheelock, were friends of Occom who also came from Algonquian-speaking tribes. In an unaddressed letter likely written to Esther (Collected Writings 93n54), Occom inscribes two messages in alternating lines, each of which employs a metaphor from Haudenosaunee diplomatic rituals: the fire and the chain, respectively. To convey this remarkable letter’s complex
form and imagery, I have reproduced it below. The letter’s form itself mimics the links in a chain, so that one has to read alternating lines in order to grasp the message:

What is the Reason, that I dont hear anything at Our Friendship I believe is grown old and Rusty all from you, is our Friendship, which use to We Use to Write to each other once in a While but Subsist between us Dead, and is our former aquain now I have not heard any thing from you a long while tance forgot, has the Water between Long Island Does not the Chain of Friendship want to be brightend have Quench the Flame of Friendship, has the length once more between us? or Shall we let the Chain of Time & Distance bloted out all Sincere Regards, What lie to gather more Rust and let it Rust off entirely? If We Shoud Search and See, if there is any Spark or Shall we begin to Scour the Goulden Chain again of Fire of Friendship left in our Hearts, if we I will take hold of the End that Reaches here, and will Can find any fire, What if we Should Try to blow it up begin to Pollish it with all the Tokens of due Respect to again? and What’s the Matter I hear nothing from my you, if you will take hold of the other end that Reaches Dear Friend your kind Husband, What woud be the over to Long Island--- I shou’d take it very kindly, if Harm if you would perswade your Husband to Come over you Woud only let me know how you do once in a While, once to see us, and take your Sister or Sisters with you, and you may give me Some account of the Well fair I have been to See you Several Times Since we have livd of the People your Way--and What ever you Want to over here, and the Distance from here to you is no further relate you may do it with all freedom to me, and what than fro you to me I have measured it Several times ever you want to know of me Shall not be withholden What if you and your Husband shoud write to me once from you--We are all Well in my family thro’ Divine favor if you won’t Come to See us and let me understand your Regards to all Enquiring Friends and particular Respects wellfair and the Wellfair of all Friends in your Family to your Parent. (Collected Writings 92-3)
In Six Nations polity, the fire signified both a place of habitation (where a family “kept its fire”) and a location for treaty councils. To kindle the fire meant “to establish the site as proper for councils,” while to cover the fire meant to adjourn a council (Jennings 118).

In Occom’s letter, the fire references both family homes and the meeting together of friends: Occom wishes Esther to bring her family to see him, to rekindle the flame that has been muted because of distance and lack of interaction. The chain metaphor echoes and enhances this theme of renewing friendship. In Haudenosaunee treaty diplomacy, a chain signifies a “bilateral or multilateral alliance”; the chain had frequently to be greased or polished so that rust did not accumulate on it, just as the alliance had to be renewed regularly and its terms renegotiated (Jennings 116). Occom plays with both of these images to express his personal longing for a renewal of company with old friends.

The form of Occom’s letter, moreover, enacts the careful, deliberative processes necessary to sustain kin relations. Its metaphors suggests that ties even between friends and family need to be regularly renewed in the turbulent political, social, and economic environment that New England Natives faced in the late eighteenth century. Occom’s letter requires careful, deliberate reading of both its form and symbolic system; the interweaving requires the recipient of the letter to heighten her awareness, to spend time engaging with the form of the letter as much as its content, its physical appearance on paper as much as its symbolic layering. “If we should search and see,” Occom writes, “if there is any spark of fire of friendship in our hearts,” and indeed the reader must search for the fire amongst the interlocked lines, like links in a chain. “Time & Distance” can quench a fire of “Sincere Regards”; similarly, should one party not pick up and polish its
end of the chain with “Tokens of due Respect,” reading the chain letter carefully to locate the fire inside, the friendship might grow “old and Rusty.”

The letter also encapsulates the reciprocality of kinship relations. “I have been to see you Several Times since we have lived over here,” Occom writes, “and the Distance from here to you is no further than from you to me.” Occom has made his gift offering, and a gift of equal value, a return visit, is now necessary on the part of his kin, Esther. Likewise, the exchange of information will be reciprocal: Esther may relate whatever she wants “with all freedom” to Occom, and what she wants to know “Shall not be withheld.” Here Occom echoes the Iroquoian condolence ceremony, a ritual designed to set right relations and to condole loss. In the condolence ceremony, three strings of wampum would be exchanged between two parties at the beginning of a council; the three strings symbolically “cleared the eyes of a visiting negotiator, unplugged his ears, and cleared his throat.” This was so that he would see normally again, clear his ears of any clutter heard during his journey, and speak clearly (Jennings 124). Occom indicates that an exchange between him and Esther will be likewise a ceremony of renewal, in which both may clear out any grief or mistrust and exchange words with freedom and clarity.

This letter’s coded form appears to be anomalous in the Occom letters available to us today, but Jacob Fowler also wrote to Occom in this form, and, as Joanna Brooks observes, the number of Occom’s letters that survive constitute likely only a small portion
of those he wrote. This letter, along with Fowler’s, suggests an Algonquian literary culture that integrated multiple Native and non-Native modes of connection and renewing friendship: Euro-American letters, Haudenosaunee diplomatic customs, and Algonquian intertribal channels. Mohegan minister Joseph Johnson’s writings support this theory. When in council with the Oneidas in 1774 to secure lands for a projected settlement of Christian Indians called Brothertown, Johnson told the Oneidas of a “Paper or Writing [he] carried [him]self thro’ Six Towns of Indians in New England.” The paper announced the Onieda’s acceptance of the proposed settlement, and Johnson notes that “at every town [he] called the People together both small, and great, male, and female, and they received the good news with great joy” (McCallum 163). Elsewhere, Johnson referred to the “Seven Towns” of New England Indians; he notes here that he “did not go to the seventh town, by reason of the inconvenience of going by water; and also [his] Business called [him] to be at home” (163). Johnson’s careful delivery of his message in person to almost all of the towns, and his emphasis on physical impediments to reaching the last town, demonstrates to the Onedias that he had been deliberate and careful in seeking a unified opinion on the proposed settlement that could only come from the ground up. It also echoes the Haudenosaunee use of wampum, which contained the words that the messenger would deliver in person at council.

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5 The 76 letters authored by Occom in Joanna Brooks’ volume “probably constitute only a surviving fraction of the hundreds Occom wrote over the course of his fifty-year career. The majority of these surviving letters were saved by their recipients. Eleazar Wheelock kept twenty-four letters from Occom among his extensive personal archive, now institutionalized at Dartmouth College. Only sixteen surviving letters are drafts or sender’s copies preserved by Occom himself” (64). Brooks cites Occom’s comfort with “oral traditions of knowledge preservation,” lack of time and paper, and frequent itinerancies as probable reasons why this is the case.
Occom used correspondence in a similar manner to try to keep the fire and
burnish the chain linking the Haudenosaunee to Wheelock’s school. Having spent time
among the Oneidas on three missions and observed their diplomatic interactions, Occom
was familiar with the Condolence Ceremony that “permeates the protocol of Iroquois
encounter era diplomacy” and understood its importance for missionary efforts among the
Haudenosaunee (Williams 54). The Condolence Ceremony is a highly ritualized
mourning ceremony that replaced the mourning war among the Six Nations as a method
of coping with the death of loved ones and maintaining peace. According to the
Iroquoian Deganawidah Epic, Deganawidah brought a message of peace to an Iroquois
chief, Hiawatha, who embraced the message and the Condolence Ceremonies that would
effect peace (Williams 58). Condolence Ceremonies “embodied the ... belief that
relationships of close connection were sustained by shared sufferings and solidarity in
times of crisis” (Williams 54). Occom, aware of the crucial importance of the
Condolence Council to the Six Nations alliance, sent a letter to Wheelock correcting an
error related to the ceremony in Wheelock’s 1765 Continuation of the Narrative of the
State of the Indian Charity-School. Wheelock wrote in the Narrative that Anglo-
American missionary Samuel Kirkland had gone to preach among the Senecas after the
end of the French and Indian War but, because of a famine in the area, had to travel two
hundred miles to the Mohawk River for supplies. Wheelock noted that Kirkland
“brought with him 13 Seneca Boys, to assist him [in getting supplies]... Soon after they
came down, 12 of the Boys were taken sick with a Dysentry, and four of them died. The
rest recovered, and are returned with Mr. Kirkland” (17). He then emphasized that
Kirkland “has surprisingly insinuated himself into [the Senecas’] Affection and Esteem” (17).

In a letter to Wheelock from Boston, Occom wrote, “I am very Sorry to see a mistake in your last Narrative--it was the Chief Sachem his wife and 3 of their Children and ten or 11 others Came Down with Mr. Kirkland, and it was the Sachem’s Wife 2 of his Children and one more Died while they were down” (*Collected Writings* 74). He goes on to describe the condolence of the Sachem: “I was at the Burying of the Sachems Wife, and the Nex Day Sir William [Johnson] Condoled the Death of the Queen in a Solemn Manner, according to the Indian Custom--and when the Solemnity was over, Sir Wm reintroduc’d Mr. Kirkland to the Sachem’s Favour, & [the Sachem] Promis’d for himself and for his People, to be kind to him” (74-75). Occom gives as a reason for correcting Wheelock, “I am affraid Sir Wm will be displeased and may make a handle of that mistake against the Cause” (75). Sir William Johnson, British Superintendent of Indian Affairs and lukewarm supporter of Wheelock’s project, had been adopted into the Mohawk Nation when he married Mohawk Molly Brant and had established himself among the Six Nations. Wheelock, who unlike Johnson had not bothered to learn Haudenosaunee rituals, neglected to mention the necessary Condolence Ceremony in his published narrative, likely because he was unaware of the gravity of this situation that involved not just any Senecas but the Chief Sachem’s family. Johnson’s performance of the proper ceremonies kept Kirkland in the Senecas’ good favor and enabled Wheelock’s efforts in that nation to continue. Occom’s correction demonstrates his integration of written text with setting right relations; just as the condolence ceremony renews ties
following unfortunate events, Occom attempts to intervene here to maintain ties between
Johnson and Wheelock.

Occom participated in the ritual renewal of ties during his own interactions with
Haudenosaunee nations. In 1768, after his trip to London, Occom wrote to Robert Keen,
secretary of the Indian School’s trust fund, about several Oneida Indians who came to see
him and expressed joy at his return from England. The Oneidas, Occom writes, “were
very thankful to hear the Liberality of Christians ... over the Mighty Waters” who had
donated money to Wheelock’s school. Rather than missionaries only going out among
the Haudenosaunee, here the Oneidas visit Occom in order to gain information about
happenings at Wheelock’s school and abroad. They “Hope by this Means their poor
Children’s Eyes may be opened, that they may See with their own Eyes” (Collected
Writings 81-2). The image of opening eyes has Biblical references, but in an Oneida
context it evokes the Condolence Ceremony, in which one party at a negotiation gave
three strings of wampum to the other in order to “clear their eyes, ears, and throat, so that
they might see, hear, and speak clearly again” (Williams 42).

The Oneida’s need to see clearly again stemmed from poor judgment on
Wheelock’s part. Eleazar Wheelock had sent his son Ralph on botched missions to the
Oneidas and Onondagas, during which Ralph failed to observe Haudenosaunee rules of
diplomacy. These Oneidas likely went to Occom’s home to renew the alliance with one
they trusted, expressing hope that their children might reap the benefits of Wheelock’s
education with fresh eyes. Later, the Onondaga Nation reacted more heatedly to Ralph.
In 1772, Ralph met with several Onondaga Indians at missionary Samuel Kirkland’s
home. David Avery recorded the exchange, which Kirkland interpreted. Ralph’s words to
the Onondagas base his authority to speak to them on his familial, national, and religious
connections:

I hope you will carefully consider all these things I have told you, as I am sent in
consequence of the command of Jesus, & by immediate orders of my father, who
is the head of the ministers in New-England, & known the other side the waters;
& many great ones both on this & the other side are engaged to assist in his
instructing the Indians. I act in concert with my father, engaged in the same work:
you will therefore consider me here speaking in his stead--& when he dies I shall
succeed him, & manage all the affairs of instructing the Indians (286).

The Onondagas respond to Ralph’s claim of transatlantic community with a reminder of
their own local networks: “Why, brother, you are deceiving yourself! We understand not
only your speech, but your manner of teaching Indians. We understand affairs that are
transacted at a great distance to the westward--they are all brought here; this is our
centering council-house: just so well am I acquainted with your deportment. I view all
your conduct as just by, under my eyes” (287). After reminding Ralph of their central
place in the Haudeosaunee Confederacy, the Onondagas go on to contrast the English and
French missionaries’ treatment of Indians--the French “are very charitable--& can’t see
those they instruct naked or hungry” (288)--and to reiterate their own transnational
alliances, rooted in locale: “As the word of God is of such vast importance, our brethren
the outward door, the Senecas, must be informed. When they speak their minds, you
shall hear ours; if they embrace your message, we shall undoubtedly ... we are the central-
council-house, & can’t determine without the voice of all our distant brethren” (288).

The Onondaga headman mean not to suggest that they would at this point accept another
mission, but that Ralph has overstepped his bounds by presuming to impose his
transatlantic vision of a single “holy people” onto them and failing to acknowledge the proper protocol for treating with the Iroquois Confederacy.

The contrast between the Oneidas’ trust of Occom and the Onondagas’ disdain for Ralph Wheelock reflects Occom’s ability to maintain physical and written ties to both local communities and farther contacts at home and abroad. The contrast of Occom’s bustling, networked home with Wheelock’s isolated school in Hanover underlines the two men’s increasingly competing ideas about locale. Requesting books, Occom wrote to one benefactor, “I live near a Center of five Towns of Indians and they Come to me for Books--We Used to be Supplyd in Some measure with Books from Dr. Wheelocks Indian School, but he is now removed with his School far up into the Country to the Distance of 150 miles; and Boston and New York are at a great Distance from us” (Collected Writings 94-95). In contrast to Wheelock’s distancing himself from local particularities, Occom brought together the local and transnational in his home. He wrote to supporter Susannah Wheatley in 1771, “My being acquainted with the World in Some Measure, has made my House a Sort of an Asylum for Strangers both English and Indians, far and near” (96). From his home, Occom traveled frequently among both English and Indians: he told Wheelock that same year that he was “as Well, if not better received by [the Indians] than ever,” and if he “would only Comply with their Desire, the Indians at Mohegan, Groton, Nahanteck, Stonington, and even at Charlestown in general, would put themselves under [his] Instructions” (98). In 1773, he wrote to fellow minister and friend Samuel Buell, “I have work enough for three four or five Ministers. I am called Continually from all

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6 Susannah Wheatley, of Boston, was mistress to the famous African-American poet Phillis Wheatley; Occom and Phillis Wheatley also kept up a correspondence.
quarters far and near.” He even invited Buell to share in his ministry: “Dear Sir, I Wish you woud Come over this Spring or Summer, if we Shoud live, and I will go with You and Show you large Fields, White already to Harvest” (102-3). Such letters integrate the imagined community of saints with the local, inviting readers into Occom’s already networked space.

Those letters Occom wrote to Wheelock himself after Wheelock had moved and enlarged his school draw a clear contrast between this translocal Indian-Christian network and Dartmouth College’s disconnect of the worldly and the local. Wheelock’s physical removal of his school from Connecticut to New Hampshire, “which by then had fewer Indians than any colony in British North America” (Silverman, *Red Brethren* 82), drove home for Occom Wheelock’s misunderstanding of or disregard for the Indian transnational. Coupled with the school’s isolation in Hanover, for Occom it had acquired “too much Worldly Grandure for the Poor Indians they’ll never have much benefet of it” (*CW* 99). Occom emphasizes that he speaks for the local community, offering “the general Sentiment of Indians and English too in these parts” when he tells Wheelock, “So many of your Missionaries and School masters and Indian Scholars Leaving You and Your Service Confirms me in this opinion” (99). Occom had supported Wheelock’s original plan for Indian missionaries to work among the Six Nations, for even Wheelock envisioned to some extent the local yet transnational connections that would arise from this design. In his first narrative, *A plain and faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Indian Charity-School at Lebanon, in Connecticut* (Boston 1763), Wheelock had imagined that the “Indian Boys from different
and distant Tribes and Places” would cultivate friendships at school that would help them in their missions and could “send to, hear from, or visit one another Confirming the Things which have been Spoken” (17). Wheelock’s removal of the school to Hanover, however, indicates that he ultimately had misunderstood or neglected the local element of the Native transnational, for the new school was not easily accessible to their communities. Occom knew that Wheelock’s project would certainly fail at this point because he had so obviously distanced his project from Native locales.

Although scholars continually emphasize Occom’s complete “break” with Wheelock by 1771, Occom offered Wheelock the chance to regain his support through a ceremony of renewal, in which Occom’s eyes could be cleared and he could see the truth about Wheelock’s plans for the Indian school. Occom wrote to Wheelock in 1771, “…if I Coud be Convinced by ocular Demonstration, that your pure Intention is to help the poor helpless Indians, but as long as you have no Indians, I am full of Doubts” (Collected Writings 99). He repeats again and again in letters to Wheelock this need for a clearing obstacles on the path between them: “I wish I Coud give you one Visit, to have a ful talk but you got so far up, I Shall never be able” (99-100). In 1772, Occom again explained to Wheelock, “Writing gives me but very little Satisfaction, I want to Spend 3 or 4 Days, with you ... and to hear and See for myself--but you have got So far the other Side of the Globe; I am not able to bear Expences so far--and it may be of no profet if I went” (100). In a 1773 letter, he articulated the limits of hearsay: “I want much to See, how you Go on in the Grand Cause I Cant be easy, till I See with my Eyes, and not only hear with my Ears.” Occom’s references to ears and eyes evoke both the gospel--“For this peoples’
heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have
closed” (Matt. 13.15)—and the three “rare words” of the Condolence Council, which
metaphorically “cleared the eyes of a visiting negotiator, unplugged his ears, and cleared
his throat” (Jennings and Fenton 124). He gives Wheelock an example of a
communication method that opens the eyes and ears:

A Wampum of Friendship Flew from Massipi thro Various Tribes of
Indians, Came to our Hands about Six Weeks ago, and we Receiv’d it
Cordially—Several Tribes of Indians are to hold a Congress Next march at
Stock-Bridge, and a grand Congress is to be at Sir William Johnsons Some
Time next June or July—and if I am able, I intend to be at Both of ‘em
(102).

Wampum belts “carried the words of a tribal council” and were “confirmed by the
presentation of the wampum to the person being addressed” (Jennings and Fenton 122,
124); the wampum belt Occom describes “flew” by way of a messenger who visibly and
audibly relayed the information it contained. The contrast between this material
manifestation of friendship and Wheelock’s failure to renew ties with Occom shaped
Ocomm’s break with Wheelock as much as Wheelock’s removal of the school.

Ultimately, Occom wrote to Wheelock, “I have had Strong inclination to Come to
See you and your College—but if I have no Line from you after this, I shall think, I am
not Worthy of your Notice in the least Shape, and I Shall not come to Trouble you nor
write you any more” (CW 105). Occom lamented that “unless there is an alteration
Suitable to the Minds of the Indians,” Wheelock “will never do much more good” among
them, for his “First Plan was much better than the last” (106). Occom, along with Joseph
Johnson and other Indians from the “Seven Towns,” would go on to pursue their own
plan of settling a Christian Indian community in Oneida country, to be called
Brothertown. Characteristically, Occom would travel back and forth between Brothertown, Mohegan, and other Native towns and nations until his death in 1792, maintaining local ties while fostering transnational Native community.

**Eleazar Wheelock’s Transnational Distance**

Sometime after Samson Occom came to Eleazar Wheelock’s home in 1743 to begin study, Wheelock had conceived (likely in collaboration with Occom) the idea for a school to educate Indian missionaries, with the ultimate goal of converting the Six Iroquois Nations. He had begun educating multiple Native pupils in his home, from towns and nations including Delaware, Mohegan, Mohawk, Narragansett, Montauk, and Tuscarora. Because Wheelock relied on charitable contributions to maintain his school, in 1763, at the end of the French and Indian War, he began to publish “Faithful Narratives” of the “Design, Rise, and Progress” of his Indian Charity School in order to encourage donations. The narratives attest to support for the project on both sides of the Atlantic and offer evidence of the project’s current success and prospects for the future. By compiling eye-witness accounts and letters from Native and non-Native missionaries in these accounts, Wheelock employed a strategy Laura M. Stevens identifies in British missionary tracts more generally: to encourage distant readers “to share the perspective of other Christians trying to convert Indians by looking over the shoulders of missionaries and hearing their requests for help” (82). Indeed, in one of his narratives published in London, Wheelock writes that the included letters from missionaries demonstrate to readers “with what a disinterested spirit [the missionaries] are endowed, what Hardships they have undergone, and what a wide prospect of future usefulness is now
opening” (*Brief Narrative* 32). The middle phrase—“what Hardships they have undergone”—complicates the idea of “a wide prospect.” By including accounts of missionaries’ “hardships” in a second section separate from the British and Anglo-American attestations, and thus not understanding or integrating the difficulties into the future goals of the school, Wheelock ultimately records the reasons for the failure of his missionary project. The early narratives demonstrate the Iroquois’ incorporation of missionary alliances into their long-standing diplomatic practices in ways Wheelock does not understand, while the later texts relate the inevitable outcome of Wheelock’s limited idea of the transnational: the decline and failure of his efforts among the Six Nations.

One of Wheelock’s most comprehensive narratives, *A Brief Narrative of the Indian Charity-School in Lebanon in Connecticut, New England: Founded and Carried on by That Faithful Servant of God the Rev. Mr. Eleazar Wheelock* (1766; 2nd ed. 1767), illustrates Wheelock’s lack of awareness when it came to the Indian transnational. The text was published in London to coincide with the arrival of Samson Occom and Nathaniel Whitaker in England at the beginning of their fundraising tour. It speaks to a transatlantic audience and includes many letters of support from ministers and other key figures in New England and abroad, a “chain of correspondence” connecting readers from distant locales (Stevens 109). Pages of attestations and recommendations signed by the likes of Sir William Johnson—who had become “a hero in the British press” because of his negotiations with the Six Nations during the French and Indian War (Fulford and Hutchings 28)—as well as the Governors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New York, several lawyers and merchants, and countless
ministers, indeed suggest a vast community unified in a shared hope for the school’s success. Recommendations from London, added in an Appendix to the second edition of the Brief Narrative (London, 1767), extend the community of support transatlantically.

The imagery of transatlantic expansion into Indian territory is never reconciled with the material means by which such an expansion must occur. The introductory letter to the Brief Narrative, assumed to have been written by George Whitefield, demonstrates this disjunction. Whitefield claims that if the English can “Christianize” the Indians, “what a Triumph over the Powers of Darkness!”, and if they can “civilize” them, what a Prospect of important Consequences open to View! How many in the Train that cannot be foreseen! What a Saving of Blood and Treasure! How great the Addition of Hundreds of Thousands of Subjects! What an Increase of our Settlements! How great the Augmentation of the Staple of these Dominions! What the Increase of the Demand for British Manufactures to cloath [sic] the new Subjects! How important to this commerce of Great Britain and the Colonies! And what a Source of Opulence to the whole Empire! (8).

Whitefield’s model of transnationalism involves accumulating benefits to the British empire and incorporating all spaces under the British realm, without regard to the particularities of locales and other sovereign groups. In contrast, Sir William Johnson’s testimony, which directly follows Whitefield’s letter, makes a more subdued claim that hints at the diplomatic exchanges Johnson, an adopted Mohawk, knew well. Johnson offers his “Opinion” that Wheelock’s project “may be productive of good Consequences, if properly conducted, by civilizing the Indians, and reducing them to Peace and good Order” (9--my italics). Where Whitefield sets forth a steamroller model of transnational relations, Johnson expresses the need for careful methods in sending missionaries among
Indians, methods that will manifest themselves textually in the *Brief Narrative*’s many letters from Native and non-Native missionaries in the field.

Wheelock’s own comments in the *Brief Narrative*, addressed to “Gentlemen, and Christian Friends!,” set up a binary between “civilized” Christians and “savage” Pagans. Wheelock capitalizes on the recent coverage of the French and Indian War in the British press, in which horrific reports of Indians committing such brutalities as scalping children became so commonplace that some began to question their veracity (Bickham 61).\(^7\) Wheelock describes “vast Numbers of aboriginal Natives in this Land; whose manner of Living is savage,” who “have continued from Age to Age in the grossest Paganism and Idolatry” and “have, from the first planting of these Colonies, been a Scourge and Terror to their English Neighbours” (21). The Indians, Wheelock writes, have been “butchering, torturing, and captivating [English] Sons; dashing their Children against the Stones; skilfully devising, and proudly glorying in, all possible Methods of Torture and Cruelty within their Power” (21). Given British readers’ familiarity with this type of cruel, barbaric Indian, Wheelock had reason to believe that his proposal to make the Indians “good Members of Society, and peaceable and quiet Neighbours” would encourage donations (21). Wheelock also capitalizes on the recent peace, which, he claims, has opened “a wider Door than ever ... for the Furtherance” of his design, allowing him to send “Missionaries and Schoolmasters further among Tribes where none have heretofore been” (23).

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\(^7\) According to Bickham, “Letters from the ravaged colonies filled the [British] press with scarcely an issue of a newspaper appearing between the summer of 1755 and winter of 1757 without at least one horrific report” (60).
The reports Wheelock includes from missionaries in various places where Wheelock himself had not been paint quite a different picture than Whitefield and Wheelock’s British empire steamrolling over Pagan savages. These documents take the reader away from Whitefield and Wheelock’s grandiloquent imagery, into the channels through which missionaries and their messages (letters and wampum) move in multiple directions. A key example of the success of Wheelock’s school was of course Occom himself, whom British audiences would see with their own eyes on the tour. Evidently in order to demonstrate that Occom had success among “distant” Indians, Wheelock included in the Brief Narrative a letter written by Occom when on a mission to the Oneidas in 1761. The letter describes the Oneidas’ gift of a belt of wampum to Occom, accompanied by a speech, in which the Oneida tell Occom through an interpreter, “We will, by the Help of God, endeavor to keep the Fire which you brought and kindled among us” (27). The Oneidas pledge to fulfill their end of the alliance, keeping the council fire burning by promising to follow the “Christian Religion.” But in an expectation of reciprocity that always accompanied such promises, they ask that “the great Men,” the English leaders, “protect [them] on [their] Lands” and “forbid Traders bringing any more rum amongst” them (27). The Oneidas conclude the speech with a reminder that the wampum belt “shall bind [the two parties] together firm in Friendship for ever” (27). The wampum was meant to help maintain the friendship and remind both sides of their obligations to revisit and renew the relationship.

An accompanying letter Wheelock includes in his compilation, written from Sir William Johnson to Occom two years after the wampum gift, emphasizes Wheelock’s
cursory understanding of this need for ritual renewal of alliances with the Haudenosaunee. Johnson informs Occom that he writes on behalf of the Oneidas, who “desire to know what is become of the Belt of Wampum which they delivered” to him and wish to have it “returned” (28). In a footnote to the letter, Wheelock notes that the Oneidas “desire this because they look on themselves neglected, in not having an Answer from the English.” When the Haudenosaunee made a proposition with wampum, they expected the other party to keep the gift and give in exchange a “comparable symbol” if they accepted the proposal, or return the original gift if not (Becker 37). The Oneidas assume that their proposals have been rejected--likely because the outbreak of Pontiac’s war had prevented Occom’s third mission to the Oneidas in 1763--and therefore desire the return of the wampum. Wheelock’s inclusion of the letter indicates both his inability or unwillingness to connect his missionaries’ success with the necessary renewal of alliances and his dependence on Haudenosaunee communications for his own textual compilation.

Subsequent letters illustrate that particular Native nations incorporated missionaries and English customs in localized ways that Wheelock’s method of dealing with correspondence--as complied evidence in one coherent system--overlooks. Indeed, the Six Nations each seem to have dealt with missionaries differently, in terms of their locale and needs. Anglo-American missionary Samuel Kirkland’s letters, included in Wheelock’s Narrative, demonstrate that the success of Kirkland’s missionary work among the Mohawks depends upon his spending time with them, settling with them and

8 At the end of the French and Indian War, Native peoples in the Ohio country feared the loss of their independence and lands since all French lands now belonged to the British. In 1763, Chief Pontiac (Ottawa) encouraged Natives in the region to rise up against the English, leading to Pontiac’s War.
building up one of their towns. The Mohawk head men at Canajohare (the Upper Castle of the Mohawks⁹) tell Kirkland that they “have a great while desired a Minister” and wish a “good, true, faithful Minister” will “settle down and tarry with” them and help them build a church (35). Montauk missionary David Fowler had explained to Wheelock in a letter that “tarrying” among the Six Nations was essential: “they expect the Ministers will settle & tarry with them.--They are suspicious People, they’ll soon get something another against them if they don’t tarry in one Place that will strike off all they Affections from them; If they lose the Affections of these People it is over with them” (McCallum 91). According to Kirkland’s letters, the Mohawks are glad Wheelock and Kirkland promise to provide them with a permanent minister despite their relatively low numbers, and explain that if they obtain a “good Minister a great many would come and live with [them], some from the lower Castle, some from Oneida, some from Canada; [they] should be presently numerous if [they] have a good true Minister” (36). In exchange for this promise of the fortification of their village and increase of their community, the Mohawks help Kirkland in his mission to the Senecas by giving him instructions in diplomacy. The Mohawk headmen explain to Kirkland that “A short Speech, with a String of Wampum, is to be made to every Tribe through which [he] pass[es], acquainting them with [his] Design ... A longer and more full Speech to the Sachem of the Senecas; besides a String of Wampum and small Present, which [he is] to deliver with [his] own Hands to the aforesaid Person, for [his] Benefit, Protection &c” (36). They also promise to do their best to keep Kirkland safe in his travels through the Six Nations. Attention to

⁹ Euro-Americans often called the “impressively fortified” Iroquois towns “castles” (Shannon 20).
how the Mohawks wish to incorporate a missionary into their locale proves necessary for Kirkland’s success.

A letter Wheelock includes from two Tuscarora Indians, Isaac Dakayenensere and Adam Waoonwanoron, demonstrates that Tuscaroras integrated both “civilizing” practices and written correspondence into their relationships of reciprocity. The Tuscaroras, who had left their town for a time because of a famine, wrote to Wheelock on July 31, 1765 that they were told he “would not only assist [them] by sending [them] Ministers to teach [them] Christianity, but also that [he] would assist [them] in setting up Husbandry” and building mills. They had not received any teachers or “Tools for Husbandry,” and were “disappointed,” but hoped still to receive them. The letter thanks the English for their offer to teach them both husbandry and Christianity: “we greatly rejoice in it,” they write, “and think that they should go together, the one as well as the other, and that we want Instruction in both,” although they emphasize their own claim to the land that will be improved: “as those that come to instruct us must live, we have no Objections against their improving as much Land as they please; yet the Land shall remain ours” (47). In a response to this letter on August 19, 1765, Wheelock claimed that a “misunderstanding” occasioned the lack of response to the Tuscaroras’ request: he had “understood before that the Indians did not Seem to be much disposed to practise Husbandry” and had expected the Indians to “Send [him] word before [he] did anything about it that & for that [he has] waited ever since” (McCallum 80-81). Wheelock construes “Indians” as a broad category, which impedes his understanding of his own
missionary project that the Indians themselves are shaping on the ground and that create reciprocal obligations on the part of the missionaries.

Yet Wheelock also, although likely unwittingly, participated in those obligations. When the Tuscaroras returned to their village and received this letter from Wheelock, Isaac wrote again to the minister, in a letter Wheelock also includes in the Brief Narrative. Isaac describes the power of correspondence to renew ties and renegotiate alliances. Whereas previously he had written “Letters to [his] Brethren, the English, to which [he] never received any Answer” and could only wonder “Whether they were lost by the Way, or what the Occasion was that [he] received no Answer,” he rejoices in this time receiving an answer from Wheelock and hearing that the Tuscaroras’ “[L]etter was received safely.” He further indicates his understanding that text, like wampum, can effectively bring people together across distances: “I am likewise glad to hear, that you have sent an Account of our Desire [for a Minister and teachers] to England” (47). Isaac, like Joseph Johnson among the Seven Towns of Indians, moreover told the “great Men” of the Tuscaroras “the whole of the Letter” that Wheelock sent them (48). According to Isaac’s correspondence, textual exchange fits within the Tuscaroras diplomatic relations and can integrate the transnational within their local concerns at their village.

Although Brief Narrative’s opening rhetoric speaks to a transatlantic empire, all of these supporting materials diffuse the transatlantic articulation of empire in relation with local interactions and communications among particular Native groups. Wheelock’s later publications, written after Wheelock incorporated the Indian school with Dartmouth and less earnestly continued to promote Indian education in print, demonstrate the impact of
Natives’ constant reminders of the need for local renewal and reciprocity on Wheelock’s project. These narratives record the discrepancy between the unilateral approach of Wheelock’s new school and the multilateral, transnational negotiations by which Native missionaries Joseph Johnson and Samson Occom made plans for a pan-Indian, Christian settlement called Brothertown, in Oneida country. According to such narratives, Wheelock seems to have finally become aware of the Indian transnational and simultaneously left engagement with it up to his former Native pupils.

Wheelock’s Continuation of the Narrative of the Indian-Charity School in Lebanon, in Connecticut; From the Year 1768, to the Incorporation of it with Dartmouth-College, and Removal and Settlement of it in Hanover, in the Province of New Hampshire (1771) defends Wheelock’s decision to move the school, in response to Occom’s and others’ accusations that in doing so and in now educating mostly whites Wheelock had “on the whole, or in part changed [his] object” and misappropriated “the collections which were sacred to the only purpose of Christianizing the Pagans” (18). Wheelock claims that he began to sense a “most dark and threatening aspect upon the great design” of his school when the Oneidas came to retrieve six of their children from the school. He speculates in the text that the Oneidas’ sense of a potential war with the English instigated this move, but Ralph Wheelock’s recent assertion to the Oneidas that they could “go to Hell” if they “would not accept the Gospel” (Murray 56) surely had something to do with it. The Oneidas, it seems, became fed up with Wheelock’s attempts to gain influence among them and grew suspicious of his treatment of their children, which they heard
about even from their “woods.” In meetings with David Avery in 1772, the Oneida headmen expressed amazement that Wheelock had not yet been “sufficiently appraised of” their disapproval of English schools. They continued, “Our father [Wheelock] does not know the mind of Indians: their minds are invincible: they are strongly attached to other things” (“Speech of the Oneida Headmen” 68). Moreover, they pointed out, the Oneida’s previous professions of Christianity have made them “small things, or nothing at all” among the Six Nations, where previously they “were esteemed as honorable and important in the confederacy” (68). Thus the Oneidas removed their children as a reminder to Wheelock of the significance of their alliances within the Six Nations, asserting the Indian transnational over the transatlantic Christian community.

Wheelock’s subsequent narratives express a disconnect between his distanced concerns at Dartmouth and the informational and diplomatic channels necessary to conduct missionary work in the Indian transnational. The 1773 *Continuation of the Narrative of the Indian Charity-School, Begun in Lebanon, in Connecticut; now incorporated with Dartmouth-College, in Hanover* describes the “Difficulty of introducing and settling a Missionary in any of [the Iroquois] Tribes, and the Length of Time,” as well as the “expensive Ceremonies” required. He claims that these factors have “led [him] more and more into a favourable Opinion of Missionaries itinerating among them, and accordingly of qualifying suitable Youths for that Purpose; who may be able to speak to several Tribes in their own Languages” (17). Whereas earlier Wheelock

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10 Some of Wheelock’s Indian pupils accused him of mistreatment. For example, Hezekiah Calvin (Delaware) claimed that Wheelock treated the Indians “very hard in keeping of them to work, & not allowing them a proper Privelidge in ye School” (McCallum 65). He also accused Wheelock of stealing a watch and other effects his father had given him.
had simply reported those “expensive Ceremonies” necessary to conduct missionary work among the Haudenosaunee, he now indicates his wish to avoid practices like “tarrying” among the Mohawks and maintaining clear communication channels with the Tuscaroras.

Wheelock includes in this narrative both excerpts from Anglo-American missionary David McClure’s journal of his and Levi Frisbie’s mission to the Delawares, an Algonquian-speaking group located west of the Ohio River, and information about Samson Occom and Joseph Johnson’s plans for Brothertown. Wheelock’s incorporation of the McClure journal, in which the missionaries wander around in Indian territory without a distinct sense of how diplomacy works there, provides a counterpoint to the Brothertown efforts that involve precise negotiations with the Haudenosaunee. In an event indicative of the shape their mission will take, McClure and Frisbie stop at Samson Occom’s home at Mohegan before setting out on their mission, wishing him to accompany them, but Occom declines. As McClure puts it, “his Affairs, he inform’d us would not admit to his taking a Mission at present” (44). Despite Occom’s lack of interest, the missionaries proceed on their mission, and McClure’s journal describes a series of disorienting events that followed because of their lack of understanding within the Indian transnational. He learns from missionary David Brainerd, who heard it from Indians who had traveled to the Delaware town of Muskingum, that the Delawares there “were at present inclining to a Rupture with the English” (45). Brainerd thus declines to “introduce [McClure’s] Mission among the Indians” but helps the missionaries obtain further information at Philadelphia, where they ultimately decide to visit the Delawares
on the West branch of the Susquehanna River, rather than those at Muskingum. When they arrive at Lancaster, however, they hear from a trader that the Muskingum Delawares were in fact at peace with the English, and they again determine to head that way, particularly because, according to the trader, the Indians near the Susquehanna were supposedly “moving off and leaving that Country which not long since had been Sold to he English” (46). At another town, they meet a Mingoe Indian, “going to Sir William Johnson’s,” who tells them through his interpreter that “he was afraid [the mission] would not do,” for “the Indians were a roving People, and could not attend to hear about Religion” (48). However, he tells them to “be strong” and that “the King of the Delawares was at Home, and he thought many of them would like our coming” (48).

A number of physical impediments accompany this conflicting news that gives no sense of progress in the mission. The missionaries experience a delay when Frisbie gets sick and their hired interpreter, Joseph Peepy, goes to his tribe to participate in a town council and does not return at the appointed time because his grandchild has died. When McClure eventually finds and returns with Peepy, he hears that at the principal Delaware town, “the Head Men of the Nation were all at home,” but “the Season for the Fall Hunting was now approaching, and their Men in a few Weeks would disperse and not return before the Close of Winter or Beginning of Spring” (51). Because Frisbie is too sick to accompany him, McClure sets out alone in order to reach the Delawares before their seasonal practices take them away from home.

McClure’s council with the Delawares dramatizes the conflict between Wheelock’s distanced imagining of an Indian “holy people” and the networks of alliances
within which the Indians situated themselves. Upon reaching the Delawares, McClure finds some of them drunk, and so the King suggests that they hold off on business until the following day; the drunkenness indicates that traders brought rum to the Indians, a recurring problem that many Indians, in an expectation of reciprocity, hoped missionaries would stop. The next day, the Delaware headmen conduct McClure into the Council house, where two Council Fires are burning and he observes their diplomatic customs by waiting to speak in turn. He tells them that the English missionaries “come not to get your Lands nor your Riches, nor to concern ourselves in your worldly Affairs--but to tell you the Word of God and of Jesus Christ the Saviour of Sinners” (55). He then reads them letters of recommendation and a “short Historical Account of the Indian Charity-School,” citing the example of Occom as a success story (55). The Indians retire to discuss the proposal and plan a meeting for the next day, during which they demonstrate how they understand the missionary project. They read McClure both a letter from the Quakers explaining that any missionary or teacher in the area will have a certificate, and a letter from a Baptist Minister that implies his interest in the Delawares’ lands. McClure writes, “As they imagine Ministers are all in general on the same Plan ... the [Baptist] Letter prejudiced them against our Offer” (57). Where McClure wishes to distinguish Wheelock’s missionaries from others, the Indians have come to conceptualize the English as one body, not of saints but of exploitative land-hunters.

When the council meets again several days later, the Delawares cite this view of the English as the reason for their refusal of the mission. They claim that “the Great Being did not intend the Religion of the White People should be their’s” and that “it was
not their Interest to appear so friendly to the White People who had already crouded too fast upon their Land” (57). Further, “the English Religion would bring them off from their Knowledge and Love of War, and then they should be an easy Prey to their Enemies” (57). The Indians also object that the “white people .. who are acquainted with, and who say they are Christians, are worse than the worst of us, than such as they are” (65), an objection which, McClure acknowledges, “had Weight in it” (65). Giving the tribe’s “final Answer,” one of the Delawares tells McClure,

My Brother, I am glad you have come among us from such a great Distance, and that we see each other, and rejoice that we have had an Opportunity to hear you preach, since you have been here. My Brother, you will now return Home again from whence you came, and when you get there give my Love to those that sent you. I have done speaking (66).

When McClure inquires further as to why they have rejected his mission, one of the Council tells him that “they did not like the white People’s settling upon the Ohio; and that it was necessary that the Chain of Friendship between King George and them should be made more firm and strong before they could receive the English so much into Favour as to receive their Religion” (66). Because King George has not done his part in polishing the chain, McClure and Frisbie leave with only discouraging news.

Alongside McClure’s journal, Wheelock includes information about Samson Occom and Joseph Johnson’s plans for Brothertown. At the time, Occom and Johnson were negotiating with Sir William Johnson and the Oneidas for land, using diplomatic traditions cultivated during their missionary work and based in pre-European contact networks. Wheelock added an appendix to the narrative after he heard this news, describing
a late Account which [he has] by good Authority, that upon the Invitation of Sir William Johnson, all the Tribes of christianized Indians in New-England have determined to remove and settle in a Body within the Borders of the Six Nations, the Rev’d Mr. Occom, and several others, Indian Youths of good Characters. (40)

According to Murray, Wheelock himself had considered a similar endeavor of settling a town of Christian Indians among “Pagan” nations. Murray notes that he probably got the idea from his Boston sponsors, who “thought the best way of educating Indians was to locate schools among them—precisely, that is, what Wheelock was not doing at the time—and that they intended to spend the funds at their disposal only toward that end” (169-70). Here, Wheelock claims,

such a Step as this I have long Thought, could it be effected, would be a most likely Mean to prevent and secure them against those Evils and Mischiefs which they have suffered, and which still threaten them from the Vices of their English Neighbours on their Borders, and the Traders who deal among them... (40).

Yet as Wheelock notes here and in a later Narrative (Hartford, 1775), the plan had ultimately been effected by Samson Occom, Joseph Johnson, and Jacob Fowler, with the help of Sir William Johnson (16). These men acquired permission to settle among the Oneidas and found supporters among the “Seven Towns” of New England Indians. They accepted the particular place that the Six Nations made for them. In negotiations, the Oneidas explained to Joseph Johnson that the Brothertown Indians would have a distinct locale and role among the Haudeosaunee. They would live near their “Elder Brothers the Tuscaroras,” who “came ... before” them, and “from a greater distance” (McCallum 171). The Tuscaroras, the Oneidas tell Johnson, “will live next to you, or side of you” and will

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11 The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) subsidized Wheelock’s Indian education; the society had boards of correspondents in Boston and New York.
offer their wisdom: “they are an understanding people. [Y]ea we are ready to say, that
they are become wiser than us Onoidas, in considering of Affairs of great
importance” (171). The Oniedas will look upon the Brothertown Indians “as upon a
Sixth Brother” and describe the Brothertowns’ new relations within a network of
transnational kin alliances: “We will tell you, of all your elder Brothers, the Onoidas,
Kiyougas, Nanticuks, Tuskaroras, Todelehonas. [T]hese five are your Elder Brothers.
But as for the Mohawks, Onondaugas, and the Senecas they are our fathers, and they are
your fathers” (170-1).

The Oneidas also reminded Johnson that the Brothertown Indians’ “Ears must not
be open to hear flying Stories” and they “must not let prejudice arise in [their] hearts too
quick,” for “this is the way, or Custom likewise of us Six united Nations: not to regard
any evil minded Person, or Persons who are contrary to Peace.” Precise understanding of
transnational relations based in kinship, reciprocity, and renewal was necessary to avoid
misunderstandings, rumors, and prejudice that communication across distances might
bring about. Occom and Johnson chose participation in this transnational model of
alliance, recognizing that Wheelock’s model dislocated communications from the spaces
needed to contain them in order to keep peace. Meanwhile, their plans demonstrated to
Wheelock the inefficacy of his own model, leading him to further distance himself from
the Indian transnational.

Whereas transatlantic scholarship has helped scholars avoid an insular sense of
exceptional American identity, and an emphasis on Occom’s political engagements has
repositioned him within Native networks, a transatlantic or Native-only focus obscures Indian influences on Anglo-American missionary projects and the texts they generated. One can see that Wheelock’s imagined community and hierarchy, in which he delegated the materiality of missionary work to others, made him blind to the requirements of Indian transnational diplomacy. Yet his texts record what he does not understand, that the Indian transnational disrupted and shaped, rather than being wholly subsumed by, the British empire. Reading those texts alongside Occom’s reminds us of the ways in which the intra-national can be read back on the transatlantic to demonstrate that moving outward might obscure what is happening within. In the late eighteenth-century northeast, Native nations and individuals found ways of materializing metaphor, of containing language in the physical forms and exchanges that protected its meaning. Missionary texts from the period retain those Native-generated meanings, charting a range of material and textual exchange that remaps our vision of the eighteenth-century transatlantic world.
Chapter 3: Lydia Sigourney and Washington Irving’s Coeval Indians

As we have seen, in the eighteenth-century Southeast and Northeast, non-Native writers relied upon Indian practices, knowledge, and writing in particular locales, and one can read these intercultural literary influences in the form and content of a range of texts. After the Revolutionary War and the formation of the U.S. nation, these influences shifted somewhat as early national writers developed a more consistent set of images to represent indigenous people and the U.S. government consolidated plans to annihilate Indians and take their lands. Throughout the nineteenth century, literary figures and print stereotypes of vanishing Indians, noble savages, and savage warriors, all of which served U.S. expansionism, met with ongoing Native agency and influence. Native people retained their communal histories and their kin and tribal relationships; they maintained or altered their practices and knowledge to work toward the future in the face of extreme loss and hardship. Tensions arose between figures of Indians circulating in print and actual Indians non-Natives encountered or read about, leading to uncertainty, contradiction, truth-seeking, and interrogation in texts written by non-Natives and shaping a range of literary forms.

Perhaps in no period have physical and discursive attempts to make Indians disappear been better documented than in the Jacksonian removal era of the 1830s. In his 1829 annual message to Congress, U.S. President Andrew Jackson, ignoring both thriving Indian nations in the Southeast and the many Natives who remained in New England,
claimed that the southeastern Choctaws, Cherokees, and Creeks were “surrounded by the whites with their arts of civilization, which by destroying the resources of the savage doom him to weakness and decay.” These southern tribes, he argued, would share “the fate of the Mohegan, the Narragansett, and the Delaware” unless removed from white civilization (qtd. in Usner 62).¹ Jackson’s claim that eastern tribes like the Mohegans, who remain in New England today, had “decayed” speaks to a larger cultural belief that Indians could only be victims, and that if they changed their practices and interacted or intermarried with whites, they were no longer Indians. Some white Americans saw Indians as destined to disappear in the face of a superior civilization; others claimed that they were a previously noble race whose finer qualities had been corrupted by their interactions with whites, leading to their degradation. In either case, Indians were a race of the past, with one historical trajectory: decline leading to inevitable disappearance.

Literature from this period dramatizes Indian disappearance and degradation in the service of developing a national ideology. As Lucy Maddox has shown, white American authors of the early nineteenth century saw Indians as prime material for a unique national literature.² Popular writers like James Fenimore Cooper and Catharine

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¹ Removal of Indians from their homelands had long been a policy of colonial and later state governments; during the first decades of the nineteenth century, removal became a focused U.S. national policy. This period saw the transition from Jefferson’s “desultory policy of civilization and assimilation” to Jackson’s aggressive removal policy that culminated in national outrages like the Cherokee Trail of Tears in 1837 (Conn 4).

² They debated whether writers should create “sublime,” romantic Indian figures through the art of fiction, attempt to represent Indians accurately, or represent them at all. Some, like William Gilmore Simms, argued that Indians were essential to a truly American literature but that “the raw material” of Indian content needed refining; others claimed that literature had no use for Indians, for mythologized Indians were a lie and realistic Indians were “simply, in bad taste” (Maddox 38, 42). Paradoxically, one reviewer lambasted as “revolting” John Tanner’s realistic depictions of everyday Ottawa life in his A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner During Thirty Years Residence Among the Indians (1830), while around the same time James Fenimore Cooper started calling his works “romances” because critics derided his unrealistic, overly-sentimentalized Indian characters (Maddox 45).
Maria Sedgwick wrote about noble Indian figures of the past who inevitably moved West at the end of their historical romances. Images of Indians naturally fading away came from a nation “trying to reconcile its rampant materialism,” glaringly evident in the Jacksonian push for removal of even tribes who had achieved “civilization,” “with its more humanitarian and democratic impulses” (Ostrowski 310). Poet William Cullen Bryant eventually reconciled his own political support of Jackson with his aesthetic appreciation for Indians by representing Indians themselves as conquerers of a previous race of mound-builders in his popular poem “The Prairies.” This theory, formulated in Josiah Priest’s *American Antiquities* (1830), allowed Bryant to claim that “Native Americans are not native” and thereby justify their displacement by white Americans (Pace 206).  

Historians and proto-ethnographers, too, removed Indians from the national present as they began to develop a “national historiography” (L. Pratt 63) and ethnographic portrayals of Indians. Jean M. O’Brien has shown that New England’s Euro-American historians proclaimed the death of the “last of” a certain tribe because that person seemed to be the last full-blooded Indian in a particular locale, even as his or her “mixed-blood” children and grandchildren attended the funeral. Such narratives were founded upon an idea of “pure” Indian blood and a lost, ideal Indian society: “Indians could only be ancients” (O’Brien xxii). Rev. John E. Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary among the Delawares, pointed out that what he wrote in *An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations, Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania*

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3 The theory was later picked up and developed by the Mormons.
and the Neighboring States (1819)—a major influence on James Fenimore Cooper’s Last of the Mohicans—was factual, “the result of personal knowledge, of what I myself have seen, heard, and witnessed, while residing among and near them, for more than thirty years.” However, because the Delawares had “lost much of the honourable and virtuous qualities which they once possessed, and added to their vices and immorality,” Heckewelder decided to tell “the history of early times, not of the present” (xxiii-xxiv).

Historian Steven Conn sees in such a text a proto-ethnography, written in a society that would eventually eschew history or biography of Indians, both of which acknowledge “agency, choice, and volition,” in favor of ethnographic portrayals of Indians as “creatures of habits” who resist change over time and thus exist outside of history (196).

Thus many Americans relegated Indians to the past, excluding them from the “privileged time frame” of American progress (Bunzl x-xi). As Lloyd Pratt has recently noted, however, nineteenth-century American literature often recorded competing temporalities, “conflicting experiences and understandings of time that defined life in America,” and “did as much (or more) to disorder American identity as it did to reassemble it on an expanding scale” (3; 28). The daily life of locale competed with the imagining of national time as “linear progress” (Pratt 4). Should writers answer William Cullen Bryant’s call to explore “the rich diversity of regional, religious, and occupational differences throughout the continent” and the “private lives and daily habits” of Americans, they may well capture alternative understandings of identity and progress in their texts (qtd. in Larson, 78). What happened, then, when authors went into the diverse spaces of the continent that Indians were still shaping, not to dwell and describe the
“manners” of a vanishing race but to depict the richness of America? Reviewers urged
popular poet Lydia Sigourney, for example, to apply her talents to “national subjects” like
Indians; after a preliminary, unsuccessful epic poem about Indians in general, Sigourney
went back to the place where she grew up--Norwich, Connecticut--and the nearby
Mohegan Indian settlement for inspiration. She would continue to return to that Mohegan
land and its inhabitants throughout her writings, describing Mohegans changing
alongside whites while remaining Indians. Another popular writer, Washington Irving,
wrote early essays that critiqued whites’ physical and discursive treatment of Indians but
reinforced the narrative of Indian degeneration. When he returned to America in 1832
after 20 years abroad, however, he promptly embarked on a hunting tour of the West
where he depended upon plains Indians’ understanding of and movements on the land for
his journey and his resulting narrative, *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835). Unlike the earlier
texts, this story absorbs the intertwined “human history and natural history” characteristic
of the Indian-inhabited western landscape over which Irving travels (Calloway 4),
displacing the disappearance and degradation narratives with a story of Natives’ ongoing,
daily practices.

Sigourney and Irving do not straightforwardly contradict myths of Indian
degradation and disappearance; at times, they parrot narratives of independent, heroic,
democratic Indians of the past vanishing or decaying in the present, even as they claim
that Indians have been mistreated and misrepresented by whites. But their texts also
demonstrate that Indians are--to borrow a term from anthropologist Johannes
Fabian--“coeval” with white Americans. Fabian uses the phrase “denial of coevalness” to
critique anthropological studies that “[suppress] the simultaneity and contemporaneity of the ethnographic encounter” (x). Such studies “place anthropologists and their readers in a privileged time frame, while banishing the Other to a stage of lesser development”; they obscure the “intersubjective moment of fieldwork” that relies upon informants as much as anthropologists (x). During a period in which white Americans were developing the fixed time frames—progress, primitivism—that would shape the formal discipline of anthropology established in the second half of the nineteenth century, Sigourney and Irving do not deny Indians’ coevalness. Instead, on Indian ground and responding to Indians actions, they are influenced by Indians they describe; their writings capture how Native individuals and groups both altered their livelihoods in order to adapt to changing economic and ecological circumstances and maintained communal ties and tribal practices.

The genres I examine here—sketches, travel narratives, poetry—allow for sustained meditation on particular places and persons and a layering of temporalities. In contrast, the fixed time periods of Cooper or Sedgwick’s historical romances preclude this engagement to some extent. Sigourney’s village sketch, Sketch of Connecticut, Forty Years Since, for example, embodies the characteristics of a genre in which frequently “[a]ll the community members ... seem to exist simultaneously, and individuals’ lives often appear to continue beyond the stories the narratives relay” (Zagarell, “‘America’” 147). Such forms allow for the integration of time and space, of history and place, characteristic of Native historical traditions. Yet Sigourney and Irving’s texts also begin to rely upon Indian understandings of time and place, so that Native sacred spaces, place-
based storytelling, and economic and ecological practices become the points of continuity in these texts, displacing national development and Indian disappearance.

Sigourney and Irving’s writings record Indian histories in process, occurring simultaneously and contemporaneously with the history of whites, in spaces of shared interest. Impacted by the Indian presences they record, they allow Indians to change, drawing their pasts into relation with their current situations and hinting at a future unable to be explained by theories of degradation or disappearance. American Indians remained on or even dominated the lands about which Sigourney and Irving write, and such Indians’ coevalness with whites, evident in their ongoing communal identities and decisions to change, shape the course of these authors’ regional narratives. Their texts pick up Native presences and take shape around them, allowing Indians to act as participants in history and giving a sense of their past, present, and future on the American landscape and in American literature.

Mohegan Continuities

Lydia Sigourney’s history in Connecticut is strangely dependent upon that of famous Mohegan leaders. When the English began to settle on the land they would call Connecticut, the Mohegan Indians who lived there identified as one people with the Pequot Indians. In 1635, a leader named Uncas led a splinter group away from the main Pequot community to settle on the western bank of the Thames River, where they declared themselves Mohegans, or “wolf people.” Uncas, a savvy leader, strategically allied his people with the English during such conflicts as the infamous Pequot war of
1637, during which the English, with the help of two hundred Mohegans and Narragansetts, attacked a Pequot encampment and brutally killed four hundred Pequot men, women, and children (J. Brooks 9-10). The Mohegans built a fort at their settlement at Shantock, and the English helped them defend themselves against their enemies the Narragansetts, who were under the leadership of Uncas’ rival Miantonimo (Oberg 38; 115). Uncas’s “[t]actical alliance with the English did not protect Mohegan territory against colonial expropriation,” however, and the Mohegans faced increasing pressure from English settlers to give up their Connecticut lands (J. Brooks 10). Uncas trusted an English ally, Major John Mason, to act legally in the interest of the Mohegans and, in 1640, authorized him to found the town of Norwich, Connecticut, “on nine square miles of Mohegan territory, reserving fishing rights to the Mohegans” (J. Brooks 10). Uncas later deeded Mason all of the Mohegans’ lands. Mason came under pressure from Connecticut to relinquish his claims, but in 1671 he reserved a large plot for perpetual use by the Mohegan tribe. These lands would come under contest throughout the eighteenth century, as the Mohegans appealed to the British Crown in several instances to help protect their lands from Connecticut settlers. Although the Mohegans eventually lost the eighteenth-century land case to the Connecticut colony, they have managed to maintain a place in colonized Connecticut for over 350 years and today constitute a federally recognized tribe with a settlement on their Connecticut homelands.

Whereas Uncas’s alliances shaped settlement and war in early Connecticut, later the Mohegans produced well known ministers, leaders, and writers like Samson Occom, who, we have seen in the previous chapter, developed an Indian transnational literary and
religious culture. Uncas’ strategic political moves and Occom’s facility with words have long attracted the attention of historians and, more recently, literary scholars. But prior to any of the recognized histories of Mohegans, they influenced the writings of one of the most popular poets of antebellum America. The town of Norwich that Uncas authorized was to become the birthplace and childhood home of the poet Lydia Huntley, later Lydia Sigourney. Although, by the time she became a writer, Sigourney had moved from Norwich to Hartford with her husband, the presence and actions of the Mohegans who continued to live near Norwich during Sigourney’s time and do so today would consistently impact her work. From Uncas’s “critical role in the intercultural politics that shaped New England’s development” (Oberg 14), to Samson Occom’s ministry, to the founding of the Mohegan Church in 1831 by Sigourney’s friend Sarah Huntington and Occom’s female descendants, Sigourney consistently drew inspiration from the Mohegans in Connecticut. Like the Mohegans’ constant yet changing presence in Connecticut during her time, the Mohegans’ appear consistently in Sigourney’s writings, which capture their complex history and their ongoing relationship to land and community. Sigourney’s first, generalized treatment of Indians was unable to integrate narratives of Indian disappearance and degradation with their simultaneity and contemporaneity that she clearly sensed. But, I argue, the Mohegans’ actions, historical and contemporaneous, helped her understand how Indians could be coeval, an idea she later came to articulate in poetry and prose about the Mohegans and other Indian groups.

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4 Joanna Brooks cites William Allen’s 1859 attempt to write a biography of Occom as the first historical/biographical treatment of the Mohegan minister (“This Indian World” 29).
Writings about the Mohegans and American Indians more generally appear consistently in Sigourney’s body of work, known for its quantity, popularity, and generic diversity. One of few self-supporting American writers before 1840 (along with Irving and Cooper) (Leverenz 356), Sigourney published over two thousand poems, as well as sketches, conduct books for children, travelogues, and memoirs (Kelly 12). Her works were published in “almost three hundred newspapers, magazines, and annuals, from the local and ephemeral to the established and national, from the Western frontier to fashionable London,” and she published “almost sixty books of several kinds and diverse formats” (Kelly 12). Many of these writings treat Indian-related subjects. Sigourney’s interest in Indians was ethically motivated, part of a larger drive for reform during a period in which many New Englanders “saw great potential in transforming Americans from passive, obedient subjects into informed, active participants in the republic--and in their own Christian salvation” (Mandell 116).5 Several of her most frequently anthologized poems--“Indian Names,” “The Cherokee Mother”--condemn whites for their removal of Indians from their homelands, while others encourage missionary work among Indians. Her writings also evince an interest in Indian history as integral to American national identity. In an 1815 review of Sigourney’s (then Lydia Huntley’s) first book, Moral Pieces in Prose and Verse, a writer for the North American Review found “very considerable merit” in her verses, praising “freedom and facility in the manner” and “correctness and harmony in the features, though generally tinged with melancholy.”

5 As Mandell points out, this reformist attitude in New England accompanied “the shift from Federalist to Whig culture, and in Massachusetts and Connecticut from unitary commonwealths to diverse democracies, as ministers and others organized ordinary men and women to become active citizens in a multitude of social, religious, and political societies” (116). Sociologists of the period note “the replacement of vertical social arrangements, featuring an unambiguous hierarchy in tightly knit towns and villages, with horizontal associations that united individuals of similar class, occupation, or interest across wider areas” (116).
all of which made him wish that Huntley would “devote herself to some work of greater scope and higher character than any of these occasional verses” (“Moral Pieces” 119-120). The reviewer called on her to, as Sir Walter Scott had done with the “Scottish highland chiefs, and border warfare with England,” construct poetry from the “rude materials” of America, such as “the important part played by the various Indian tribes, particularly the Six Nations, whose history is abundantly interesting” in the French and Indian war (“Moral Pieces” 120).

Sigourney took such advice to heart with her early work *Traits of the Aborigines of America* (1822), which draws on Indian-European history to create an American epic. Sigourney’s aim in writing *Traits* seems to have been to give Indian nations a history comparable to those of European nations, a project that, she noted in her memoirs, was “singularly unpopular, there existing in the community no reciprocity with the subject” (327). As if unable to contain and organize information about Indians, the poem literally overflows with such information; footnotes that attest to the veracity of the poem’s content make up almost half of the document. *Traits*’ first canto describes “untutor’d tribes” with both “stern resolves” and “gentle virtues” prior to European settlement of America. The next four cantos detail the various emigrants to America and their motives (e.g. Spanish greed for gold and English desire for religious independence); English-Powhatan relations and the John Smith-Pocahontas myth; Natives’ immense suffering because of disease, famine, and European perfidy; Native women’s plant-knowledge and medicinal practices that aided European settlers; English settlers’ mistreatment and misrepresentation of Indians; the appeals of chiefs like Complanter
(Seneca) for justice for their people; and the missionary efforts of David Brainerd and John Heckewelder. The footnotes cite a range of mostly non-Native sources, but at least one, Tiya Miles has observed, cites a Native source, quoting a letter from Cherokee activist Margaret Ann Crutchfield expressing the grievances of the Cherokee nation in the face of the first Removal crisis of 1819 (Sigourney, Traits 281).6

Traits merges various temporalities, drawing analogies between Indian-European history, biblical events, ancient civilizations, more recent European history, and the present. It alternates between an epic Indian past, in which individual deeds gain both mythological and national significance, and ongoing, diverse traditions among Indian groups: “Such a marked diversity of customs, and religious rites, is found among the aborigines of America, that they must be considered as the offspring of different nations” (186). It also includes recent events like General Coffee’s massacre of Creek Indians in 1813. In addition to granting individual Indian leaders like Powhatan, King Philip, and Cornplanter agency and volition in an epic, national history, Traits documents the mundane, everyday practices of Native women during Sigourney’s own time. Her third canto describes the medicinal skills of “the softer sex” and includes many footnotes on indigenous plants that Native women collect and use with skill in their daily lives, which seem to have no beginning or end in the text. Indeed, while heroes of the past eventually fade away, these women lack the epic status that would segregate them in the past, and Sigourney discusses their plant knowledge in the present tense.

6 The treaty of 1819 ended up allowing the majority of Cherokee people to remain on their homelands. Miles also notes that Sigourney donated personally to the Cherokee missions (233).
According to *Traits*, then, Sigourney seems to have viewed Indians as simultaneous and contemporaneous with whites, even while portraying them as heroes of the past and victims of white perfidy in the present. The Indians in the text offer a critique of unchecked progress from within national time. The poem takes to task whites who pursue “wealth” (l. 482) and “luxury” (l. 522) without moral rigor and condemns both their discursive and physical treatment of Indians:

We teach our babes
Not to lisp prayers for them, but join their names
With baseness, treachery, and the shuddering
Of dread disgust. We take away their food,
Their hunting forests, and their broad lakes throng’d
With scaly tribes” (l. 640-47)\(^7\)

The speaker also calls out her nation for wanton cruelties, lamenting “slain Creeks” at the hands of General Coffee during the War of 1812 and other unnecessary killing of Indians.\(^8\) Referencing an attack on a village of Chehaw Indians, who had allied with the U.S. against the Seminoles, Sigourney asks her fellow Americans about the killers:

Who are these,
Red from the blood wine-press, with its stains
Dark’ning their raiment? Yet I dare not ask
Their clime and lineage, lest the accusing blasts,

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\(^7\) By “scaly tribes,” Sigourney means “fish.”

\(^8\) During the War, a faction of the Creeks known as “Red Sticks,” backed by the British, attacked forts and towns in Alabama. On Nov. 3, 1813, General Coffee attacked the Creeks at Tallaseehatchee, killing around 186 creeks. Coffee commended the Creeks’ bravery, writing that “no Creek asked to be spared.”
Waking the angry echoes, should reply

“Thy Countrymen!” (l. 905-10)

Actions against Indians threaten to create a homogenous nation, not of proud, democratic, moral citizens but of blood-stained murderers. Indians are present in national time here, but their agency seems to lie with war heroes of the past, for present Indians are victimized.

In later poems, by contrast, Sigourney apostrophizes Indians themselves in a shared time, indicating their ability to respond and act. “The Indians’ Welcome to the Puritan Fathers” (1837) emphasizes the Indians’ hospitable treatment of the Puritans that became “a bast and ban” upon the Indians. Here the speaker asks the Indians, “Was there no seer, thou fated Man! / Thy lavish zeal to warn? / Thou in thy fearless faith didst hail / A weak, invading band, / But who shall heed thy children’s wail, / Swept from their native land?” (l. 27-32). As the speaker addresses Indians in the present, she simultaneously speaks to their past and future (“who shall heed thy children’s wail”), granting Indians simultaneity with whites while acknowledging the immense threat they face from white Americans.

Where did this dialogue with Indians come from? In her memoir, Sigourney claims that she got the idea to write Traits from “[a]n early acquaintance with the Mohegan tribe of Indians, who resided a few miles from Norwich” and “a taste for searching out the historic legends of our forest-people,” which “deepened [her] interest in their native lineaments of character, and [her] sympathy for their degraded condition” (Letters 327). Whereas Traits does not mention the Mohegans, many of
Sigourney’s subsequent writings focus directly on the Mohegans, documenting their long-standing traditions, political and legal decisions, and scared spaces, as well as how those these aspects of their lives changed over time. Shifts and continuities in her writing about the Mohegans demonstrate the impact of Mohegan actions on her understanding of Indian history and presence in New England, despite their being reduced and marginalized from centuries of disease, warfare, and loss of land to whites. Her texts explicate the means by which Natives in New England “remained in their homelands and continually remade their lives in dialogue with their non-Indian neighbors” throughout the nineteenth century (O’Brien 146). Sigourney, in turn, seems to have crafted her literary approach to Indians in dialogue with the Mohegans and their homelands. Her representations of Indians, and the Mohegans in particular, gain a clarity and focus over time that allows her to integrate Natives’ past and present in her writings, which begin to portray these as an integral history embedded in place.

Sigourney’s Sketch of Connecticut, Forty Years Since (1824) presents an early working out of the competing narratives of Indian degradation and Mohegan continuity in Sigourney’s writings. Sketch, a meandering prose piece, centers on Sigourney’s hometown of Norwich, Connecticut in the 1780s and Madame L-- (Madame Lathrop), Sigourney’s benefactress. The text dwells on the Mohegan presence near Norwich, giving Sketch a particular cast that goes beyond the local or regional writing en vogue

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9 Sigourney’s poems about the Mohegans include “Funeral of Mazeen: The Last of the Royal Line of the Mohegan Nation,” “The Mohegan Church,” and “The Chair of Uncas”; prose writings that mention or discuss them include How to be Happy (1833); Sketch of Connecticut, Forty Years Since (1824); “Oriana,” in Sketches (1834); and Scenes in My Native Land (1845).
during Sigourney’s time period. Sketch at times reiterates the commonplace trajectory of a noble, savage Indian past becoming a degraded or disappearing Indian present. The narrator describes the “native improvidence” of the formerly powerful Mohegan tribe that has led to their diminishment. Despite their use of “[h]ere and there, a corn-field without enclosure,” the narrator calls the Mohegans “reckless of futurity,” desiring to “roam freely over the forests, and drink the pure breath of the mountains” rather than provide for the future (31-2).

Yet Sketch ultimately reveals a dynamic Mohegan community trying to shape that future. A few years before Sigourney’s sketch begins, the Mohegans had lost a century-long fight for a large tract of land in southeastern Connecticut that John Mason had reserved to them in the late seventeenth century but that Connecticut claimed as its own. When Sigourney lived in Norwich, they were dealing with the effects of this loss and other infringements on their rights and were pursuing various options for sustaining their community. Sketch offers a historical representation of the Mohegans that does not present them as a vanishing race of the past but instead depicts the complex political, social, and economic practices and interests of the Mohegans during this period, giving voice to diverse, historical Mohegan characters. It also depicts Mohegan women as sustaining the tribe through their daily practices; these women, we will see, later

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10 See Catharine Maria Sedgwick’s A New England Tale (1822) and Caroline Kirkland’s A New Home, Who’ll Follow? (1839) for other examples of antebellum women’s regional writing.

11 In 1700, the Mohegans appealed to the British crown to protect their settlements from encroachment by colonists. Commissioners appointed by Queen Anne reviewed the case and affirmed that Connecticut had wronged the Mohegans, citing the “ancient friendship” between the Mohegans and the English and the Mohegans being a “considerable tribe of people” as grounds for their rights to their lands and hunting grounds (qtd. in L. Brooks, 73). The colony, however, ignored the commission’s decision and continued to infringe on the Mohegans’ land rights. The Mohegans took political action throughout the eighteenth century to maintain their lands, but ultimately the courts ruled in favor of the colony in 1773.
protected the community by working with white women to build a Congregational Church on Mohegan lands, an event that would shape Sigourney’s later writings. Indeed, the Mohegans live on after the Sketch’s inconclusive last pages, just as they did in Sigourney’s time, and their future actions shaped her subsequent writings by leading her to a fuller understanding of Indians’ coevalness with white Americans.

Early on, Sketch describes the Mohegans’ ongoing, changing relationship to their homeland, integrated with their tribal identity. The narrator depicts the Mohegans’ “place of burial,” which is “still visible” and in use. When a “Mohegan who was employed in mowing, in the northern part of town, and a Pequot who was passing through it, both died on the same day, apparently destroyed by the excessive heat of the weather,” the narrator notes that most of the Mohegans attended the burials of the two men, and, while the graves were prepared, protested that the two men should not lie side by side, for one had royal Mohegan blood, while the other was “an accursed Pequot” (37, 38). The Mohegans and Pequots maintain their history with one another, evincing what Sigourney’s narrator calls a “haughty spirit” even when “an oppressed, a crushed people” (38). The narrator’s diction interweaves narratives about Indians, who are oppressed and haughty but notably still actively involved in this burial of one of their members and a tribal enemy. The burial story reveals Mohegan maintenance of sacred spaces and their own tribal identity in Connecticut, despite the overwhelming presence of non-Natives.

Sketch, moreover, includes stories of generations of Mohegan men that imply that Euro-American assumptions, rather than innate Native savagery, have created a clear distinction between the noble past and degraded present Indians. The narrator gives the
history of the Mohegan sachem Uncas, “a monarch whose invincible courage would have been renowned in history, did he not belong to a proscribed race” (39). Sigourney’s choice of the word “proscribed” is telling, for the word and its form hold Euro-Americans accountable for the treatment of Indian allies like Uncas, rather than naturalizing their supposed doom as an inferior race. The word implies that Uncas’ actions, not his race, should form an account of his life. Sketch offers biographical information about other, more recent Mohegan leaders, including Samson Occom, the famous minister discussed in the previous chapter; Robert Ashbow, a Mohegan leader; John Cooper, a teacher and preacher, and the wealthiest Mohegan of his time; and Zachary Johnson, another tribal leader who often opposed Occom.12

The various occupations and differences of opinion between these Mohegan men register the complexity of Native choices in the face of adversity. Indeed, Sketch depicts historical and ongoing Mohegan concerns over their way of life, resources, land, community, and religion. Sigourney describes John Cooper, for instance, as “the most wealthy man in his tribe,” adding that “[i]t would be unpardonable to forget this distinction, in a country like ours, where wealth so often supplies the place of every other ground of merit” (52). The increasing greed of the U.S. nation is a recurring theme in Sigourney’s poetry. In “The Fathers of New England,” for example, Sigourney admonishes her male readers--“ye, who proudly boast, / In your free veins, the blood of sires like these [Pilgrims]”—to “Guard well their lineaments.” “Should Mammon cling / Too close around your heart[s],” Sigourney tells her male readers, turn to Plymouth Rock

12 All of the Mohegans Sigourney names appear in either the 1782 or the 1832 Mohegan censuses taken by Connecticut officials.
and remember the Puritans’ Christian purpose. Cooper, as Sigourney presents him in *Sketch*, risks a similar admonition from his tribe. Some Mohegans regard Cooper “with a suspicious eye,” not out of envy but because “they imagined that he approximated too closely to the habits of white men, whom if they regarded as friends, they could not wholly forget had been invaders” (53). The statement both includes the Mohegans in the supposed “progress” of an increasingly industrializing and economically-oriented U.S. society and distinguishes their concerns from whites, granting Mohegans their own tribal history in New England and a particular relationship to this increasing drive toward wealth.

*Sketch* also explores the various means by which the Mohegans maintained their territory or worked to ameliorate their situations by migrating elsewhere. For example, one chapter in *Sketch* includes a debate between two of the Mohegan men, Samson Occom and Robert Ashbow, over whether to move to Brotherton—the pan-Indian Christian community founded by Occom, Joseph Johnson, and others—or to remain on their lands around Norwich. In their dialogue, Occom stresses submission to God’s will over assertion of Native rights, even calling whites “a favoured race, who ... will yet impress with civilization and Christianity, the features of our roving and degraded character” (160). Such remarks are not historically accurate, for Occom spoke out vehemently against Christian nations’ hypocrisy in their treatment of Indians and Africans.¹³ In Sigourney’s sketch, Robert Ashbow articulates this critique, asking, “Why are Christians so eager to wrest from others lands, when they profess that it is gain for

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¹³ See, for example, “The Most Remarkable and Strange State Situation and Appearance of Indian Tribes” and “Thou Shalt Love thy Neighbor as Thyself” in *Collected Writings.*
them to leave all, and die? ... On the land which our fathers gave us, we may not set our feet, except as strangers” (160). The debate continues for some time, until Ashbow claims the impossibility of reconciliation between Indians and whites, even in Heaven, and Occom, in response, simply raises his eyes to the sky, “as if they uttered ‘Thy light alone, is able to dissolve this darkness!’” (163). That Sigourney places the overt critique of whites in Ashbow’s mouth is not surprising, for she likely wished to uphold Occom’s reputation as a friend to whites and a literary figure. In her later sketch “Oriana,” Sigourney describes Occom as a devotional poet, influential in the “ecclesiastical history” of this time period; Ashbow, in contrast, was a member “of the royal line,” a representative of the “native, untaught eloquence of the tribe” and one who spoke for “his people in their national council” (“Oriana” 134-5).

Regardless of the historical accuracy of these men’s comments, the dialogue ends in an impasse, in contrast with an authoritative narrative about the superiority of Euro-American over Native ways of life. Ashbow both embraces Christianity and uses it as a platform to critique white morality, as did Sigourney herself and many Natives during her time, including Pequot minister and author William Apess and Cherokee newspaper editor Elias Boudinot. As happened historically, in Sigourney’s text Ashbow and many Mohegans remain in Norwich, while Occom leads others to Brothertown. Sigourney’s text articulates the critique of white Christians that many Natives, past and present, often voiced, and does not try to synthesize multiple points of view among the Mohegans, nor their choices about remaining on or leaving their homelands in the face of white injustice. Instead, it presents their complexity by juxtaposing various Mohegans’ ideas and actions.
We do not know how much direct experience Sigourney had with the Mohegans or exactly what sources she used for her sketch. The exact history of the Occom archive, which consists today of more than 1,000 holograph manuscript pages located at Dartmouth college and several historical societies in Connecticut, is unknown: as Joanna Brooks, the editor of Occom’s collected writings, notes, “it is unclear how most of Occom’s writings survived and came into the possession of these libraries” (xvii). Sigourney was clearly aware of the Mohegans’ land struggles and plans for Brothertown, likely from Occom’s letters or from legal records. She mentions in *Sketch* and “Oriana” an archive of Occom’s letters and hymns: Occom, she writes, “possessed a decided taste for poetry, especially that of a devotional cast; and a volume of this nature, which he selected and published, evinces that he fervently appreciated the pathetic and the powerful” (“Oriana” 134). Interestingly, her comments on Robert Ashbow in “Oriana” suggest that much of her knowledge of him came from direct experience or local knowledge. Where scholars today have access to Occom’s complete writings and written information about Ashbow, Sigourney likely drew from experience, oral tradition, and a smaller archive, supplementing these with her own imaginative vision of the Mohegans. Her sketch does not fully demonstrate the complexity of Mohegan political struggles, factionalism, and relations with other tribes, but by referencing not only Occom but Ashbow and Cooper and staging the move to Brothertown as a debate, she avoids a scholarly tendency that, as noted in the last chapter, led scholars to view Occom solely within a Euro-American context until recently. Although Sigourney’s sketch has Occom value Euro-American ways despite their detrimental effects on Natives, it also
foregrounds Occom’s role at Mohegan as a tribal leader, positioning him as a prominent voice among other Mohegans with their own political and religious views.

Comparison of Sigourney’s Occom and Asbow with a petition written by Occom and Ashbow helps clarify the relationship between Sigourney’s Mohegans and Mohegan history. A 1785 petition signed by Ashbow and Occom, among other Mohegans and Niantics, protests Connecticut’s denial of Native fishing rights. The petition requests fulfillment of “not a Privilege, which we never had before, but a Protection in our Natural Privileges, which the King of Heaven gave to our Fathers and to their Children forever” (qtd. in Brooks, 100). The Mohegans’ right to fish in traditional locales, according to the petition, comes from a lineage beginning with the heavenly Father and moving down through their Mohegan fathers on earth: a fusion of what in Sigourney’s sketch appears as Occom’s Christian submission and Ashbow’s rational view based in the Mohegans’ material rights to the land. Additionally, part of the petition reads: “if we had forfeited our privileges at your hands by any of our agreements we should have nothing to say” (qtd. in Brooks, 101). The Indians cite an obligation on the part of Connecticut to recognize long-standing relationships between the Natives and the land and the Natives and the English, both of which the Natives, for their part, have not forfeited. Yet Connecticut shirks its obligations and expects the Indians to have “nothing to say” about it. Here the Mohegans refuse to have “nothing to say” about both their subsistence practices and the hypocrisy of greed-driven white Christians. Sigourney’s text, through the narrative structure of dialogue and debate, does not end its sketch of the Mohegans
with Occom’s submissive lack of words, but allows such words to linger in the readers’ mind as it continues to trace various Mohegans’ stories.

While Sigourney’s Mohegan men reflect Mohegan approaches to land rights, religion, and community, the text also describes a host of unnamed Mohegan women who create wares to sell in white houses and maintain tribal knowledge. Native women sold wares in New England during the early nineteenth century while many Native men went to sea as whalers, traveled around New England performing wage labor, or found work as craftsmen, interpreters, soldiers, and ministers (Mandell 33-4). Sigourney’s inclusion of Mohegan women in this text is particularly striking, for Native women very rarely appear in historical records, while Sigourney had access to writings by men like Occom and about men like Uncas. The Mohegan women in particular demonstrate the coevalness of Sketch’s white and Indian characters, for these unnamed women give the sense that they continue well beyond Sketch’s pages. Sigourney’s depictions of Mohegan women evoke Natives’ subsistence methods that combined tradition with change in New England during both the time of her sketch and the time of her writing. Reflecting what Mandell calls “Native workways” in New England, by which “Indians retained distinctive lifeways and communities even as they participated in that economy as part-time wage workers,” the unnamed Mohegan women in Sketch of Connecticut find a place in New England’s economy for their skills (1; 37). Sigourney’s narrator claims that these women manifest “considerable ingenuity” in their manufacture of “brooms, mats, and baskets,” which they color with “the juices of plants and herbs” and sell for use in white
households (34-5). Their skills in crafting these wares have “more easily initiated [them] into the habits of civilized life” (34).

Scholars have noted that basketry not only provided income but also allowed the manufacturers to maintain traditions and ties with their communities. Native women used family networks, knowledge of the landscape, and generational memories of useful gathering and hunting places to obtain materials and find markets for their wares (Mandell 35). Mohegans and other Natives decorated their baskets with colors and symbols that had particular meaning for their tribes; the Mohegans’ particular decorations included pink and green medallions and linked chains composed of leaves, strawberries, trails, and dots. Mohegans Gladys Tantaquidgeon and Jayne G. Fawcett suggest that the four-domed Mohegan medallions represent “the four directions that guide the traveler or call the winds,” while trail, dot, and plant designs represent “the path one traveled through life” (101). Crafting and decorating such baskets together allowed Native women “to preserve a modicum of cultural and social continuity while adapting to changing economic conditions” throughout the nineteenth century (Usner 102).

In Sigourney’s Sketch, Mohegan women, moreover, serve as “the physicians of their tribe”: “Their knowledge of aperients and cathartics, was extensive; their antidotes to poison were also considered powerful, and their skill in the healing of wounds was said to have been justly valued in time of war” (36). Medicine “represented a ... connection

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14 Ann McMullen observes that the Mohegan decorations are strikingly uniform compared to those of other tribes, and “even changes in color selection and decorative techniques do not substantially change the basic design structure,” suggesting that “these designs had symbolic importance to the maker” (114).

15 Usner describes basket, mat, and pottery-making among Choctaws in Louisiana during the early 19th century, and mentions other groups from the Pueblos to the Penobscots who adopted similar practices throughout the nineteenth century.
between Native traditions and New England’s economy and culture;” Natives were able to market their healing abilities because “Indians in New England, like blacks in the South, were perceived as having special skills and knowledge of local herbs” (Mandell 32). Native women in New England capitalized on this view of Native medicine to make a living, as do the Mohegan women in Sigourney’s sketch.

These Mohegan women’s practices seem timeless and enduring, in contrast to various white inhabitants of Norwich who at times seem themselves to make up a vanishing race. The town’s losses described in Sketch include Madam L’s husband and all of her children, the village pastor, Dr. L, and Oriana, a British girl adopted by Mohegans Zachary and Martha Johnson.16 Oriana has inherited disease from her birth parents in England—not, it is worth noting, her adoptive Indian parents—and dies at the end of Sketch. This final section of Sketch seems particularly significant to Sigourney’s representation of the Mohegans, for Zachary and Martha Johnson live on after Oriana’s death, further indicating the continuity of Native presences beyond the sketch’s time period. Sandra Zagarell argues that the end of Sketch becomes uncharacteristically “highly plotted” and the text “gives way under the strain of historical reality and the limits of genre” (“Expanding ‘America’” 232). The story of Oriana does indeed seem fantastical in relation to the rest of Sketch: Oriana emigrates to America with her British husband, is taken captive by the Delaware Indians during the Revolutionary war, is saved by Zachary because she had previously given him food when he was starving, and is adopted and cared for by Zachary and Martha until she dies (272).

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16 Zachary and Martha Johnson were actual Mohegans, though the story of Oriana seems to be purely fictional.
Rather than assume that the sketch genre did not serve Sigourney well, however, I view this end piece of the sketch as integral to its implications about New England’s future. Sigourney, Nina Baym observes, seems to have been fond of this Oriana section of the text, for she republished it as a brief sketch, “Oriana,” in her twice reprinted *Sketches* (159). Beyond Sigourney’s admiration for the piece, the Oriana section indicates the continuity of Natives during and after the Revolutionary War in New England. Throughout the Oriana plot, the Mohegans create stability and continuity. Sigourney makes a point of noting that, when a non-Native physician comes to evaluate Oriana, he advises her Mohegan parents to continue their own medicinal treatment of the girl, with only some “simple additions.” The physician “approved the light nutriment of milk, and fruits, which she had adopted, examined the herbs, and plants, whose infusions she had used, and seemed surprised at their judicious adaptation to the different stages of her malady” (244). This skillful medicinal work does not save Oriana, whose case, the physician points out, is “beyond the reach of medicine,” but it lives on after her with Martha and Zachary, the Mohegan parents that survive her, as well as the many other Mohegans that have taken various paths toward the future at the end of the text. The quiet work of Mohegan women and the spiritual and political aims of Mohegan men, then, prove a constant in the text, even through its most fantastical section. Some Mohegans leave for Brotherton and some stay; almost all survive the splitting up of the tribe and the deaths of many whites. The Oriana story, however fantastical, puts a point on Mohegan coevalness.
Like the women who demonstrate that coevalness in *Sketch*, the Mohegans remain a consistent presence in Sigourney’s œuvre after *Sketch*, indicating that Sigourney’s representations of Indians evolved in dialogue with Mohegans’ ongoing actions. A recurring image that exemplifies this complex dialogue in Sigourney’s writings is the Mohegan Congregational Church, erected by the Mohegans in 1831 with the financial help of Sigourney’s acquaintance Sarah Huntington and other white women from Norwich, Hartford, and New London, Connecticut. Huntington, like Sigourney, was interested in missionary efforts at home and abroad; in 1827 she became “strongly interested” in the Mohegans who lived near Norwich (Mandell 115). Huntington worked with Samson Occom’s sister Lucy Occom Tantaquidgeon and her daughters, “whom many Mohegans considered the guardians of the tribe’s traditions,” to establish a Sabbath school at the Tantaquidgeon home (Mandell 115). Eventually, they raised enough money to build a church on Mohegan tribal lands. These women even managed to obtain funding for a teacher’s home and salary from the federal War Department’s Civilization Fund, at a time when the 1830 Indian Removal Act allowed the President to remove even “civilized” Indians from their lands.¹⁷ The Mohegan women understood that “it would be strategically important to the continuance of the Mohegan on traditional lands to escape removal by demonstrating themselves a ‘Christianized’ people” (J. Brooks 88).

The Mohegan Congregational Church has sustained traditional Mohegan practices and communal ties, allowing certain Mohegans both to remain on their lands and to change with the rest of the world for centuries. Lucy Occom Tantaquidgeon deeded tribal

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¹⁷ Huntington’s cousin Congressman Jabez Hunting helped obtain the funds (Mandell 116).
land for the church; the current Mohegan tribe explains that “[t]he land beneath the Church is one of two locations continually owned by the Tribe since before European contact,” and “in many ways helped the Tribe maintain its presence in the area and avoid relocation to the west” (Mohegan Tribe, “Mohegan Church” par. 1). Lisa Brooks observes that the physical presence of the “Indian meetinghouse” in New England symbolizes “the colonization of Native space” but also sustained Native communities in New England: “[i]ts physical presence embodied the longevity of the community and its particular identity, its gatherings provided psychological sustenance and cultivated group unity, and its structure gave authority to the community’s internal decision-making process” (166). Similarly, David J. Silverman explains how Christian churches among the Wampanoags of Cape Cod both reinforced “Indians’ village, tribal, and colonial ties” and provided “an institutional framework in which to address issues often unrelated to religion” (“Church” 265). Churches offered a space in which to discuss political and social as well as religious issues and “gave Indians their best chance of remaining peacefully on some of their lands while maintaining a sense of local and tribal identity, despite living in a region increasingly dominated by whites” (Silverman, “Church” 266-67). Women’s meetings at the Mohegan Church during the nineteenth century exemplify these processes; they helped women like Emma Baker, who was able reinstate the annual Wigwam Festival as part of the Mohegan Ladies Sewing Circle’s activities in 1860, to maintain tribal traditions (Mohegan Tribe, “Green Corn” par. 3). The church also proved essential to the Mohegans’ successful petition for federal recognition as a
tribe in 1994, when the Mohegans were able to show their ongoing relationship to tribal lands by reference to the church (J. Brooks 28).

Sigourney’s writings on the Mohegan Church capture this fortifying power of the Native church, driving home its social, political, and material value as a protective and enabling space for the Mohegans. Formally, her poem “The Mohegan Church” (Poems, 1834) enacts a revision of popular narratives about Indians in dialogue with the Mohegans. In a footnote to the poem, Sigourney observes that “on the ruins of an ancient fort in [the Mohegans’] territory, a small church has been erected--principally through the influence of the benevolence of females” (256). The note expresses both a change from a “fort” to a “church” and the continuation of Mohegan tribal organization on their lands. The persona of the poem acknowledges that this particular locale and tribal continuity might surprise those familiar with commonplace images of Indians; the poem begins with images of “hills, with verdure spread” where “[t]he red-browed hunter’s arrow sped” and “waters, sheen and blue” where “[he] freely launch’d his light canoe.” The speaker then asks her reader:

--Ask ye for hamlet’s peopled bound,
With cone-roofed cabins circled round?
For chieftain grave--for warrior proud,
In nature’s majesty unbowed?
You’ve seen the fleeting shadow fly,
The foam upon the billows die,
The floating vapor leave no trace--
Such was their path--that fated race.

The interrogative apostrophe distances the reader from the persona, as if she knows something that their typical images of Indians of the past cannot encompass. The last four lines quoted here describe the certainty of Sigourney’s audience that, with the “cone-
roofed cabins,” “chieftains,” and “warriors,” all Indians have disappeared. Sigourney asks her readers about their expected images of severe savage kings and noble Native orators: “Say ye that kings, with lofty port, / Here held their stern and simple court? / That here, with gestures rudely bold, / Stern orators the throng controlled?” Finally, she shifts into her own, contrasting vision:

--Methinks, even now, on tempest wings,  
The thunder of their war-shout rings,  
Methinks springs up, with dazzling spire,  
The redness of their council fire.18

The “dazzling spire” references both the Mohegan council fire and the church that has succeeded it. Sigourney often used the spire to reference the church; in “The Indian’s Welcome to the Pilgrim Fathers,” for example, she depicts the “Pilgrim Fathers” imagining their “future toil” as they arrive in America: “Mid yonder vale their corn must rise / In Summer’s ripening pride, / And there the church-spire woo the skies / Its sister-school beside” (l. 9-12). The church spire and school represent for Sigourney the uplifting aspects of civilization, in contrast with the unchecked material gain and industrialization of the landscape that she often condemned. Here Sigourney suggests that one spire might replace the other as a community gathering place, and that the Mohegans participate in “civilization” by maintaining their own space in Connecticut.

Sigourney then draws her readers away from this image, as if her reader’s narrative is overcoming the story she wishes to tell: “No!--no!--in darkness rest the throng, / Despair hath checked the tide of song, / Dust dimmed their glory’s ray.” Again,

18 In another version of this poem, these last two lines read, “Methinks again with reddening spire / The groves reflect their council fire.” Despite the variant, the lines similarly merge church spire with council fire.
the speaker’s qualifying voice responds, “But can these staunch their bleeding wrong? Or quell remembrance, fierce and strong? Recording angel--say!” The questions, like the “methinks” above, invite the reader to consider Indians in a contemporaneous situation with other Americans, in which they might avenge their wrongs. Whites’ naturalization of Indian darkness and despair cannot stop Indians’ “bleeding” at white hands or cloud their memory of whites’ wrongdoing, for they are continuing to act and retain knowledge in the present. Sigourney indicates that narratives of Indian disappearance and degradation do not suffice; the Mohegans cannot forget their wrongs and will take action in response to their suffering. The church, presumably, will allow them to do so.

Indeed, “The Mohegan Church” demonstrates that, where previously English mistreatment of the Mohegans would have resulted in “war-shouts,” its equally sinister consequences now involve heavenly justice. The poem superimposes the Mohegan Congregational Church, which was erected not far from Uncas’s old fort at Shantock, directly upon the fort itself. The “ruins” of the Mohegan “fortress,” where “many a deed ... Might tell to chill the midnight hour,” become the foundation of the church: “But now, its ruins strangely bear / Fruits that the gentlest hand might share; / For there a hallowed dome imparts / The lore of Heaven to listening hearts.” The word “strangely” captures much in its simple expression of confusion or incongruity; given whites’ treatment of them, it seems ironic that the Mohegans would embrace Christian “lore.” That such is the case indicates Mohegan adaptability, rather than their static existence in the past as a fated, warlike people. The poem’s final stanza takes the superimposition further:

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Now where tradition, ghostly pale,
With ancient horrors loads the vale,
And, shuddering, weaves in crimson loom,
Ambush, and snare and torture-doom,
There shall the peaceful prayer arise,
And tuneful hymns invoke the skies.

Where previously “ambush” and “torture” might have served the Mohegans—and, the poem seems to indicate, such events perhaps occur only in white “tradition”—the Church serves them in the present, allowing for peaceful coexistence with whites in the contemporary world. Sigourney ends the poem by encouraging this Mohegan continuity. She urges the Mohegans to “Turn to these temple-gates with praise; / Yes turn and bless the usurping band / That rent away your father’s land,” pointing to their rewards for doings so in the afterlife: “Forgive the wrong--suppress the blame, / And view with Faith’s fraternal claim / Your God--your hope--your heaven the same.” The irony here indicates the Mohegans’ justified indignation at whites and demonstrates that their revenge has taken on a new form: they will go to heaven, where whites will have to answer for their sins.

In this way, the Mohegans give substance to Sigourney’s “willingness to confront difficult moral issues” that might “be more perfunctory than real” elsewhere in her poetry (Larson 92). Her understanding of the palimpsestic Mohegan present is reflected again, not only in other writings on the Mohegans but in a poem about the Cherokees, the Indian tribe most in the public eye during her lifetime because of their well-known fight against removal. Sigourney’s “The Cherokee Mother,” printed in 1831 in the Cherokee national newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, depicts a Cherokee mother lamenting the impending
removal of the tribe to unknown lands. The woman describes a long tradition of dynamic Cherokee life on their homelands:

Beneath yon consecrated mounds
Our father’s treasur’d ashes rest,
Our hands have till’d these corn-clad grounds,
Our children’s birth these homes have blest
Here, on our souls a Saviour’s love
First beam’d with renovating ray,
Why should we from these haunts remove?--
But still you warn us hence away.-- (l. 5-12)

The progression from sacred burial mounds to “corn-clad grounds” to “Saviour’s love” chart not a progress narrative but an accumulation of traditions on Cherokee homelands. Cherokee women had always farmed, although farming practices had changed when men began to farm and the Cherokees acquired African slaves. Some Cherokees adopted Christianity, while others did not. The land to which the Cherokees will remove is an “uncultur’d” place that lacks the Cherokee accumulation of practices, a place “Where unknown waters fiercely roll, / And savage monsters howling tread; / Where no blest Church with hallow’d train, / Nor hymns of praise, nor voice of prayer, / Like angels sooth the wanderer’s pain.” The mother tells her child to “ask not where!” they will go, for she cannot explain a place without a history, a place to which she has no connection developed through generations of Cherokees and their dynamic relationship to a particular landscape. She assures her child that she will care for him, but suggests that the previous generation will have the greatest struggle: the child’s grandfather will not be buried in the mounds with “Those blessed sires, who weep no more” (l. 34-36). The poem acknowledges generational continuity and selective change among the Cherokees, grounded in the landscape on which they have created a “civilized” nation. The whites
will have to answer for their destruction of these generations, and the poem’s speaker ends with a threat of retribution in the afterlife: “Will a crush’d nation’s deep despair, / Your broken faith, --our tear-wet sod, / The babe’s appeal, --the chieftain’s prayer, / Find no memorial with our God?” (l. 45-49).

Through her engagement with Mohegan history and presence in Sketch of Connecticut, as well as her ongoing dialogue with the Mohegans’ actions during her time, Sigourney began to locate Native communities upon the dynamic landscapes they shaped. Sketch evinces an openness to the possibilities and actualities of Mohegan actions by demonstrating their complex, rooted yet changing relationships to land, religion, and community. When her famous poem “Indian Names” (1834) protests removal, it asks its readers, “Think ye the Eternal’s ear is deaf? / His sleepless vision dim? / Think ye the soul’s blood may not cry / From that far land to him?” (l. 53-56). The reference to “far land” not only reminds her readers of God’s omniscience but also demonstrates the Mohegans’ influence: Sigourney seems to understand the significance of removal not only in terms of whites’ victimization of helpless Indians but of Native communities’ fundamental relationships to the land that displacement will sever. For Sigourney, consideration of Indians in general was crucial to the moral welfare of the nation; her nearness to Mohegan land demonstrated that Indians had their own, simultaneous nations and histories.
“Every-day” Indians on the Prairies

Whereas Sigourney wrote about Indians in dialogue with the experiences of the Mohegans close to her home, Washington Irving ventured into Indian lands completely foreign to him when he embarked upon a hunting tour through present-day Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma, just after returning to the U.S. from a seventeen-year stay in Europe. Irving’s sketches of his experiences on this journey make up A Tour on the Prairies (1835). In some respects, Irving presents himself as an “urbane gentleman” on the prairies, “viewing at a distance” (Hamilton 51). But Tour on the Prairies’s narrative structure relies on Indians’ dynamic relationships with the territory over which Irving’s party travels. Whereas Irving’s early writings treat Indians as independent, static, noble figures of the past, the Indians Irving encounters on his hunting tour disorient the narrative arc of noble Indian past to degraded and vanishing Indian present, instead offering images of Indians’ ongoing, daily practices. In the prologue to Tour, he calls this text “a simple narrative of every-day occurrences; such as happen to every one who travels the prairies.” Among the everyday occurrences on the prairies, Irving becomes dependent for his physical experience and his narrative creation upon the Indians he meets and the Indian-shaped landscape over which he travels. That landscape and its inhabitants present a long history of Native choices, in dialogue with those of Euro-Americans, that in turn shape Irving’s text, creating a narrative of Indian-white dependence in a simultaneous present.

Before he went to England, Irving had published works that illuminated a long history of Euro-American mistreatment and misrepresentation of Indians. Daniel F.
Littlefield notes that the “generalized treatment of the Indians” in Irving’s early essays was based on Irving’s “reading of colonial history and on the second-hand information of his brother William, who had traded with the Indians in western New York, and of Irving’s friend Henry Brevoort, Jr., who was briefly involved in [John Jacob] Astor’s trading activities at Mackinac” (136). Brevoort sent letters to Irving that detail injustices against Indians and ask Irving to publish several speeches given by Indian chiefs that Brevoort recorded (Littlefield 137). Irving never published the speeches, but he did write essays that protest white mistreatment and misrepresentation of Indians.

Irving’s early essays, written at a distance from actual Indians, replicate the stereotype of Indians as static, independent, noble figures of the past who could only change by degrading. The influential essays “Traits of Indian Character” (1814) and “Philip of Pokanoket” (1814), both published in the *Analectic Magazine*, praise Indian independence and ingenuity and condemn whites for their negative representations and mistreatment of Indians, which has reduced them to degraded remnants living on the outskirts of white society. In essays read by many Americans, Irving thus helped to create and replicate the story of independent, heroic Indians being the only Indians; Indians of the present were remnants destined to fade away. “Philip of Pokanoket” treats the history of King Philip, or Metacom, a Wampanoag leader who led an uprising against English colonists in 1675; the uprising became the massive “King Philip’s War” between English and Algonquian peoples that, “[i]n proportion to population ... inflicted greater

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19 Irving later revised these essays for publication in the English edition of *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Esq* (1820). In the revised version of “Traits” published in *Sketchbook*, Irving felt the need to tone down his critique of the U.S. government’s treatment of Indians, removing a passage about General Coffee’s slaughter of the Creeks and claiming that “the American government ... has wisely and humanely exerted itself to inculcate a friendly and forbearing spirit towards [the Indians], and to protect them from fraud and injustice” (1003).
casualties than any other war in American history” (Lepore xi). Irving aims to correct earlier demonizations of Philip by justifying his actions. In Irving’s dramatization of the war, Philip fought to save his people’s independence: “it was enough for Philip to know, that before the intrusion of the Europeans his countrymen were lords of the soil, and that now they were becoming vagabonds in the land of their fathers.” He praises Philip’s character, which he describes as “amiable and lofty” and “alive to the softer feelings of connubial love and paternal tenderness, and to the generous sentiment of friendship.” Yet the King is part of a romantic, savage past: Irving writes of Philip in his final days, “we picture him to ourselves seated among his care-worn followers, brooding in silence over his blasted fortunes, and acquiring a savage sublimity from the wildness and dreariness of his lurking place.” The tableau-like description extracts King Philip from progressing time, making him a memory of a lost era.

“Traits of Indian Character” similarly uses praise to crystallize Indians in the past. The essay, written during the War of 1812, defends “the aborigines of this country” against mistreatments and misrepresentations; it was particularly influential, cited not only by white writers like Sigourney, but also by Native writers William Apess (Pequot) and Elias Boudinot (Cherokee) in their arguments for Indian rights.20 Irving repeats his common theme that the Indians have been “doubly wronged by the white men--first, driven from their native soil by the sword of the invader, and then darkly slandered by the pen of the historian.” He aims to counter such misrepresentations by delineating actual

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20 Sigourney cites the essay’s description of General Coffee’s slaughter of Creeks in a footnote to Traits of the Aborigines of America. Apess cites Irving in the epilogue to his autobiography, A Son of the Forest, and Boudinot cites the essay twice in his “Address to the Whites,” which he delivered in Boston and other northeastern cities.
“traits of Indian character,” those manners and habits that deny Indians the ability to change. Irving draws a distinction between present Indians visible to whites—“miserable hordes” on the “frontiers” of white civilization—and the former “undisputed lords of the soil” who lived contentedly with little and shared all. The current Indians “are degenerate beings, enfeebled by the vices of society, without being benefited by its arts of living. The independence of thought and action, that formed the main pillar of their character, has been completely prostrated, and the whole moral fabric lies in ruins” (20). Again, independence defines Indian “character,” while interaction with whites removes this essential “Indianness.” “Traits” also contrasts Indian morality with white: “The moral laws that govern [the Indian], to be sure, are few, but then he conforms to them all. The white man abounds in laws of religion, morals, and manners; but how many does he violate?” (21). Presenting himself as an authority on Indian character, Irving implies that all Indians share traits that are knowable because static; Indians who change are degraded, while past Indians are true Indians.

In contrast with these early essays, Irving’s *Tour on the Prairies* offers very little generalization about Indians or political commentary about Indian-white relations. Because of *Tour’s* sketch-like form, one critic argues, “Indian removal can be noted and alluded to, but ... the need to address and argue those policies is downplayed” (Reynolds 99). A recent biographer, in contrast, attributes Irving’s lack of critical commentary on Indian removal in *Tour* to Irving’s being “no expert in the politics of Indian removal. Nor was he ever predisposed, in spite of his political connections, to commit to internal policy debate.” Irving, in this scholar’s view, had come to admire Andrew Jackson, “whom he
preferred to see as a man who wished all people well” (Burstein 259). Irving’s western tour was in fact directly connected with Jackson’s removal project. Jackson had appointed Captain Henry Ellsworth, whom Irving met by chance on a steamboat shortly after his return to the U.S. from England, to scout out land and resources in the Indian Territory and to promote peace among warring plains tribes in preparation for the settlement of eastern Indian nations in their territory (Burstein 258). The Ellsworth expedition was thus a small part of a colonizing project detrimental to many Native groups. Western groups like the Osages had ceded lands to the U.S. in a series of treaties leading up to the Indian Removal Act of 1830; in the process, these Natives lost much of their hunting territory, just as eastern nations lost their homelands and natural resources (Bailey 12).

In a letter to his brother Peter, Irving gave as a reason for taking up the offer to accompany Ellsworth that he wished to see those “great Indian Tribes” that were about to disappear as “independent nations” under this major shift and, in Irving’s assessment, become “amalgamated under some new form of government’” (qtd. in M. Burns 57). This assessment of independent Indians about to disappear as such, of course, echoes Irving’s early essays. But Irving’s interactions with Indians in Tour disrupt the idea of “independent nations” on the verge of drastic change. Contrary to Irving’s expectations, those “great Indian Tribes” on the prairies had long been dealing with the effects of colonization and incorporating elements of Euro-American lifestyles, from horses and clothing to religion. These choices would impact Irving’s own journey and the resultant text, which, I argue, lacks political commentary not entirely because Irving admired
Jackson or pursued a different literary form, but because his exchanges with Indians disoriented him from his denial of Indians’ coevalness.

Irving first records Indians’ dynamic lifestyles that have already adapted to European presences when his party travels through the outskirts of “civilization.” As the travelers follow the west bank of the Arkansas River, they move through miles of “Creek villages and farm houses; the inhabitants of which appeared to have adopted, with considerable facility, the rudiments of civilization, and to have thriven in consequence” (Tour 25). As Andrew K. Frank has pointed out, Creeks of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries “did not possess a singular or essentialist understanding of Creek culture. Instead they recognized that their boundaries existed in flux, with new peoples and technologies constantly entering their community” (5-6). Creeks’ dress, for example, often involved a mix of European textiles and “Indian” decorations, such as feathers and tattoos. Irving describes the Creeks returning from a traditional ball game to their farm houses in bright shirts of European style, and notes their “gipsey fondness for brilliant colours ... One had a scarlet handkerchief bound round his head surmounted with a tuft of black feathers like a cock’s tail. Another had a white handkerchief, with red feathers” (Tour 25). The mix of European textiles and feathers, as well as an old game with more recent houses, result from a long history of Creek trade with Europeans and their selective appropriation of European dress and habits to suit their needs and tastes.

Once Irving’s party arrives on the prairies further west, his narrative takes a particular course because of Natives’ subsistence practices, embedded in a long history of both Native migrations and interactions with Europeans, that draw from and shape the
ever-changing environment through which he travels. Irving describes how his group had planned to meet an Osage hunting party at Fort Gibson, to accompany them “on their autumnal visit to the Buffalo prairies” (16). They were unable to pursue this plan because the Osage hunters had already departed on their seasonal hunt when the party arrived at Fort Gibson. Irving’s party thus opted to travel with a “company of mounted rangers” to the hunting grounds, “on horseback, in hunters’ style” (18). These seasonal patterns that shape Irving’s journey were essential to Indians’ survival on the plains, particularly after they adopted horses from the Spanish southwest into their cultural systems. Tribes like the Pawnees and Osages were traditionally villagers for whom farming was an integral aspect of practical and spiritual life. They became increasingly nomadic as they acquired large horse herds from the southwest trade with Spain, which allowed them to make “extended biannual forays to the bison-rich Western plains” (Hämäläinen 854). Yet with this mobility came new pressures. Horses’ voracious appetites might destroy cornfields, and, in the winters, horses “consumed enormous amounts of cottonwood bark, depleting the scarce timber resources” (Hämäläinen 855). The Pawnees spent up to seven months of the year on the hunt by 1800 in order to provide forage for their horses and “time for the overtaxed home environs to recuperate and for the farming system to operate” (Hämäläinen 857). Increased hunts and nomadism rapidly depleted the bison population and the “tangled and overlapping claims over hunting ranges” increased intertribal warfare (Hämäläinen 857).

Groups like the Pawnees began to interact differently with the natural world in order to accommodate their horse populations. The Pawnees lived their lives according
to ceremonial and seasonal cycles that antedated their use of the horse; they managed to
integrate horse usage into these life patterns, but the integration was not seamless (White,
*Roots* 35). So that they would not have to choose between village and hunting life, the
Pawnees “burned the prairies regularly in the fall;” such fires “provided the means for
securing feed for their horses in early spring, the time of critical need,” for “spring
growth of grasses did not begin early enough to maintain the horses” at Pawnee villages
(37, 39). Lighting such fires prevented the Pawnees from having to choose between
horses and corn, but the fires had negative consequences as well. Fire “diminished the
number of trees along streams and rivers, hurting other aspects of the Pawnee economy
and introducing tensions into their dealings with whites” (39).

These prairie fires set by the Pawnees and other groups, although Irving does not
seem to understand or identify their purpose, consistently determine the travel plans of
Irving’s party and Irving’s own experience and record of the prairies. Irving hates
traveling over those parts of the prairies burnt by Indian hunters in order to help feed their
horses in the next season. “The fires made on the prairies by the Indian hunters,” he
writes

> had frequently penetrated these forests, sweeping in light transient flames along
> the dry grass, scorching and calcining the lower twigs and branches of the trees,
> and leaving them black and hard, so as to tear the flesh of man and horse that had
to scramble through them. I shall not easily forget the mortal toil, and the
> vexations of flesh and spirit that we underwent occasionally, in our wanderings
> through the cross timber. It was like struggling through forests of cast iron (96).

While Irving literally struggles through this Indian landscape, his text becomes entangled
in time with Indians, in the present. The Pawnees’ and other tribes’ seasonal patterns
impact the physical experiences of non-Natives on the prairies and, in turn, inform how
those prairies will be represented by non-Native pens. Irving and his party even cut short their journey based on these fires and the state of their horses; unlike the Pawnees, who would feed their horses on the new growth of burnt prairies at a later season, Irving’s party has not taken into account the current desolation of such areas. The duration of Irving’s journey is directly determined by Indian raiding practices and Indian fires; towards the end of the journey, Irving’s party’s horses are “generally much jaded by the fatigues of traveling and hunting, and had fallen away sadly for want of good pasturage, and from being tethered at night, to protect them from Indian depredations” (148). The party is thus unable to finish out its tour, for further travel without proper grazing grounds would cause them to lose horses: they “had started too late in the season or loitered too much in the early part of [their] march,” and now “was the time ... when the hunting parties of Indians set fire to the prairies” (149). Irving’s party risks “that the prairies between [them] and the fort would be set on fire by some of the return parties of Osages, and a scorched desert left for [them] to traverse” (149).

Because Irving’s party missed its chance to travel with the Osages, the seasonal patterns and actions of Pawnees, Osages, and other groups that determine the course of journey and text are only perceivable through such signs on the landscape as burnt prairies. Irving thus comes to rely on his guide Pierre Beatte, of Osage and French descent, for insight into the Indian actions that shape Irving’s journey. Beatte lives among Osages at a mission town along the Neosho river, hunts and goes on war parties with the Osages, and has an Osage wife. Irving’s traveling companion Charles Latrobe wrote in his journal of Beatte: “he was the only one in the whole company who had any
knowledge of the country, and his information and guidance might in general be
depended on” (140). The party’s other guide, another “half-breed” named Antoine
(whom Irving calls Tonish), constantly boasts and exaggerates. Irving thus recognizes
the need for Beatte despite his immediate distrust of the guide, which he mentions near
the beginning of Tour. Upon Irving’s first encounter with Beatte, who is “lounging about,
in an old hunting frock and ... leggings, of deer skin, soiled and greased and almost
japanned by constant use,” Irving confesses that he “did not like his looks,” and notes
that he had “been taught to look upon all half breeds with distrust, as an uncertain and
faithless race” (22). Defying Irving’s certainty about Indians of the past like King Philip,
Beatte, with his hard-worked exterior and “cold and laconic” comportment, does not
conform to Irving’s type of the noble Indian. Yet Irving’s use of Beatte’s information
throughout Tour indicates that he came to see this “half-breed” less as “faithless” and
“uncertain” than as knowledgable of both Native and non-Native practices and able to
interpret the prairie landscape and its signs in a way that escapes Irving. He comes to
recognize a different type of “independence” in Beatte than in Philip, a competence in
“self protection and self maintenance” on the prairie. He even envies this independence,
imagining that Beatte “consider[s] himself superior to [them] all, now that [they] were
launching into the wilderness” (24).

This is not to say that Beatte serves as a perfectly willing guide or entirely faithful
interpreter for Irving or anyone else on the tour. Beatte makes “no promises nor
professions” when negotiating his employment; he states “the terms he required for the
services of himself and his horse, which [Irving’s party] thought rather high, but [shows]
no disposition to abate them, nor any anxiety to secure [Irving’s party’s] employ” (22).
A negotiator in the current U.S. economy, like the Mohegan women in Sigourney’s
_Sketch_, Beatte knows to earn as much as possible from this exchange, in which he even
has the upper hand. His lack of deference apparently got under Irving’s skin; according to
the journal Commissioner Ellsworth kept on the journey, Irving was “quick in his
feelings, and easily excited by anything the least disrespectful, and several times had a
complete blow up” with Beatte and Tonish, the other guide (Washington Irving 47).
Evidently, just as Beatte came to understand the value of remaining with Irving’s party
despite his dislike for Irving’s behavior, Irving came to realize the necessity of Beatte for
his narrative and overcame or ignored the more distasteful aspects of their relationship.
According to Ellsworth, “when the time of parting came, [they] all looked upon Beatte as
a friend, and Tonish as a scaramouch” (140-41). When Irving not only exchanges money
for Beatte’s guidance but also shifts his response to him along the journey, in
contemporaneous time, Beatte becomes an actor in the construction of the narrative, an
influence on rather than an object of Irving’s pen.

Irving’s narrative relies on Beatte’s knowledge for its story just as he and his party
rely on Beatte for guidance over the prairies. An Osage living among an Osage
community, Beatte understands the integration of place and human history in plains
tribes’ conceptions of the world. At one point Captain Ellsworth asks Beatte if he can
point out the direction in which the Red Fork river lies. Beatte tells the Captain, “If you
keep along yonder, by the edge of the prairie you will come to a bald hill, with a pile of
stones upon it,” to which the Captain replies, “I have noticed that hill as I was
“hunting” (45). Beatte explains, “those stones were set up by the Osages as a land mark: from that spot you may have a sight of the Red Fork” (45). Because of his experience with the Osages, Beatte reads the sign as resulting from and compelling human action in a way the Captain, who sees a hill rather than a deliberate marker, cannot.

The Captain along the journey, and Irving in his narrative, indeed rely on Beatte’s interpretations for insight into a landscape that, for many native peoples, “could be read like an historical text” (Calloway 4). Beatte explains that passing the Osage hunting party in front of them will be necessary if they want to find buffalo, for the Osages “frighten everything, like a prairie on fire” (33). He points out the time that has passed since Natives and white rangers left various hunting or war camps and gives history to the sites themselves (29, 30, 31). For example, Irving’s party passes “the recently deserted camping place of an Osage war party.” Irving describes the details of the camp, noting that “[t]he frame of the tents or wigwams remained, consisting of poles bent into an arch with each end stuck into the ground: these are intertwined with twigs and branches, and covered with bark, and skins.” While Irving can offer an account of what he observes, he depends on Beatte to supply the events that occurred at the scene and their meaning: Beatte situates the scene temporally as well as spatially, pointing out “the wigwam in which the chiefs had held their consultations round the council fire; and an open area, well trampled down, on which the grand war dance had been performed” (30). Irving notes that only “[t]hose experienced in Indian lore can ascertain the tribe, and whether on a hunting, or a warlike expedition, by the shape and disposition of the
wigwams.” Lacking this experience himself, Irving relies on one with Osage knowledge to add depth to his sketch by giving history to the skeleton camp.

This is not to say that Irving simply records Beatte’s information or the landscape’s signs of Indian presences and does not exert control over the text. On the contrary, he makes literary types of his traveling companions—for example calling the guide Antoine a “kind of Gil Blas of the frontier” (15)—and simplifies and potentially rewrites events for effect, aiming at times to create a recognizable story about Indians for his readers rather than simply relate travels over an inconvenient landscape. If Captain Ellsworth’s private journal can be taken at face value, Irving embellished one particular story to create a familiar narrative of Indian-white relations for his readers. Ellsworth describes witnessing a dispute between some Cherokees and an Osage whom the Cherokees claimed had stolen their horse (13). In Irving’s version of the story, the accuser is not a group of Cherokees but a white man, a “Draco of the frontier” who believes only in “Lynch’s law ... in which the plaintiff is apt to be witness, jury, judge, and executioner, and the defendant to be convicted and punished on mere presumption” (27). Such a law, Irving writes, engenders “many of those heart burnings and resentments among the Indians, which lead to retaliation, and end in Indian wars” (27). Whether the real dispute involved Cherokees or a white man, Irving creates contrasting types of the Osage and the white frontier-dweller, juxtaposing the “noble countenance and frank demeanour of the young Osage, with the sinister visage and high handed conduct of the frontiers-man” (27). In a familiar narrative, the Osage becomes a noble victim who will eventually succumb to the white law of the frontier.
As this scene suggests, the Osages exemplify the static, independent, noble Indian of the past for Irving. Irving tries several times to fix the Osages into static figures. The Osage men who visit Irving’s camp, according to Irving, watch “every thing that was going on round them in silence, and [look] like figures of monumental bronze” (35). They are “the finest looking Indians [Irving] has ever seen in the West”: “stately fellows; stern and simple in garb and aspect,” with “fine Roman countenance, and broad deep chests,” who “looked like so many noble bronze figures” (20). According to Captain Ellsworth’s narrative, Irving, neurotic about cleanliness, in actuality found the Osages dirty and extremely poor and was relieved that his party could not travel with them. Irving seems to have chosen to represent a noble race that would be more appealing to his readers than a degraded present.

Beatte’s and other Osages’s presences on the journey, however, return the Osages to simultaneity and to participation in the construction of Irving’s text. Irving learns that Beatte exists somewhere in between Osage and white rather than on a trajectory from one to the other; such a trajectory does not explain his occupational practices and economic independence. Beatte’s life involves the integration of various activities: hunting, farming, fighting with war parties, praying, raising a family. Irving learns that Beatte lives in an Osage town on the Neosho River, superintended by a missionary named Requa, “who was endeavoring to instruct the savages in the art of agriculture, and to make husbandmen and herdsmen of them.” Irving had stopped at this town before his hunting excursion and “considered it more likely to produce solid advantages to the poor Indians, than any of the mere praying and preaching missions along the border.” At
Requa, he continues, “Pierre Beatte had his little farm, his Indian wife, and his halfbreed children: and aided Mr. Requa in his endeavors to civilize the habits and meliorate the condition of the Osage tribe.” Although Beatte “had been brought up Catholic, and was inflexible in his religious faith” and therefore “could not pray with Mr. Requa,” a Protestant Missionary, he could nevertheless “work with [Requa], and he evinced a great zeal for the good of his savage relatives and neighbors” (123-4). Beatte’s Catholicism might represent a combination of religious devotion and strategic choice of Christian sect; Willard Hughes Rollings notes that neither the Catholics nor the Protestants ever had much success in converting the Osages, but Catholicism “shared many superficial traits” with more traditional Osage beliefs (17). Beatte manages to integrate his farm work, religion, and family life with practices of Osage hunters and warriors; Irving notes that, even with his Christianity and his farming, Beatte “evidently was more of an Indian in his tastes” than a white man, for Beatte relates many stories of fighting both white men and Pawnees with his fellow Osages. The idea of being “Indian in his tastes” emphasizes Beatte’s choices in his mode of living and occupations, describing Indian action rather than Indian victimization.

Irving’s *Tour* also records a number of ongoing Osage traditions that indicate the maintenance of long-standing practices by the Osages in the present, amidst change. Irving claims to have heard the Osages’ “doleful wailings at daybreak” when they “go out at that hour into the fields, to mourn and weep for the dead” (36). Such morning wailings were a traditional practice of the Osages, for whom sunrise was a sacred time. The coming of the sun “symbolized the beginning of life” and “in turn reminded everyone of
those who had departed from life, since the beginning and ending of life were associated with each other in Osage minds” (L. Burns 208). The Osages even mourned for those that they were about to raid (L. Burns 208). Other Osage rituals involve chanting and storytelling in camp. A group of Osage visitors to Irving’s camp lie around the fire and begin “a low nasal chant, drumming with their hands upon their breasts by way of accompaniment.” Beatte, Irving writes, informed Irving’s party that the chant “related to ourselves; our appearance, our treatment of them, and all that they knew of our plans” (35). As Irving interprets them, the Osages interpret Irving and his company, again demonstrating their coevalness with non-Natives.

Osage stories indicate generational continuity based in the landscape. Irving mimics this connection between knowledge, story, and landscape, relating an Osage folk story he picked up in his travels “almost in the words in which it was related to [him] as [he] lay by the fire in an evening encampment on the banks of the haunted stream where it is said to have happened” (126). The story tells of an Osage hunter who is to be married to a beautiful young woman of his tribe and leaves her at home while he journeys to St. Louis to sell his skins and purchase gifts for her. Upon his return, he finds the Osage camp gone but his bride still there. She tells him the people have gone on the hunt and they travel together to the new camp. When they reach the camp, the young woman remains outside, claiming “It is not proper for us to return together ... I will wait here.” The hunter enters the camp to find the girl’s family distraught at the death of the young girl, and the hunter himself falls down dead when he learns the truth of her passing
Native ethnologist Francis LaFlesche (Omaha) recorded this story from Osage elders in the late nineteenth century. The story recorded by LaFlesche notes that the young man “had departed from the old custom of waiting for his parents to choose him [a wife] and buy [her] and had taken the woman of his own choice to his home and lived with her” (129). As Garrick Bailey points out, this action “would have been unusual, since Osage families were usually matrilocal” (163). The story thus was probably intended to instruct youth in marriage customs and respect for kinship structures. It utilizes death as a mode of instructing the living community, with the particular landscape as a reminder, rather than indicating that Indians exist in the past.

Just as this story incorporates a landmark to reveal an important teaching or truth, stories of Native spirituality evince an experienced-based belief system. Distinguishing Native from Christian religions, Dakota philosopher Vine Deloria describes the integration of spirituality with place among many Native groups: “The places where revelations were experienced were remembered and set aside as locations where, through rituals and ceremonials, the people could once again communicate with the spirits.” Sacred landscapes conveyed reality, and experience demonstrated truth: “revelation was seen as a continuous process of adjustment to the natural surroundings and not as a specific message for all times and places” (65-66). On the day Irving’s party passes a Delaware camp, he describes conversation at the campfire about the Delawares, whose daring in war is related to their belief in “a guardian spirit, in the form of a great eagle.”

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21 The version recorded by LaFlesche and recently collected by Garrick Bailey varies slightly but shares the same structure and main plot as Irving’s.

22 Bailey notes that many Osage folk stories were designed for both entertainment and education; this was likely the case with this story (5-6).
This particular spirit reflects a belief among the Delawares’ in manitous, spirits found in everything around them, that could be helpful or harmful (Fur 117). The eagle guardian, Irving notes, responds to and shapes actions in the material world; when “pleased with [the Delawares], he wheels down into the lower regions and may be seen circling with wide spread wings against the white clouds: at such times the seasons are propitious the corn grows finely, and they have great success in hunting.” When angry, “he vents his rage in the thunder, which is his voice, and the lightning, which is the flashing of his eye, and strikes dead the object of his displeasure” (67). The Delaware stories reflect revelation as connected to place and everyday experience, and Irving’s narrative, connected to the material spaces through which he travels, takes shape around such stories.

Of course, Irving does not interpret these stories or comment on their meaning; even as he picks up the connection between story and place, he remains detached from the Native history and knowledge the stories and places convey. Irving incorporates his uncertainty and lack of interpretive abilities on the prairies into his story, drawing suspense from his inability to understand Indian practices on the prairies. Although Beatte offers information about the Osages, Irving’s party never meets any Pawnees on their journey, likely because the Pawnees’ subsistence patterns took most of them back to their villages to begin the harvest around the first of September, and they did not return to the buffalo plains until mid-November (White, Roots 171). Irving’s month-long journey began in early October and ended in early November (Tour 14). Irving’s depictions of the Pawnees thus depend on hearsay and conjecture. For example, at one point Irving’s
company observes “a couple of figures on horseback, slowly moving parallel to [them] along the edge of a naked hill about two miles distant; and apparently reconnoitering” them (64). There ensues “a halt and much gazing and conjecturing. Were they Indians? If Indians, were they Pawnees?” (64). Irving extends the moment of uncertainty, implying the potential for thrilling narrative development: “[t]here is something exciting to the imagination and stirring to the feelings, while traversing these hostile plains, in seeing a horseman prowling along the horizon” (64). In this case, the two horsemen end up being two of Irving’s own company. Irving relies on these moments for adventure in the narrative while also unable to fulfill them, for he remains dependent upon the Pawnees’ seasonal movements. The Pawnees encourage Irving to hint at a bigger picture of Native life on the prairies but prevent him from describing more than “every-day occurrences” on the landscape.

Irving’s Tour on the Prairies thus gets caught up in Indians’ coevalness, their contemporaneity and contemporaneity, as Irving travels through and describes a landscape that his own text mimics by locating stories in place. Indeed, as Irving’s journey took shape because of prairie fires and Native hunting practices, as well as Beatte’s knowledge of the land and people, his text recorded the various choices of Indians on the prairies who were both retaining knowledge and adapting their lives in that space, as they had done for centuries. The result is that Indians become not “independent” nations on the verge of disappearance, but part of the “every-day,” with a history, present, and future.
Irving and Sigourney’s texts that I have discussed here present less coherent assessments of Indians and U.S.-Indian relations than the historical romances of their contemporaries Cooper and Sedgwick that have drawn so much critical attention. I hope to have shown that Sigourney and Irving’s interests in local and regional landscapes speak as importantly to national questions as they record Indians’ complex choices, actions, and ideas which are simultaneously rooted in past and present, connecting particular tribal, national, and individual Indian history to current situations. While Indian removal of course drew and continues to draw much attention to whites’ victimization of Indians in the Jacksonian era, Sigourney and Irving’s writings demonstrate that Indian actions disoriented the narrative of disappearance and degradation in the period’s literature. This influence is more difficult to see, yet more rewarding to locate, for it helps to reconstruct Indian histories that did not end in the Removal period and would continue to shape Native lives throughout the nineteenth century.
Chapter 4: Indians and Information Circulation during the American Civil War

In early December of 1863, just after a decisive Union victory at Chattanooga, Tennessee, that would open the way into the heart of the Confederacy, Richmond’s newly-founded satirical weekly *Southern Punch* printed an article titled “Sensation Mongers.” In the story, an editor examines a proof of a wood-cut, “a representation of four white men being flayed alive by Indians” which “was to appear in the next number.” When a man comes to ask if he might write for the paper; the editor asks him what he can “do in the sensation line!” Unfortunately, the man wishes to “prepare a series of scientific articles.” The editor turns back to his “four white men and the Indians” and responds: “No use, sir--no use. The public don’t want them--no taste for them.” He continues, “The public, sir, wants blood, blood, blood! Write me some articles stained with blood from beginning to end, and I’ll give you your own price.” The “Sensation Mongers” author asks, “May not ... this craving, from habit, for gross and crimson-colored sensational fictions, account, in some measure, for the present ferocity and devilish crimes of the Yankees?” He hopes that “the people of the Confederate States will cultivate a higher taste.”

The article draws attention to sensationalized Indians as sensation by contrasting Northern war “crimes” with Southern “taste”; the desire to present the North as barbaric suggests that depictions of Indians’ brutal, “savage” war practices work in the service of regional ideology. Writing about turn-of-the-century journalistic practice, Mark Harrison
argues that “sensationalism and objectivity are conceptually nested, exhibiting more
commonalities than differences. Sensationalism puts objectivity’s precepts into practice
and challenges some of its fundamental assumptions about human nature and the
possibility of human perfection” (56). Whereas objectivity presumes that one can
overcome bias by reporting facts, sensationalism might draw attention to the false
premises of objectivity, highlighting the biases of all reporting. During the Civil War, of
course, biases were particularly extreme. By the time of the Civil War, when the
characteristics of mass media--steam-driven presses, railroad networks, rapid
transmission of information via telegraph lines---were “in place and accelerating,”
newspapers had increased power both “to portray--and distort--events and to amplify,
often exacerbate, political arguments” (Copeland 11). Given the period’s extreme
sectionalism, the revelatory power of information might always be suspect--particularly
when it came to images of a side’s “savagery”--and sensation might imply a “reality”
beyond the reach of print. The Civil War media’s constant use of “barbaric” war practices
to vilify the enemy, I argue, led to a reconsideration of the savagery of Indians, so that
many reporters investigated the facts of a matter in order to contradict sensational stories
about Indians. Romantic news reports of Indians had a similar effect; the easy move from
actual news event to static, romantic Indians compelled some non-Natives to explore
more realistic representations.

This chapter examines Indian influence on both journalistic practice during the
Civil War and literary texts that synthesize or unsettle the news after the war. Newspapers
reported countless stories about the over 20,000 Indians who participated in the U.S.
Civil War, on both sides; they also reported on Indians in the West who fought against the U.S. for their own purposes.¹ News stories about Indians range from factual accounts of their numbers, actions, and motivations, to romanticized dramatizations of their bravery, to sensational depictions of their supposedly “savage” war practices. Indian participation in the war was quite diverse, from “bushwacking” in Indian territory to serving under high military officers; for an example of the latter, Seneca Ely S. Parker was General Grant’s personal military secretary and drafted the letters that negotiated the end of the war. Northerners and Southerners could thus pick and choose to report on a range of Indian actions and Indian-related events that helped them articulate regional identities. Indians who scouted bravely could be easily romanticized as noble Union warriors, while Indians who counted coup or scalped enemies could demonstrate the savagery of their particular side. Although Indians were often represented sensationally or romantically, the link between these representations and regional identities could reveal the instability of information. The rhetoric of competing sides during the Civil War, I argue, helped reveal an “implicit real” behind these representations. Fact-based reports about Indians existed in tension with stereotypical portrayals, a process that would continue and increase after the war and, I argue, contribute to the development of an intercultural realism in literature.

Proliferating identity in this way during the Civil War--i.e. drawing Union and Confederacy into relation with various Indian nations--more clearly shows conflicting

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¹ Indians fought for the Union or Confederacy for many reasons, including their identification with the regions they inhabited, desire for adventure, treaty obligations, poverty, “continuation of traditional war practices and leadership roles,” support or rejection of slavery, and, most often, a lack of other options given their “tenuous existence in both the North and South” (Hauptman Between Two Fires x-xii). For some Natives like the Cherokees, who found it impossible to remain neutral in Indian Territory, participation in the war “seemed imperative for their own and/or their Indian community’s survival” (xii).
sides that defy monolithic nation-building narratives. The momentousness of the North-South sectional divide that culminated in civil war has made it difficult to see other regional identifications or intra-national divides that contributed to the nation’s fragmentation. Trish Loughran has observed that the rise of print culture during the 1830s and 40s did not in fact seamlessly connect disparate people and “lead to a golden age of U.S. nationalism”; instead it “ushered in the era of high sectionalism that is now marked in official U.S. history by that most divisive of adjectives: ‘antebellum’” (304). The sense of “shared time and space” that, Benedict Anderson has claimed, accompanied the rise of print capitalism “was not a solution to the geographic displacement of one part of the population from the next” but “instead a new and frightening problem for those previously distinct and culturally autonomous populations” (Loughran 4-5). Just as information technologies divided and fragmented the nation as much as consolidated it, they did not move seamlessly into Indian territories nor create a unity of opinion about diverse Indian nations. It is true that “technological advances ... combined with ideological assumptions to make the telegraph, railroad, and printing press part of the national ideology of manifest destiny” (Huntzicker 175). But Indian nations often resisted incursions of railroads, telegraph lines, and settlers into their territory to the best of their ability, leading to a variety of armed conflicts with the U.S. government that became known as the “Indian wars.”

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2 In the midst of the Civil War in 1862, the U.S. passed legislation that authorized the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, which would in 1869 join the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads in Utah. When railroads crossed through Indian lands, Indians had to be moved onto out-of-the-way reservations.
Indian and U.S. actions outside of the North-South axis remind us that the Civil War was part of a larger U.S. national effort to create an expansive, unified national power throughout the nineteenth-century, an effort that inspired division and debate as much as unity. During the Civil War, Indian resistance to this process required the U.S. to keep its sights on the West even as the Union fought the Confederacy mostly in the East. Lawrence Hauptman reminds us that while “Confederate artillery pieces were aimed at Fort Sumter during the secession crisis of 1860-1861, Washington officials made plans for continued Indian removals as an option to solve the so-called ‘Indian problem.’”

During the war, the U.S. Army “undertook campaigns of ‘pacification’” against the Santee Sioux, the Apaches, the Cheyennes, and others, forcing Sioux and Apache prisoners into concentration camps and massacring around 150 Cheyenne men, women, and children at Sand Creek, in what was critiqued even during that time as a deplorable act of unnecessary murder (Between Two Fires xi). Generally obscured in accounts of the Civil War years, these events can nevertheless help us understand intra-national conflict on the ground and in print as more than a divide between the Union and the Confederacy, a divide that was eventually overcome by a Union victory and the subsequent westward expansion of the U.S.

Eye-witness or investigative news coverage of Indians who fought in the war or beyond its lines often absorbed Indian points of view and brought about a questioning of the ideological assumptions of manifest destiny. The polarization of North and South during the Civil War diffused concepts usually associated with Indians--savagery, barbarism, cruelty--through various sides, demonstrating that information about Indians
was frequently contested and unstable. The proliferation of conflicting news about Indians during the war years, based on Indians’ presences and actions, shaped post-war texts that demonstrate the limits of romance and sensationalism. Charles Wesley Alexander’s adventurous romance *General Sherman’s Indian Spy* (1865) aims to obscure the savagery of both Union and Indian war practices by making noble war heroes of Wenonah, a fictional Indian spy, and General William Tecumseh Sherman, known for his ruthless occupation of Atlanta and March to the Sea that ravaged the Georgia countryside. However, the text draws attention to itself as romance through its heroine, who embodies the shifting nature of representation. The incorporation of Indians into the war story thus demonstrates ongoing intra-national divides that threaten the romance of national unity after the war. Mark Twain’s humorous, autobiographical *Roughing It* (1872), based on his travels in the West during the Civil War, draws on information about Indians to demonstrate that all information, as he puts it, has “three sides to it” (1:121). His text compels scholars to see the West as an extension of Civil War, a place of ongoing intra-national crisis for decades after the war where competing sides and information compelled new modes of representation. Reading these texts together, alongside newspaper coverage of the Civil War, makes clear that the Indian “side” of the nineteenth-century U.S. national story merits further consideration, for it reveals the inner-workings of representation during a period of propagandistic, polarized narratives.
The Savagery of War

For a nation used to fighting Indians, not whites, within its borders, civil war between North and South raised crucial questions about cultural practices, civilization, and savagery. Indians’ particular actions during the war shaped the news coverage. Northerners and Southerners emphasized their difference from the enemy by reference to Indians, an obvious third party. Natives’ diverse reasons for joining the Union or Confederacy allowed those parties to select from stories of local significance to support wide-reaching political interests and simultaneously led to a confusion of “savagery” in those reports. Some Indians sought to maintain practices they had incorporated into their lives after many years of contact with white Americans. Indian nations in Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) signed treaties with the Confederacy early in the war; members of southern tribes like the Cherokees and Creeks had adopted slavery after years of interaction with their white neighbors and identified in certain ways with the southern gentry. Others believed alliance with the South would offer them more political power. Additionally, the U.S. Army abandoned military posts in Indian territory at the beginning of the war, so that leaders who wished to remain neutral--like Cherokee chief John Ross--had no choice but to ally with the Confederacy in order to protect their lands. Many opposed these treaties, often along factional lines within tribes that had developed early in the nineteenth century. Those who rejected alliances with the South--for example, the

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3 Take, for example, the Cherokees. With the Civil War in Indian Territory came a strong re-emergence of hostilities between those Cherokees who associated with the Treaty party that had signed the Removal treaty, and those who, conversely, had supported principal chief John Ross’s anti-Removal stance. Members of the Treaty Party were generally well immersed in the values of white southern culture, had taken their slaves with them to Indian Territory, and continued to live a southern, upper-class lifestyle. These tribe members approved of an alliance with the Confederacy from the beginning of the sectional debate. The Ross party, mainly comprised of full blood Cherokees who supported traditional Cherokee ways of life, had opposed Removal; many were also against the treaty with the South.
famous Creek chief Opotheyehala--fled north to Kansas as refugees, from which location many would eventually re-enter Indian territory as Union troops.

Outside of Indian Territory, some Indians strongly identified with the Union or Confederate cause. In a letter to his sister, Seneca farmer and teacher Issac Newton Parker, who served as sergeant and color-bearer of the Tuscarora Company, or D Company of the 132d New York State Volunteer Infantry (Hauptman, *Iroquois* 27-28), described himself as “battling the storm and front of a rebellion such as any *enlightened* nation never saw” (I. Parker 81-3). He took pride in his largely Indian regiment’s particular successes in the Union Army. In a January 15, 1863, letter, he described the Indians’ stamina when his troop lost their way on a march to New Bern, North Carolina, “making [their] trip about 68 miles, and when it could have been made in 48 miles.” “No Indians on the entire route,” Parker boasted, straggled “behind to be picked up by the ambulances.” He further recorded that his troop traveled 22 miles per day when “The Army of the Potomac only usually goes from 4 to 8 miles a day” (70). He pointed out to his sister: “The N.Y. press praised us as in fact of being the best regiment of General Spinola’s Brigade and second to none of the N.Y. City regiments that had then left for the seat of War” (81). Parker’s comments reveal a desire to be recognized both as an Indian and as a Union soldier serving national unity; a Seneca who had earlier fought to retain tribal lands in New York, he now identified with the Union fight to regain national territory.

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4 D Company was referred to as “Tuscarora Company,” even though it consisted of more Germans than Iroquois and many more Senecas than Tuscaroras (Hauptman, *Iroquois* 28). This was likely because Tuscarora sachem Cornelius C. Cusick recruited part of the unit (Hauptman, *Iroquois* 11).
Indians who fought in the war could retain tribal war practices, another incentive. As Daniel Sutherland observes, winning the Civil War depended as much on an army’s success in guerrilla operations as on its victories in large, formal battles. In a letter to his brother John Sherman on June 9, 1864, Union General William T. Sherman described guerrilla warfare in southern territory, calling his army’s operations in Georgia “a big Indian war.” Sherman wrote that “all of Georgia, except the cleared bottoms, is densely wooded, with few roads, and at any point an enterprising enemy can, in a few hours with axes and spades, make across our path formidable works.” Meanwhile, “sharpshooters, spies, and scouts, in the guise of peaceable farmers, can hang around us and kill our wagonmen, messengers, and couriers” (236). This type of guerrilla warfare was associated with the “Indian mode of fighting,” which Americans viewed as “stealthy, sly, and cunning.” In wars against Indians, U.S. Army officers had “become familiar with Indian raids, ambushes, and desultory fighting. Many of the men who organized guerrilla bands presented as credentials for such service their experience as Indian fighters” (Sutherland 28). As countless biographies of generals in periodicals like Harper’s Weekly, Frank Leslie’s Illustrated News, and Southern Illustrated News demonstrate, people accepted that Indian wars had prepared these men for Civil War and made them deserving of Army rank.5

For some Indians who fought in the Civil War, guerrilla warfare corresponded to long-established methods of fighting. Ironically, the U.S. army had already gained much experience in guerrilla warfare by the 1860s, because Indians’ style of warfare on the

5 For examples, see “General Heintzelman”; “General Gregg”; and “Brigadier-General Nathaniel Lyon.”
plains, “with its emphasis on ambushes and surprise attacks, made conventional warfare virtually impossible” for the U.S. Army. Plains Indians’ “mobility and ability to live off the country gave Indian tribes a great advantage over American troops” (Van de Logt 42). Thus, some Indians fulfilled ongoing war practices by joining the U.S. Army during the Civil War. Mark Van de Logt observes that Pawnee scouts who fought for the U.S. during and after the Civil War “took great pride in scouting for the American army” but “never relinquished their Indian heritage. In fact, military service reinforced established Pawnee martial values and customs” (4). The Pawnees and other Indian groups could continue to fight their tribal enemies, and their “mode of warfare, based on stealth and surprise, changed little, if at all. They continued to count coups, take scalps, and practice their war-related ceremonies” (4). Indians also used their superior knowledge of the land to guide non-Native troops. Delaware scouts, for example, continued to fulfill the “niche” that they had filled on the Kansas frontier during the 1840s and 50s, when they “served as go-betweens--interpreters, guides, and allies of the United States” (Hauptman, Between Two Fires 25).

News coverage of Indians drew from the particularities of Indian practices before and during the war to distinguish North from South. For instance, Southerners claimed superiority by declaring that the adoption of slavery had “civilized” southern Indians like the Cherokees. In May, 1859, the Southern Literary Messenger reported on “some notices which have recently gone the rounds of the newspaper, in relation to the condition and prospects of the Indian tribes on our South-western border.” These “notices” had claimed that “[w]here the most negro slaves were found there had been made the greatest progress
in civilization and improvement among the Indians.” In contrast, “[w]here few or no
slaves were to be met with, there the Indians remained mere savages.” The author thus
presents himself as convinced that “civilization among the Indians was the result of their
adoption of negro slavery” (“Slavery Among the Indians” 333). It served southern
interests to draw the Cherokees into the “civilized” South through reference to their
actual participation in slavery.

During the war itself, Northern papers discussed Indians’ alliances in light of their
own supposed beneficence toward them. When Indians sided with the Union, Northerners
described how well the U.S. government had treated them. An article in the Chicago
Tribune touts the North’s “generosity and beneficence” toward the Indians, “which shine
in brilliant contrast to the refined and subtle villainies of their Southern neighbors and
persecutors,” as a reason that many Indians from Indian Territory have sided with the
Union (“Lo, the Poor Indian!” 3). The article calls upon readers to aid these soldiers’
families, which now suffer as refugees in Kansas. In contrast, discussing Indian treaties
with the South, a writer for the Connecticut Constitution “regretted” that the Cherokees
had “been drawn into this conspiracy of Jeff. Davis.” The article points out that the
Cherokees and other tribes receive “annuities from the U.S. treasury, and they hold their
lands by treaty with the Government” and assumes that “these annuities will be cut off,
their lands confiscated, and the career of these red men who now take up arms against us
will be likely to be a short and doleful one” (“The Indians” 2). Just as Indian’s adoption
of slavery allows the South to claim slavery as a “civilized” practice, Confederate-Indian
alliances allow the Union papers to ignore their own savage treatment of Indians in forced removal and other policies.

Southerners and Northerners’ reports of Indians fighting for themselves or their enemy demonstrate the extent to which Indian alliances and war practices sparked new considerations of “savagery” and its counterpart, “civilization.” Southerners embraced and sensationalized Indian warfare, claiming that scalping and war paint would strike terror into the enemy. The *Charleston Mercury* remarked in 1861, “The Choctaw Indians have lately passed resolutions to go with the South. The Cherokees will follow suit. They are hard fighters; and, in conjunction with an army of Arkansans, will be a terror to the Abolition invaders.” The article warns the North against the “pirates of the plains” as well: “Let [the Northerners] once leave the borders of their own States, and the Kiowa, Sioux, and Pawnee Indians can exterminate the whites from Pike Peak to Missouri river” (“Crisis in Kansas”). The use of “exterminate” here evokes the more common call for whites to exterminate Indians in the west in order to make way for white settlers; the South, in its own revolt against territorial invasion, turns this back on the North.

Other papers condoned or even embraced those tools of Indian warfare generally considered brutal or “savage.” “Indian” weapons—the tomahawk and the bowie knife—became commonplace in Southern depictions of prospects for a good fight. The Macon, Georgia, *Telegraph* reported news from the Helena, Arkansas, *Shield* that “thirteen hundred Indian warriors--Southern allies--crossed the Arkansas river near Fort Smith, en route for McCulloch’s camp.” The article delighted that the Indians “were armed with rifle butcher-knife and tomahawk, and had their faces painted, and seemed eager for the
fray” (“Indians Joining McCullough” 3). Author William Gilmore Simms even suggested that Confederate soldiers dress and act like Indians. Let the army, he wrote to a Confederate commander, “assign ten men from every company to guerrilla operations” and “have them .. painted and disguised as Indians.” Echoing the pervasive media representation of the Indian at war during this period, Simms encourages the commander to arm them with “rifle, bowie knife, & hatchet.” Simms reasoned that Confederate volunteers understood Indian warfare and “the idea that scalps are to be taken by the redmen” would “inspire terror in the souls of the citizen soldiery of the North” (qtd. in Sutherland, 28-29). Many papers made similar comments about a well-known regiment of Eastern Cherokees from the mountains of North Carolina, which had been organized by adopted-Cherokee Colonel William Holland Thomas. The Atlantic Democrat gloated about the regiment, “A more formidable looking body of men, we are informed by a gentleman who has seen them, never have been congregated on this continent” (“Regiment of Indians”).

In response, the North attacked Southerners’ embrace of Indian allies and what they saw as their adoption of Indians’ “barbaric” war practices by reporting on events and Indian war participants that served their own purposes. After the Union victory at the Battle of Pea Ridge in March, 1862--in which many Indians fought for the Confederacy--the Chicago Tribune called Southern Commissioner of Indian Affairs Albert Pike’s treaties with the Indians “efforts to induce a horde of savages to butcher brave men who had taken up arms to prevent the subversion of the Republic.” The article cited “shocking barbarities” and claimed that Pike’s Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, and
Seminoles “fought as they did in the olden times--in the manner the rebels have adopted as their own,” which it described as fighting from “behind logs and trees; anxious to destroy, but fearful of exposure; seeking by every device and deception to draw our men into ambush, and attack and kill them at disadvantage.” The article also declared that the Indians had scalped their enemies (“Battle of Pea Ridge”). Images drawn by Thomas Nast for the Feb. 7, 1863 issue of Harper’s Weekly powerfully align Confederate with Indian savagery (Figures 6 and 7). The first image is meant to represent Confederate actions at the Battle of Bull Run, in which, the article claims, Southerners supposedly carried off bones as trophies and participated in other “cruelties to which savage tribes subjected their prisoners.” Indeed, the article asserts, “one witness deliberately avers” that a Confederate officer cut off the head of “one of [the Union’s] most gallant officers,” to turn into “a drinking-cup on the occasion of his marriage.” Regarding the Pea Ridge image (Figure 7), the article cites an inquiry into the battle that shows “incontestably that there our dead were not only scalped by the rebels’ Indian allies, but in other respects outraged” (“Southern Chivalry”). While more fully clothed than the Indians, the Confederate soldier in the first image appears equally sinister; his unkempt hair and untucked shirt signify an abandonment of battle decorum, a descent into “savagery.” Evidence suggests that Indians at Pea Ridge did, in keeping with the tradition of counting coup on the enemy and taking war trophies to identify individual bravery, carry out scalping practices. Yet the facile interchange of Indian and Confederate demonstrates an awareness that actual Indian practices are being appropriated to suit national ideologies. Indeed, the tropes indicate an implicit reality behind the hollowness of sensationalism.
SOUTHERN CHVALRY:
DEDICATED TO JEFF DAVIS.
In discussing their own Indian allies, Northern papers neutralized and romanticized Indians’ participation to avoid commentary on the barbarism of their own war efforts. These romantic depictions, like the sensational ones, demonstrate the Union’s simultaneous appropriation and acknowledgment of realistic Indian practices that both support and subvert propaganda. Many articles simply described Indians’ skills; for example, a *Chicago Tribune* article claimed that, among their other talents, the Indians
are “generally good marksmen” and “are peculiarly adapted to skirmishing and woods fighting” (“Lo, the Poor Indian!”). Others represented those skills as Indians’ inherent, romantic qualities. In an article on the Ninth Army Corps, for example, the *New York Herald* described “A very curious piece of strategy” which “shows that the wonders of Cooper’s Indian heroes have not ceased.” The article grounds the representation in locale and particularity; the Indian described is “[o]ne of the Fourteenth New York artillery—a Seneca Indian ... from the Western part of the State.” It describes how this soldier “undertook on a wager to bring in alive a rebel sharpshooter, who was perched in a tree in front of our line, considerably in advance of his own.” He did so by “procuring a quantity of pine boughs” and enveloping himself in them “from head to foot,” so that he was “indistinguishable to a casual observer from the surrounding foliage”; he then “stole by almost imperceptible movements to beneath the tree where the sharpshooter was lodged.” After patiently waiting “until his prey had emptied his piece at one of our men, ... he suddenly brought his musket to bear upon the ‘reb,’ giving him no time to reload.” The sharpshooter had no choice but to come down, “when the Indian triumphantly marched him a prisoner into camp and won his wager” (“Ninth Corps”). The story describes an actual event among many others in the battle and presents the Indian as a curiosity out of one of Cooper’s historical romances, blurring the lines between real and romance.

Representations of the Delaware scouts who served under Union General Fremont in Kansas go further into both factual detail and romanticization. The Delaware chief Falleaf was a successful “guide, interpreter, and trapper” and a “longtime associate” of
General Fremont, who “frequently hired the Delaware for his major topographical surveys of the American West” (Hauptman, *Between Two Fires* 31). In the fall of 1861, Falleaf organized a company of Union Delawares at Fremont’s request and “proceeded on a special mission to Springfield, Missouri ... without being spotted by Confederates” (31). Even as he fought for the Union during the Civil War, Falleaf fought the U.S. government’s policies toward his people. He “clung to the traditional Native American religion, the Delaware Big House” and “[m]ore than any other Delaware in the period, ... articulated the complaints about ‘government chiefs’ and about the Delaware’s precarious status” on their lands in Kansas (30).

The *Atlantic Monthly*’s Missouri correspondent faithfully described details of Delaware history, noting that “[y]ears ago [Fremont] made friends of the Delawares, when travelling through their country upon his first journey of exploration.” The Delawares, the correspondent remarks, “hearing that he was on the war-path ... have sent their best young warriors to join him.” The correspondent describes them as “descendants of the famous tribe which once dwelt on the Delaware River, and belonged to the confederacy of the Six Nations.” He boasts, “Their ancient prowess remains. The Delawares are feared all over the Plains, and their war-parties have often penetrated beyond the Rocky Mountains, carrying terror through all the Indian tribes.” He further aggrandizes the Delaware fighters, calling them “fine specimens of their race,—tall, lightly formed, and agile. ... they are armed with the old American rifle, the traditional weapon which Cooper places in the hands of his red heroes.” Falleaf indeed reads like one of Cooper’s Mohican heroes, “a dignified personage, past the noon of life, but
showing in his erect form and dark eye that the fires of manhood burn with undiminished vigor” (“Fremont’s Hundred Days”). The correspondent omits from his report the U.S. government’s removal of these Indians from their eastern lands; the romance serves the Union by obscuring the details of Indian-U.S. history, even as it draws on history and the present moment.

A final article shows that an implicit reality behind such romantic and sensational depictions did not escape Civil War-era reporters. An article in *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly* titled “Camp Life in the West” describes sketches from the paper’s artist traveling with the Western army. The sketches, the reporter notes, “belong more to the romance of war than its struggle.” He describes one particular scene in which “two phases of civilization meet” (Figure 8): “the Indian warriors are giving a war dance by firelight in the presence of the officers and soldiers of Gen. Asboth’s division. Sad and suggestive spectacle! Pagans and Christians travelling [sic] as fellow-companions on the same war path” (214). What does this “spectacle” suggest? Perhaps the fact that Indians continue to help the U.S. even after years of persecution; perhaps that the Indians’ convergent “war path” reveals that the Union’s own war practices are not so different. Indeed, the “romance of the war”—its estranging scenes, through the introduction of a third party many would align with the past—suggests a deeper, less pleasant acknowledgment of the government’s true motives.
The Dakota “Uprising” of 1862: Rebel Conspiracy or U.S. Atrocity?

The conflicting representations of Indians North and South demonstrate that Indian actions might both be incorporated into Northern and Southern propaganda and estrange that propaganda, developing suggestions or outright acceptance of non-Indian savagery. This diffusion of savagery surfaced forcefully with Indians’ resistance to the U.S.’s territorial invasion and mistreatment in the West, beyond the North-South axis of the Civil War. Western Native groups, aware that the U.S. Army was occupied in the East, took the opportunity to attack stage stations, telegraph and mail lines, and settlers. Southerners praised such actions; in 1864 the Macon, Georgia Telegraph commended the Indians for a recent attack on the “Overland mail to the Pacific.” “From all accounts,” the Telegraph report declared, “the Indians on the Plains are giving the Yankees a very effective ‘fire in the rear,’ and meteing [sic] out to them a taste of the outrages which they have so long practised [sic] upon defenseless people in the South” (“Overland Mail” 2).
The North, beyond simply denouncing such attacks, connected them with the “rebellion.” An article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted, “We have had more difficulties with the Indians since the commencement of the Rebellion than for many years before. It is assumed that they were fomented by Rebel emissaries” (“Our Treatment” 4). Similarly, in September of 1864, *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly* claimed that reports of new Indian attacks suggested a “concert between the various tribes” that “points to rebel instigation.”

These interpretations along sectional lines led to deeper investigations into the reasons behind Indian actions and reveal a widespread suspicion of information gathering and reportage. This suspicion, by extension, indicates an awareness of the shifty nature of representation. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* article cited above does not deny the rumor that the Indians and Confederacy are connected but points out that even if it were true, “it must be borne in mind that if the Indians were discontented with the proceedings of the officers of the United States, or with the violent acts of citizens, and considered that they had been wronged, it was a very easy thing to inflame them to revenge” (“Our Treatment” 4). The figuration of Indians as “rebels” and the investigative resistance to such reports often went hand in hand. This proved particularly true in the wake of the most significant western Indian attack on the U.S., in terms of the U.S.’s reaction to the attack and the consequences for the Indians: the Dakota Sioux “uprising” of 1862. The reports of a Dakota-Confederacy conspiracy compelled fact-based stories that countered the myth of Indian and Confederate savagery even in the North, demonstrating that Indians implied a “reality” beyond the opposing sides of the war.
The history behind the so-called Dakota “uprising” involves dishonesty, narrow-mindedness, and poor administration on the part of the U.S. government. In an 1851 treaty, the Sioux had surrendered the great majority of their lands to the U.S. in exchange for promises of money and goods and two reservations in Minnesota. On the reservations, government agents and missionaries attempted to control Sioux ways of life. The government rarely paid the Sioux in full or on time; corrupt traders and agents failed to deliver on government promises, so that in 1862 the Dakotas were starving and extremely frustrated with the U.S. They were also aware that the majority of Minnesota men had left to fight in the Civil War in the East. On Aug. 17, 1862, the Dakotas acted on their frustration, attacking New Ulm and several other white settlements in Minnesota. The U.S. soon fought back. Once the U.S. army under Colonel Sibley had subdued the Sioux, 303 of 392 tried Sioux were condemned to death. Lincoln reviewed the hastily concluded sentencing records and upheld the death sentence for 39 of condemned (Prucha 437-47). Some Dakotas fled north to Canada following the war; others surrendered and were expelled from Minnesota, marched out by the U.S. army and jeered at and attacked by settlers as they moved through Minnesota towns.

The U.S. clearly saw the Dakota attack as an additional affront to national control and unity during this period of sectional conflict. Indeed, images in the news reveal that much was at stake for the Union on both the southern and western fronts. Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly presented the Dakotas as devilish animals preying on innocent settlers. A sketch titled “Indian Outrages in the Northwest” seems to try to surpass similar images of Rebel atrocities in Northern papers by impaling a baby on a tree and displaying a dead
woman in a vulnerable position, suggesting rape (Figure 9). The husbandry tools flung to the side of the scene emphasize that the Indians have not only killed but attempted to undermine the natural westward progress of “civilization.” A later Frank Leslie’s article characterized the Dakota affair as one of the “national humiliations and sufferings” of the Civil War period, describing it as a “fearful massacre of our citizens in Minnesota by those incarnate fiends, the Red-skins.” The author hoped that the “massacre” would have “the salutary effect of dispelling the idle visions of those philanthropic imbeciles who believe it possible to tame tigers by moral suasion.” Frank Leslie’s capitalizes on the sensational elements of Indians killing white settlers, isolating Indian “atrocities” through striking images and language and thereby obscuring a more comprehensive view of the situation based in facts and the events leading up to the attacks.

Figure 9: “Indian Outrages in the Northwest—An American Family Murdered by the Sioux Indians, in a Grove Near New Ulm, Minnesota,” from Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper.
Many Northern newspapers, in contrast, did not isolate this event but connected the Dakota attacks with the wrong “facts,” claiming a Dakota-Confederate conspiracy. An article titled “The Rebels and the Indians” in the Connecticut Constitution remarked shortly after the attacks that “The perfectly reckless spirit which governs the leaders of this rebellion is shown in the news we have from the Indian tribes.” Echoing news about Pea Ridge, the reporter claims that the “rebels,” “[n]ot content with waging honorable warfare, and resting their cause on the result of a contest with our armies .... have excited the western Indians to combine in a war with the whites, and to vent their savage ferocity on all who may fall in their power.” The paper describes “Indian war,” which the people of the country “know very well,” as “slaughter, fire and devastation, murder without regard to age or sex, the use of the scalping knife, and the most barbarous and inhuman treatment of captives.” The New York Times claimed to have received information from a reliable source that the Minnesota “massacres” were “only part of a grand scheme of frontier butcheries which had been organized under the auspices of Jeff. Davis by Albert Pike, and which were intended to extend along the whole Western line from Minnesota to Arkansas.” Despite the Army’s valiant efforts to subdue the Indians, the article speculated that the “atrocious design” continued and that “twenty thousand in the region we have mentioned might be suddenly brought under the power of the tomahawk and scalping-knife.” The Union had to take quick and brutal action, as it had done with the secessionists: “The only way to prevent this is by energy, severity and punishment inexorable, on the first attempt at outbreak” (“Indian Executions”).
Nevertheless, a number of papers discredited such rumors and used them as an occasion to explore the facts of U.S.-Dakota history. The Leavenworth, Kansas Daily Times reported in November 1862 that, although “[t]he nation has been told so often by interested parties that the Indians had lent themselves to the Southern rebellion, and that the massacres were the fruits of the intrigues of the rebel agents,” the author was “extremely sorry to have to contradict the plausible theory.” This reporter instead implicated the U.S. government, claiming that “upon a close scrutiny” the Sioux “outbreak” must be attributed to “dishonesty—the most barefaced and unmitigated dishonesty—on the part of the Indian agents in the transaction of their business affairs” (“Cause of the Indian Outbreak”—italics in original). The Philadelphia Inquirer similarly claimed that anyone who understood “the relations which exist between the country and the Northwestern Indians” would know that dishonest Government agents, rather than “Secession emissaries,” led to the “massacre of frontier settlers.” These articles and others from Union papers imply that knowledge lies beyond sensationalistic, paranoid rumors. The desire to present accurate information overrides allegiances to the Union, demonstrating that Indians might both support and unsettle the sides of the war and thus disrupt confidence in literary tropes and modes of representation.

Some papers even reported details about the suffering of Sioux prisoners after the “outbreak” had been put down. The Philadelphia Inquirer consistently protested the mistreatment of the Dakotas and spoke out against the intended hanging of so many, “an indiscriminate punishment of men who have laid down their arms and surrendered” (“Convicted Minnesota Indians”). The Weekly Wisconsin Patriot reported
on women attacking Sioux prisoners in Minnesota, breaking one’s jaw and severely injuring others. “The Indians were chained, and comparatively helpless,” the paper pointed out (“Attack”). A few weeks later, the Patriot again described citizens trying to kill Indian prisoners with “hatchets, knives, and other weapons” (“Whites Attempt to Murder”). Dakota Sioux scholar Waziyatawin Angela Wilson provides powerful testimony to this brutal treatment of Sioux prisoners in 1862 through her great-great-grandmother’s story of the forced removal of the Dakotas who surrendered to the government. Wilson’s great-great-grandmother passed down in her family the story of the “Death March” of the Dakotas from Minnesota to South Dakota. Settlers in New Ulm, Minnesota threw cans, potatoes, and scalding water on the Dakotas as they were marched through town. When the soldiers wouldn’t allow any men through the lines the soldiers had formed around the prisoners, women broke through and beat prisoners with whatever weapons they could find. One of Wilson’s relatives was stabbed by a soldier with a saber when she tried to get water from a river. She died there by that river, urging her family to move on without her, so that today Wilson’s family does not know what happened to her body (197-98).

Such atrocities did not often make it into the news, but their inclusion shows a distrust of reportage and shifting representations of Indians as “barbarous” or “romantic” for political reasons. They suggest a growing contingent of reporters interested in fact-based news that would play a role in developing the realist literature of the decades following the Civil War, evident in the discussion of Twain’s Roughing It below. But, as I will show in the next section, even post-war romantic fiction about Indians unsettled the
romance of the Union, demonstrating the far reach of the implicit real in journalistic and literary texts.

**The Romance of War: General Sherman’s Indian Spy**

As we have seen, romantic and sensational depictions of Indians fighting in the Civil War both supported articulations of Union or Confederate identities and reflected Indians’ actual participation in the war. Correspondents reported Indian participation and avoided the distasteful aspects of Indian-U.S. history, making romance or sensationalism and realism two sides of the same coin. Post-war narratives that can be seen as romantic or realist reflect this strange confluence. Philadelphia writer and publisher Charles Wesley Alexander’s *General Sherman’s Indian Spy*, an adventurous romance, attempts to confine Indians to romance but consistently embeds them in realistic practices. Mark Twain’s *Roughing It*, a humorous account of Twain’s journey to and stay in Nevada during the war, “realistically” portrays Indians as caught up in sensationalistic information that always has more than one side. Together, the two texts indicate that implicit realities about Indians in the news moved literature away from previous Indian stereotypes that failed to hold up in the presence of the multiple savageries (Union, Confederacy, Indians) of civil war.

Author of adventurous fiction Charles Wesley Alexander drew upon Indian participation in the Union army to remove the savagery from one of the most brutal campaigns in the war, that of General William Tecumseh Sherman’s occupation of Atlanta and March to the Sea. When describing the effects of this campaign to Gen. H.W.
Halleck on Dec. 24, 1864, Sherman figured the Southerners as a “hostile” people, a term that would be applied through the rest of the century to Indians who resisted confinement on reservations. “We are not only fighting hostile armies,” Sherman wrote, “but a hostile people, and must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war, as well as their organized armies.” His “recent movement ... through Georgia,” Sherman continues, “has had a wonderful effect in this respect. Thousands who had been deceived by their lying newspapers to believe that we were being whipped all the time now realize the truth, and have no appetite for a repetition of the same experience” (Memoirs 2:588). In a campaign widely reported in newspapers north and south, Sherman claims that savagery is a component of war necessary to strike terror into the enemy.

Sherman’s policies might be seen as a continuation of U.S. containment of hostile parties, Indian or white. In effect, Sherman conducted a “removal” of southern citizens of Atlanta, evocative of both the removal of the Cherokees from their lands in Georgia and Sherman’s post-war efforts to confine western Indians to two large reservations as part of President Ulysses S. Grant’s “peace” policy.6 Sherman responded to Confederate General J.B. Hood’s calling the removal of citizens from Atlanta “an act of ‘studied and ingenious cruelty’” by claiming that the South, “in the midst of peace and prosperity” had “plunged a nation into war--dark and cruel war” and “dared and badgered [the North] to battle.” The South had, moreover, “seized and made ‘prisoners of war’ the very garrisons

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6 Sherman details this policy in his memoirs: “We all agreed that the nomad Indians should be removed from the vicinity of the two great railroads then in rapid construction, and be localized on one or other of the two great reservations south of Kansas and north of Nebraska; that agreements, not treaties, should be made for their liberal maintenance as to food, clothing, schools, and farming implements for ten years, during which time we believed that these Indians should become self-supporting. To the north we proposed to remove the various bands of Sioux, with such others as could be induced to locate near them; and to the south, on the Indian Territory already established, we proposed to remove the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, Comanches, and such others as we could prevail on to move thither” (2:782).
sent to protect [them] against negroes and Indians, long before any overt act was committed by the ... Lincoln Government” (2:488). Hood countered that the South merely responded when the North “came to [its] door upon the mission of subjugation,” and that the South “drove out insolent intruders and took possession of [their] own forts and arsenals,” in order “to resist [the North’s] claims to dominion over masters, slaves, and Indians, all of whom are to this day, with a unanimity unexampled in the history of the world, warring against [the North’s] attempts to become their masters” (2:490). To Hood, the fact that even Indians oppose the North underlines northern savagery. Hood, moreover, decried Sherman’s ordering “into exile the whole population of a city; drive men, women, and children from their homes at the point of the bayonet, under the plea that it is to the interest of your Government, and on the claim that it is an act of ‘kindness to these families of Atlanta’” (2:491-2).

Despite Hood’s protestations, Sherman embraced the “savage” affront on “civilization” often associated with Indians. Even in his memoirs, written many years after the war had ended, Sherman made no apologies for his ruthless treatment of Southern citizens. His army ravaged homes and institutions on his way from Atlanta to Savannah; he describes in his memoirs his orders to his men “to so damage the country as to make it untenable to the enemy” and to destroy rail and telegraph lines. To Mayor of Atlanta James M. Calhoun’s questions, “how is it possible for the people still here (mostly women and children) to find any shelter? And how can they live through the winter in the woods--no shelter or subsistence, in the midst of strangers who know them not, and without the power to assist them much, if they were willing to do so?” (2:493),
Sherman responded, “War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out.”

*General Sherman’s Indian Spy* attempts to remove this savagery from Sherman by, strangely enough, aligning him with an Indian. Yet the text’s constant implications of “real” Indians behind its obvious, self-conscious romance implies its author’s consciousness of its literary hollowness. Indeed, the heroine Wenonah embodies shifting representation; her actions consistently imply a deeper meaning that subverts the neutralization of Sherman. Much cheap adventure fiction written during and after the Civil War told stories of Indians and the “wild” frontier, usually set in the revolutionary era. Popular publisher Beadle and Company’s first dime novel—Ann S. Stephens’s *Maleska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter* (1860)—set the stage for a number of sensational and romantic Indian adventures of the past; Beadle and Company became in effect the successor to Cooper’s frontier romances, albeit with added innuendo and scandal. Yet *General Sherman’s Indian Spy* brings the Indian adventure into the story of Union victory, thereby destabilizing both narratives. By requiring an Indian for its romanticization of the Union army and vilification of the Confederates, *General Sherman’s Indian Spy* pushes toward an implicit reality that problematizes its fantasy of national unity.

*Indian Spy* tells the story of Wenonah, an Indian woman who appears in General Sherman’s camp one night and declares her wish to help the Union by serving as a spy. Sherman, impressed with her tenacity, sends her on several errands behind enemy lines, some of which Wenonah herself conceives. During these spying escapades, Wenonah
gains the favor of Confederate Lieutenant Haskins, who promptly falls in love with her; she at first pretends to love him back in order to further her aims among the Rebels, but eventually she falls in love with him as well. In the meantime, she experiences many adventures, such as almost getting hung by a southern mob and finding food and medicine for a starving woman and her children at the house of a wood-chopper who had “been dragged away by the rebel conscript officers, to fill a place in Lee’s army” (36). As the author concisely describes Wenonah’s role in the war, “Back and forth between the two armies [she] constantly hovered, and on many occasions narrowly escaped capture and death” (55). She literally exists between two sides, reflecting a more realistic portrayal of Indian participation in the war than the romantic veneer would indicate.

Little is known about Alexander’s life except that he lived in Philadelphia, where, according to city records, he worked as a clerk in 1861, an advertising agent in 1862, a reporter in 1863, an author in 1864, and finally a publisher in 1865 (Fahs 241). As a reporter and publisher in Philadelphia, Alexander was surely familiar with news about Indians who fought in the Civil War. The “Introduction” to General Sherman’s Indian Spy supports this, for it echoes the combination of factual reportage on Indians, romanticization of Union Indians, and vilification of southern Indians in the northern news. Alexander reminds his readers that “wickedly ambitious” Southerners attempted to “persuade the Indians of The Far West to join their vile cause,” and “a few of these savage warriors were, by large promises and deceptive representations, induced to dig up the tomahawk and make war upon the Union flag.” But, Alexander emphasizes, “we would be doing a brave race injustice not to record that the great majority of the Indians
scorned to follow the example of their dusky friends.” These Union Indians, “immediately girding on their weapons, ... promptly offered to fight for the flag of their ‘Great Father at Washington,’ as they called Mr. Lincoln” (19). While Confederate Indians fight savagely with the characteristic “tomahawk,” Union Indians nobly reject “wicked” rebellion, pick up neutral “weapons,” and recognize the president’s paternal benevolence. The Introduction simultaneously captures Indian participation in the war on both sides and distinguishes Union Indians from Confederates according to the author’s own allegiances.

Just as it consolidates Indian participation in the war into the North-South binary, the Introduction both implies Indians’ knowledge of news, communications systems, and the lay of the land and attempts to reduce that knowledge to stereotypical noble savagery. “How noble and inspiring,” he writes, “was this simple, dignified message [of Union support] from the Children of the Wilderness, sent by them on the wings of the ‘Fire Bird,’ (as they call the telegraph).” The statement seems intended to draw together Indians’ understanding and use of “modern” technologies with the romantic Indian of historical romance, but the Introduction continues to reference “real” details of Indians in the war by noting that Indians “were far more conspicuous” in “the Federal armies of the West” than those in the East. It then claims, unrealistically, that “no army profited more by our red allies than General Sherman’s” and “no General had more confidence in the Indians than did the gallant soldier who clove his way from Atlanta to Raleigh.” Placing the noble savage at the center of Sherman’s famously destructive March to the Sea removes the barbarity from Indians and Sherman at once. Later in the text, Alexander
indicates that he chose Sherman for his general because of his middle name, Tecumseh, after the Shawnee nativist who inspired pan-Indian resistance to Anglo-Americans in the early nineteenth century. When Sherman agrees to take Wenonah on as a spy, she tells him: “The pale face General is like the warrior whose name he bears. Like Tecumseh he flies as the war eagle flies, over the heads of enemies, so that they cannot escape him!” (22). Tecumseh, a militant defender of Native rights, is here incorporated as part of the union; Sherman has absorbed Tecumseh’s ability in battle, and neither is savage.

In the text that follows, Alexander presents a savvy Indian heroine, Wenonah, who navigates easily between stereotypes of Indians depending upon her interactions with either side. Indeed, the text reveals stereotypes of Indians as embedded within sectional allegiances. Although Wenonah frequently echoes the metaphorical, lofty language of Cooper’s Indians, she does so savvily at the right moment, when speaking to Sherman or her Confederate (but Union-sympathetic) lover. “The Great Manitou,” she tells Sherman upon receiving her first mission, “will give me the wisdom of the serpent, and the patience of the fox. Wenonah will pass as safely through the lines as she would through the forest in the dark hours of the night time” (25). But Wenonah easily slips into other voices as they serve her purpose. For example, she adopts the persona of an ignorant Indian “squaw” when Bob Martin, a Confederate deserter and a murderer, attempts to “hitch up with” her, calling her a “plump an’ good look’n” Indian girl.” Wenonah plays along, responding, “Oh! I go! I go! you give me plenty pretty blankets, plenty shiney money, plenty pretty beads” (28). Having gained Martin’s trust, she jumps in his wagon,
only to quickly bound and disarm him when he falls asleep during their journey toward the Confederate camp, where she turns him over to the Rebels.

Elsewhere among the gullible Confederates, Wenonah acts out stereotypes of the victimized, vanishing Indian and the Indian inherently attuned to nature. She evokes Confederate soldiers’ pity by “informing them that she was lost, and knew not where her people were” (29). Drawing on the “last of” narrative, Wenonah presents herself as a wandering victim, the only survivor of her vanishing Indian people, helping her gain pity and influence. When other soldiers arrest her at one point in the text she senses the effect of her beauty on them, and laments: “The pale faces ... wrong the poor Indian girl” (41). These words, spoken “in a studied tone and manner,” the narrator observes, have the intended effect on the men. For her second adventure behind enemy lines, Sherman gives Wenonah a carrier pigeon to send back with information. When the Confederates capture her and place her in a cell, Wenonah writes a message and releases the bird through the window, quickly swallowing her pencil so that, when the guards question her about the bird, she is able to deny having written a message and, with “Indian” ignorance, claim that the bird was simply her “poor pet” who flew away (45). When Wenonah removes evidence about the message, only the bird, a “natural” form associated with Indians, remains, so that Wenonah can claim her innocence despite her complicity in Union communications.

Wenonah’s understanding of how stereotypes about Indians work parallels her ease with communications technologies throughout the text. No destruction of railroads and telegraph lines appear in the text. On the contrary, Sherman and Wenonah share an
understanding of and respect for both the lay of the land and war communications. At the beginning of the text, Sherman is planning out a route on a map that Wenonah perfectly replicates without his having divulged any information to her. Unlike almost all of the regular soldiers, Wenonah is literate and can manipulate information. Although Confederate soldiers who arrest the Indian spy cannot read a letter she presents to them, Wenonah not only reads and writes messages but sends them in telegraphic form. When she cannot reach Sherman’s headquarters, she asks to be taken to the nearest “signal station,” where she sends “the message she desired to General Sherman, in the cipher he and she had adopted, so that the signal officer himself did not know its import” (53).

Wenonah’s distinct skills as an Indian also make her a shrewd reader of military arrangements. On her route to the enemy camp, Wenonah “never once” has “to make a note on paper of anything, no matter how trivial, that attracted her attention. Yet if called upon, she could at once and without error, detail everything, and draw out a sufficiently accurate map of roads, towns; stations for troops, and so forth” (38).

Despite her and Sherman’s seemingly benign war practices, Wenonah is accused by the Southerners for her complicity in “savage” atrocities on the part of the Union Army. In a chapter titled “Thrilling Adventures,” the narrator describes two “Arkansas men who, having had considerable experience as trappers and hunters in the Far West, recognized the costume worn by our heroine as belonging to, and being used only by a tribe of Indians who were friendly to the Federal cause” (57). They “at once seized Wenonah, and accused her of being a spy for the Yankees” (57). The Yankees, not the Indians, are the enemies, and an angry mob from a nearby southern town wants the men
them to hang Wenonah because they have heard “lying accounts of Sherman’s ravages, the burning of Atlanta, and a hundred other atrocities” (57). Here Wenonah’s “Indianness” dissipates as she appears to the mob as a Yankee complicit in Sherman’s occupation of Atlanta and path of destruction through the South; the shot at Sherman’s nobility through the threat to Wenonah threatens to disrupt the romance. Wenonah, of course, manages to escape rebuke for these actions, jumping into a river and swimming away under water with characteristic “Indian” ingenuity and skill. As in the news, the ingenious Indian escapes accounts of savagery and helps the Union recuperate its own purported “civilized” practices.

The end of General Sherman’s Indian Spy echoes the “vanishing Indians” at the end of Cooper’s novels. Wenonah’s Confederate lover Lieutenant Haskins eventually tells her that he “has no heart with this rebellion” (54) and ends up switching sides. The text ends with Haskins and Wenonah dying together on the battlefield, fighting for the Union. The narrator calls the dying Wenonah “the devoted, lovely young martyr, who had done her country such immeasurable service” and who, “[p]ure as the air of her prairie home, beautiful as the rose, brave as the warrior from whom she was descended, and gentle as the dove, .... was passing away from earth and life” (63). Alexander seems to kill off both the Indian and the Southerner as threats to the Union: “The spy had died for her country; her rebel lover had indeed earned his pardon, and they now both sleep peacefully side by side” (64). Unwilling to deal with questions of Indian citizenship after the war, questions that were usually dealt with by the U.S. government through dishonesty and exploitation, Alexander ends his text on a note of Indian martyrdom. Yet the text retains the presences
of Indians who scouted, communicated, fought, and indeed died in the war. Moreover, it demonstrates that Indians’ impact on representation unravels fantasy and escapism from the “real”; Wenonah’s movements between the sides of the war reflect the “reality” of journalistic representation during this period, in which an Indian’s romantic presences both supported and destabilized regional identities and written depictions.

“Real” Information: Mark Twain and the Fragmented West

Just as romance might inform the depiction of reality, “information” might never be real. Mark Twain’s Roughing It, published in 1872, tells the story of Twain’s journey west during the Civil War, when he accompanied his brother to an administrative position in Nevada territory. The text accumulates “facts” about Indians that never reveal anything about Indians; Roughing It comments on the facile production of literary representations of Indians that arises from the reality of Indian presence in the West. Neil Schmitz points out that Roughing It “never directly confronts the Civil War as an issue, as a problem” (27). He wonders how Twain become a postbellum success after defying “the Civil War’s momentous claim, that you sacrifice your life” and choosing no side: “He deserted the Confederate side. He did not enlist in the Federal side. Roughing It, whatever you make of it, is the side he chose” (29-30). Schmitz’s question overlooks that Twain’s “side” might read back onto the war, unsettling North and South as the only significant locales during this period. Indeed, Roughing It demonstrates that information always has more “sides” than it lets on. Indians’ attacks on the nation lead to conflicting information that, in turn, indicates that intra-national struggle did not begin or end with
the Civil War. Amy Kaplan argues that Twain’s “famous ‘homespun’ qualities were ... woven from the tangled threads of imperial travel”; he “wrote about an internally divided America in his most famous fiction of the 1880s and 1890s only after writing about Hawaii, Europe, and the Near East” and “wrote about travel on the Mississippi only after crossing the Pacific and Atlantic oceans” (52). Kaplan’s important point should be applied as well within domestic space, for Roughing It draws on intra-national Indian presences for its reflection on national ideology. Moreover, the Indian-filled locales of the West, not the national crisis in the East, influence Twain’s “realist” critique of stereotypical Indians.

As in the eastern arena, news about Indians is constantly circulating in the West of Roughing It. Widely dispersed people gather news from various regions in order to be able to speak to broader issues from isolated locales. South Pass City’s hotel-keeper, postmaster, blacksmith, mayor, constable--the list goes on, as Twain pokes fun at the consolidated administration of small Western towns--shares with Twain’s party “a little Indian news, and a little Rocky Mountain news,” and they give him “some Plains information in return” (1:83). In Salt Lake City, Brigham Young talks to them “about Utah, and the Indians, and Nevada, and general American matters and questions” (1:97). In the West, “Indian” becomes associated with particular regions about which the country at large, or those isolated in various western locales, do not have much information. The information received about Indians, moreover, is unreliable and unstable. At one point Twain describes crossing “the sand-hills near the scene of the Indian mail robbery and massacre of 1856, wherein the driver and conductor perished, and also all the passengers
but one, it was supposed.” He then quickly points out that “this must have been a mistake, for at different times afterward on the Pacific coast I was personally acquainted with a hundred and thirty-three or four people who were wounded during that massacre, and barely escaped with their lives” (1:56). Twain continues, with tongue in cheek, “There was no doubt of the truth of it--I had it from their own lips.” He relates the far-fetched stories of these supposed survivors, one of whom told Twain “that he kept coming across arrowheads in his system for nearly seven years after the massacre” and another that “he was struck so literally full of arrows that after the Indians were gone and he could raise up and examine himself; he could not restrain his tears, for his clothes were completely ruined” (1:56). The humorous exaggerations indicate that such stories require clear-cut sides--Indian attacker and white victim--and within that framework can deviate far from the facts. Twain’s humor, in contrast, reveals the complicity of information in creating such sides.

Twain’s party’s fear of an Indian attack in the Black Hills demonstrates how this circulation of news about Indians builds up non-Indian community in the West, even when there are no events to report. Twain’s party “enjoy[s] great discomfort all the time [they] were in the neighborhood, being aware that many of the trees [they] dashed by at arms-length concealed a lurking Indian or two” (1:57). Their fear is augmented by the supposed fact that “During the preceding night an ambushed savage had sent a bullet through the pony-rider’s jacket, but he had ridden on, just the same, because pony-riders were not allowed to stop and inquire into such things except when killed” (1:57). The humor estranges the narrative from the accepted stories of Indians ambushing mail riders;
the mail rider cannot know that an Indian attacked him, for he would be dead if he did. Similarly, Twain’s party does not need to know whether they have been attacked by Indians in order to create information that indicates they were. At one point Twain’s stage stops and the passengers hear what sounds like a skirmish between the driver and another party. After the stage continues to move again, they “lay there in the dark, listening to each other’s story of how he first felt and how many thousand Indians he first thought had hurled themselves upon us, and what his remembrance of the subsequent sounds was, and the order of their occurrence” (1:60). The skirmish, they later learn, had nothing to do with Indians, but the potential for an Indian attack creates a communal narrative.

Likewise, these stories about supposed Indian attacks build a premise of whites’ inherent right to attack Indians with bullets and words and become exasperated when Indians resist. The keeper of Laparelle Station tells Twain’s party that, soon before they arrived, he “had fired four times at an Indian” but, “with an injured air” said “that the Indian had ‘skipped around so’s to spile everything--and ammunition’s blamed skurse, too’” (1:58). With characteristic deadpan, Twain notes, “The most natural inference conveyed by his manner of speaking was, that in ‘skipping around,’ the Indian had taken an unfair advantage” (1:58). The man’s taking as a personal affront the Indian’s attempts to protect himself indicates that his story, in addition to his gun, has attempted to annihilate Indian resistance or reason.

Twain’s description of hearing information about the Mountain Meadows Massacre of 1857 makes clear that Indians have become not only a fixed but an
interchangeable point of reference for atrocities that Twain’s text unsettles in its
humorous destabilization of information exchange. In 1857, tensions were high between
the Mormons in Utah and the U.S. government, which earlier had violently forced the
Mormons out of Missouri and Illinois. The U.S. had just sent 1,500 troops to Utah to put
down “perceived treason” on the part of Bringham Young’s government (Turley, par. 5).
Certain Mormon leaders, worried about U.S. military action against Utah and wary of any
travelers passing through, orchestrated a massacre of 120 emigrants heading West to
California. The Mormons blamed the Paiute Indians, whom they had convinced to help
them, for the attack, assuming that no one would question an Indian attack on emigrant
wagons. 7 Upon leaving Salt Lake City, Twain writes that his party “had a deal more
‘information’ than [they] had before” about the massacre but “did not know what portion
of it was reliable, and what was not--for it all came from acquaintances of a day--
strangers, strictly speaking” (1:121). Twain’s party learned in Salt Lake City that the
massacre “was the work of the Indians entirely, and that the Gentiles [non-Mormons] had
meantly tried to fasten it upon the Mormons;” they “were told, likewise, that the Indians
were to blame, partly, and partly the Mormons;” finally, they “were told, likewise, and

7 Bringham Young advised his people to reserve grain in case they needed to flee when federal troops
arrived, so that emigrants passing through Utah territory had a hard time purchasing supplies. Church
leaders in Cedar City tried to arrest a party of emigrant men who made threats in the heat of the moment of
not being able to obtain supplies; however, the wagon train left peacefully. The church leaders would not
let the matter go but wished to take the local militia to arrest the men. When the militia commander
wouldn’t allow the mayor, Isaac Haight, to carry out this plan, Haight conceived the idea of getting the
Paiute Indians to attack the wagons and steal their cattle. The Paiutes were reluctant but agreed, because
“Cedar City’s leaders promised them plunder and convinced them that the emigrants were aligned with the
‘enemy’ troops who would kill Indians along with Mormon settlers.” Indians and Mormons attacked the
emigrants without approval from Bringham Young and killed several; the rest pulled their wagons into a
circle and defended themselves for several days. When two Mormons fired on two emigrants who had
moved away from the train, one escaped and Haight realized that the emigrants would know that Mormons,
rather than Indians, had attacked them. He then planned to murder all of the party. The Mormons convinced
the emigrants to disarm and claimed they would escort them safely past the Indians back to Cedar City.
Instead, they murdered all of them, 120 total, except for 17 children. The truth about the massacre came out
slowly, so that many thought for a long time that the Paiutes had massacred the party.
just as positively, that the Mormons were almost if not wholly and completely responsible
for that most treacherous and pitiless butchery” (1:121). The story came “in all these
different shapes,” until “several years afterward that Mrs. Waite’s book, The Mormon
Prophet, came out with Judge Cradlebaugh’s trial of the accused parties in it and revealed
the truth that the latter version was the correct one and that the Mormons were the
assassins” (1:121). Twain concludes, “All our ‘information’ had three sides to it, and so I
gave up the idea that I could settle the ‘Mormon question’ in two days. Still I have seen
newspaper correspondents do it in one” (1:121). The newspapers, with their quick
delivery of information over vast distances, do not “settle” a question with careful
compilation of evidence, but their reportage may “settle” the question for a reader
distanced from the event who reads their interpretations as fact. Competing information,
in contrast, unsettles the question by demonstrating the entanglement of news in “sides.”

In the second volume of Roughing It, Twain’s persona himself participates in the
creation of news about Indians and Indian-white interactions in the West. As an editor for
the Virginia, Nevada Daily Territorial Enterprise, Twain learns from his chief editor, Mr.
Goodman, never to say “‘We learn’ so-and-so, or ‘It is reported,’ or ‘It is rumored,’ or
‘We understand’ so-and-so, but go to the headquarters and get the absolute facts, and then
speak out and say ‘It is so-and-so’” (2:5). This strategy supposedly will gain people’s
confidence, for “Unassailable certainty is the thing that gives a newspaper the firmest and
most valuable reputation” (2:5). Twain’s persona responds to this advice by creating his
own “unassailable certainty.” He “discover[s] some emigrant-wagons going into camp
on the plaza and found that they had lately come through the hostile Indian country and
had fared rather roughly”; he wishes he were the only reporter of the story, for if he “were not confined within rigid limits by the presence of the reporters of the other papers [he] could add particulars that would make the article much more interesting” (2:7). Luckily, he soon learns that one wagon in this party is quickly moving on to California and, once he determines that its proprietor was “certainly going on and would not be in the city the next day to make trouble,” he “got ahead of the other papers, for [he] took down his list of names and added his party to the killed and wounded.” Indeed, he “put this wagon through an Indian fight that to this day has no parallel in history” (2:7). This fabrication satisfies the narrator that he “had found [his] legitimate occupation at last,” for “news, and stirring news, too, was what a paper needed,” and he “was peculiarly endowed with the ability to furnish it” (2:7). After congratulations from his chief editor, the narrator writes, “I felt I could take my pen and murder all the immigrants on the plains if need be, and the interests of the paper demanded it” (2:7).

Given the shift from Twain’s hearing fabricated information about Indians to creating it, Twain’s depictions of the Goshute Indians (or “Goshoot,” in Twain’s text), a Shoshonean group of Indians living in the deserts southwest of Salt Lake City, can be read as an example of the interplay between faithful report and sensation or romance that the mass media facilitated. Twain at first describes the environment in which the Goshutes live according largely to eye-witness details: “On the morning of the sixteenth day out from St. Joseph we arrived at the entrance of the Rocky Cañon, two hundred and fifty miles from Salt Lake” (2:131). Here, “in this wild country somewhere, and far from any habitation of white men, except the stage-stations,” Twain’s party “came across the
wretchedest type of mankind” he claims to have ever seen (2:131). Twain notes that these Indians “produce nothing at all, and have no villages, and no gatherings together into strictly defined tribal communities”; their shelter “is a rag cast on a bush to keep off a portion of the snow,” yet they “inhabit one of the most rocky, wintry, repulsive wastes that our country or any other can exhibit” (2:132). He further describes their attacks on whites: “they used to live off the offal and refuse of the stations a few months and then come some dark night when no mischief was expected, and burn down the buildings and kill the men from ambush as they rushed out” (2:133). They also, Twain reports, have attacked stage-coach drivers, including once the District Judge of Nevada Territory, who barely survived (2:133).

This depiction of the Goshutes strangely reflects their ability to retain their homelands during the 1860s and beyond and to survive in an isolated, hostile environment with minimal sustenance. Even today, the Goshutes remain on their homelands Twain saw in the early 1860s and on which they have lived for as long as they can remember before that (Crum 19). Beginning in 1863 and throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, they consistently yet passively resisted the BIA’s efforts to remove them from their lands onto reservations with the Utes and other groups in Nevada and Utah. They succeeded for several reasons: their small size that posed little threat to white settlers or the federal government, their less-than-desirable land, and their usually passive approach to the government’s consolidation plans (Crum 29). As the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Indian Reservation state on their website,
“The Shoshone-Goship people have always been an integral part of Western Utah and Northeastern Nevada.”

Isolated in desert lands along the Utah-Nevada border, the Goshutes lived during Twain’s time “at a minimal subsistence level, with no economic surplus on which a more elaborate socio-political structure could be built” (Defa 78). They “harvested some one hundred varieties of plants,” supplementing this diet with “lizards, snakes, fish, insects, rodents, rabbits, birds, crickets, and locusts,” as well as with “sheep, deer, bear, and elk,” which they hunted in nearby mountains (Allen 163). They could not congregate together in large communities because the land could not sustain such communities; instead they “wandered as small groups of twenty-five to thirty people locating their camps wherever they found food” (Allen 163). For shelter they constructed “a small, round sagebrush bower called a wickiup” (Defa 80). When white settlers began to encroach on their limited food supply during the 1850s, some Goshutes started to attack Overland Mail drivers and raid stage stations for supplies (Defa 97). In an 1862 letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole, one visitor to the Goshutes explained that “it is really a matter of necessity with these Indians that they starve or steal--unless they receive assistance” (qtd. in Allen, 167). An 1863 treaty with the U.S. helped diminish these raids by supplying government aid and instituting farming among the Goshutes, in return for

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8 These raids may have occurred under the influence of the Utes, some of whom had intermarried with Goshutes and moved into their territory. The U.S. acquired Utah and Nevada in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) that ended the Mexican War. In the 1850s, the government sponsored surveys for possible rail and wagon roads through the Goshutes’ territory, and a “Mormon-sponsored mail route from Sacramento, California to Salt Lake City was established that ran through the heart of Goshute country” (Defa 92). Mormons settled in parts of Goshute territory during the 1850s--some converted the Indians and helped them set up farms. A bit later, non-Mormon whites came in. In the early 1860s, the pony Express and Overland Stage routes crossed Goshute territory.
the Goshutes’ promise to move to a reservation at an indeterminate date that never materialized.

Twain quickly begins to offer more “information” about the Goshutes after his initial depiction. Twain’s persona claims that what he sees as the Goshutes’ squalid existence shocks “an Indian-worshiper” and “disciple of Cooper” like himself (2: 134). The contrast between the Goshutes and “the scholarly savages in the Last of the Mohicans, who are fittingly associated with backwoodsmen who divide each sentence into two equal parts” supposedly lead him to “examin[e] authorities, to see if perchance [he] had been overestimating the Red Man while viewing him through the mellow moonshine of romance” (2:134). These comparisons bring him to “disenchanting” revelations: “It was curious to see how quickly the paint and tinsel fell away from [the Indian] and left him treacherous, filthy, and repulsive” (2:134). Twain replaces one universal “type” of Indian--Cooper’s noble savage--with another based on this single encounter with a particular tribe, noting “how quickly the evidences accumulated that wherever one finds an Indian tribe he has only found Goshoots more or less modified by circumstances and surroundings--but Goshoots, after all” (2:134). At the same time, he satirizes this institution of a new type: “The Bushmen and our Goshoots are manifestly descended from the self-same gorilla, or kangaroo, or Norway rat, whichever animal-Adam the Darwinians trace them to” (2:132). Twain’s deliberate lack of scientific particularity--“whichever animal,” including a kangaroo--draws attention to scientific “information” as part of the unstable information circulation about Indians present throughout the text, information that begins with Indian practices and particularity but
might end with abstract scientific race theory. He takes the abstraction further by
remarking that the Goshutes “are very considerably inferior to even the despised Digger
Indians of California; inferior to all races of savages on our continent; inferior to even the
Terra del Fuegans; inferior to the Hottentots, and actually inferior in some respects to the
Kytches of Africa.” The hyperbolic movement outward, away from the particular
Goshutes, in their extremely isolated environment, to “savage” people all over the world,
makes all information circulating about Indians seem ridiculously detached from
“reality.” To find “information” about the Goshutes, one has to go far away from their
actual situation: “Indeed,” Twain writes, “I have been obliged to look the bulky volumes
of Wood’s *Uncivilized Races of Men* clear through in order to find a savage tribe
degraded enough to take rank with the Goshoots” (131).

A letter Twain wrote to his mother from Carson City on March 20, 1862 further
illuminates Twain’s absorption of local particularities to indicate the distanced “sides” to
Indian information. According to the letter, Mrs. Clemens had apparently asked her son to
send stories about “lordly sons of the forest ... sweeping over the prairies on their firey
steeds, or chasing the timid deer, or reposing in the shade of some grand old tree.” Twain
tells her, “You can’t mean the Pi-Utes, or the Washoes, or the Shoshones, do you? ... For
among those tribes there are no lordly sons of the forest, for the ferocious reason that
there are no forests of any consequence here.” Likewise, these Indians “don’t sweep over
the prairies on their firey steeds .. because they haven’t got any, you know. And there are
no prairies ... because sage-brush deserts don’t come under that head.” Finally, Twain
reminds his mother, “when the timid deer come prospecting around here, and find that
hay is worth one hundred and fifty dollars a ton, and sage-brush isn’t good to eat, they just turn their bobtails toward the rising sun and skedaddle” (175). Twain’s mother’s desire for tales of “sons of the forests” is completely incongruous with the arid climate and minimal sustenance of these Indians’ lands that have shaped their particular ways of life in the West; the disjunction allows Twain to develop his realist humor.

Twain’s final statements about the Goshutes drive home the instability of information about Indians. Twain describe a “plausible resemblance” between the Goshutes and the employees of the “Baltimore and Washington Railroad Company,” a resemblance that, however, “cannot deceive parties who have contemplated both tribes” (134). Indeed, the Indians in the West might be railroad employees or Mormons; these various “tribes” disrupt national information circulation in their regional particularity. If the Civil War sectional press made the reality of Indian-U.S. relations implicitly visible, particularly in speculations about the Dakota uprising, the sides of the West, Twain suggests, do the same.

Post-Civil War governmental policies make clear that, despite conspiracy theories about Rebels and Indians during the war, Indians and Southerners were not seen as the same from a post-war U.S. viewpoint. Even “civilized” Indian nations like the Cherokees faced a loss of autonomy after the war; whereas “no southern states were forced to surrender land to the federal government,” this “was a predetermined fact” in post-war federal negotiations with Indians (Confer 156). The U.S. trampled equally on the land rights of Western tribes. In a letter to his brother John, William T. Sherman acknowledged
that, “According to existing treaties with Indians, they have a right to wander and hunt
across all the railroads toward the West,” and the U.S. has no right to build roads there.
However, “[w]hether right or wrong, those roads will be built, and everybody knows that
Congress, after granting the charters and fixing the routes, cannot now back out and
surrender the country to a few bands of roving Indians.” Navy Secretary Gideon Welles,
who despised Congress’ treatment of Indians, wrote in the same month, “The Indian
troubles and the plundering schemes of the Pacific and other Western railroads were
considered [in Congress]. There has been wild and wicked legislation by Congress.
Members are corrupt and dissolute. McCulloch says the ring of railroad men had
monopolized that great interest and is controlling congress” (425).

The railroad companies and Congress won out over Indians’ rights in the West,
and ultimately the Civil War proved devastating for many Indians who had fought
alongside Union or Confederate soldiers. The “Indian Wars” of the late nineteenth
century would follow, as the U.S. continued to pursue national expansion. News
 correspondents, however, would follow the Army west and report on those wars. Often
their reports reflect national ideologies, but these were accompanied by divergent
representations grounded in Indian influence. As I will show in the next chapter, the
“implicit real” behind stereotypical portrayals of Indians led to a more pronounced
intercultural realism on the part of late nineteenth-century writers Charles Alexander
Eastman (Dakota) and Stephen Crane. The intra-national divides of the Civil War and the
West remained during the decades following the Civil War, and Natives and non-Natives

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continued to question ideological representations and to unsettle the facile production of
tropes.
Chapter 5: Indian Wars and Newspaper Noise: The Intercultural Realism of
Stephen Crane and Charles Alexander Eastman

The reciprocal relationship between late nineteenth-century literary and
journalistic practices has become something of a commonplace among literary scholars
and cultural historians. Scholars have associated the rapid growth of the mass media in
the decades following the Civil War with what Miles Orvell calls the “new conditions for
seeing that [literary] realism required” (134). ¹ According to this narrative, the “New
Journalism” of the 1880s, which foregrounded event-based news, “truth”-seeking,
human-interest stories, eye-witness accounts, and interviews, corresponded with realist
and naturalist authors’ aims to offer “truthful treatments of American life” (Shi 6). In
particular, scholars have often associated journalist-author Stephen Crane with the late
nineteenth-century media, relating his writings to the generic complexity and multiple
“angles” of the press. ²

A second commonplace in studies of this period complicates this relationship
between literary and journalistic realism. Scholars have shown that the often sensational
late nineteenth-century mass media consistently misrepresented American Indians.

¹ Between 1870 and 1900, daily newspapers increased four times, while overall newspaper circulation
increased six times (Robertson 17). The major expansion of journalism accompanied technological
developments, population concentration in urban centers, and the burgeoning of a literate middle class.

² On the relationship between late nineteenth-century journalism and literature in general, see Shi 4-10,
Fisher-Fishkin 5-7, and Orvell 104-26. Orvell cites Crane in particular as an author who, influenced by
newspapers and photography, was “pushing the conventions and techniques of mimesis to the breaking
point” (104). In a book specifically on Crane, Michael Robertson argues that journalism developed Crane’s
interest in “angles” and perspectives, rather than arguments or moralization (92).
Indian-related reports make clear that in the New Journalism, “accuracy in principle was demanded, but ... accuracy in practice often gave way to distortion for effect” (Knight 311). During the later nineteenth century, newspapers most frequently featured Indians in sensational stories of so-called “Indian wars.” As white Americans encroached on Indians’ lands and life-ways with renewed vigor following the Civil War, newspapers played out a “national drama” in which whites became legendary heroes and Indians “obvious and necessary villains” (Coward 6). Although usually victims of white aggression, Indians were portrayed as the “savage” aggressors in the mass media, their retaliations viewed as what Harper’s Weekly artist and correspondent Frederic Remington called “interminable Indian outbreaks” (“Indians as Irregular Calvary”). The New Journalism’s attention-grabbing headlines and liberal use of photographs complemented tropes of Indians “on the warpath” that had been commonplace in American popular culture since Puritan captivity narratives (White, “Frederick Jackson Turner” 29). Stories of Indian depredations attracted urban readers, who could confirm their assumptions about murderous savages and white military heroes from a safe distance.

Such mythology about Indians in the news has led scholars to exclude Indians from discussions of “truth”-seeking, accuracy, and realistic representation in this period’s journalism and literature. Most scholarly studies assume that Indians, confined to Western reservations or assimilating to white culture, had no impact on the literary trends of the East and that the ideological beliefs of the period’s realist and naturalist writers

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3 For detailed characteristics of the New Journalism, see Mott 436-45 and Knight 311.

4 Questions of Indian policy (e.g., whether administration of Indian affairs should be relegated to the Department of the Interior or the War Department), the fate of “the Indian,” and the progress of Indian students in government-run boarding schools, among other issues, also received frequent media attention.
precluded their interest in actual Indians. Those studies of the period’s literature and culture that do discuss Indians foreground popular culture that only reiterated newspaper clichés about Indians. Popular poetry created icons of savage Indian warriors and white Indian-fighting heroes. Likewise, photographs of captured Indian warriors from Geronimo to Sitting Bull found a wide audience, and simulations of Indian war attracted large audiences to the famous Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show, where white audiences could view supposedly “real” Indian warriors from the safety of the stands (Kasson 7-8). Like the news, such spectacles both vilified Indians and popularized them in contained settings, claiming Indians as a unique part of American identity while proclaiming their inevitable demise in the name of progress, industrial capitalism, and Anglo-Saxon superiority.

However, diverse Native groups and individuals with complex cultural practices lived and travelled in the East as well as the West during the mid- and late-nineteenth-century, and, as we have seen also in the previous chapter, reports about them from a wide range of viewpoints circulated consistently in newspapers throughout the country. While the work of ideology led to the prominence of certain media narratives and the creation of a popular mythology about Indian “savages,” competing perspectives peppered the vast mass media in place by the 1890s. Sensational tropes mingled with attempts to question clichés and to depict Indian-related events and Indian practices with greater fidelity. At times, Indian voices appeared alongside whites’ reports in the mainstream news, calling attention to Indians’ histories and material situations. This
tension between tropes or myths and fact-driven accounts, I argue, had its own influence on journalistic and literary practices.

This chapter analyzes that influence in the work of two prolific turn-of-the-century writers, Stephen Crane and Charles Alexander Eastman. Eastman was a Dakota Sioux Indian, born and raised among the Dakotas, who attended college at Dartmouth and medical school at Boston University. He worked as a physician and in other positions among both Natives and non-Natives, meanwhile authoring many books and articles and becoming a prominent public lecturer. Crane grew up and went to school in the East, worked as a reporter in various locales in the East, West, and abroad, and published many fictional works and poems. Along with their wide travels and prolific writing, these two authors have much in common. Both expressed disdain for the popular press, even as they published in newspapers and periodicals. Both knew famous intellectuals and political figures like William Dean Howells and Theodore Roosevelt and observed with earnest interest U.S. politics and wars. Both experimented with a variety of literary and journalistic forms. While American Indians are not a primary concern of Crane’s work as they are in Eastman’s, his writings reference Indians with a frequency and variety that echo and unsettle newspaper portrayals and demonstrate a consistent

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5 For a more detailed Eastman biography, see Lopenzina 728; Powell 417-18. Powell points out that, by 1893 Eastman’s “essays were being published in magazines like Nicholas and Harper’s, and he had delivered a speech, ‘Sioux Mythology,’ at the World Columbian Exposition” (417)

6 Among the well-known writers and other intellectual figures with whom both Crane and Eastman interacted are William Dean Howells, Hamlin Garland, Irving Bacheller, Theodore Roosevelt, and Mark Twain.
interest in issues of national ideology that also concerned Eastman. These authors’ Indian-related writings capture the tension between sensationalistic and realistic reportage; they analyze how the former becomes dominant in popular lore about Indians, as fair-minded, investigative reports and Native points of view get filtered out and meanings of events consolidated to support white ideologies. Both writers employ multiple, conflicting viewpoints—including eye-witnes accounts, rumors, myths, visual representations, and oral testimonies—that reflect the media’s complexity and the presence of Indian testimony and modes of representation. Their Indian-related texts can help scholars better understand the relationship between the period’s literature and journalism, for they explicate the processes by which news and myths get created and disseminated.

My pairing of Crane and Eastman aims to unsettle a more or less automatic distinction between generic and ethnic categories of American literary history. Literary categorizations of Crane as a “realist” or “naturalist” and Eastman as an “American Indian writer” have obscured the connections between their literary and journalistic

7 Overt or implicit references to Indians appear in Crane’s oeuvre with a variety and regularity that indicates his interest in news reports and popular discourse about Indians. Crane treats the mythology of savage Indian warriors and Indian-fighting heroes in the Sullivan County sketches “Last of the Mohicans” (1892) and “Not Much of a Hero” (1892). He reported directly on Indians in an article on the Harvard University vs. Carlisle Indian School football game of 1896. He ruminated on the limits of cross-cultural understanding as he described Native Mexicans in his syndicated “Mexico Sketches.” In his letters, Crane often refers to a friend as an “Indian” or “Sioux” and frequently references the Apaches (for examples, see Correspondence, Vol. 1: 36, 43, 119, 131, 172). Crane’s war reports from Greece and Cuba reference Indian fighting in the U.S., particularly against the Apaches (War Dispatches 239, 264, 277, 280). The Monster’s (1898) fire scene involves fire engine companies with tribal names “Tuscarora” and “Chippeway”; the Tuscarora company rushes down Niagara Ave., a street name that points to their actual reservation in Niagara County, New York. Crane mocks the popular craze for “Indian legends” in The Third Violet (1897) and “Seen at Hot Springs” (1895): in The Third Violet, he uses the phrase “of course” eleven times in the “Indian legend” related by Hawker to indicate the mechanical nature of such legends told by whites at every tourist destination. Crane’s Whilomville tale “His New Mittens” (1898) features a childhood battle between “Indians” and “soldiers.” Finally, but not exhaustively, Crane’s unfinished play “The Fire-Tribe and the Pale-Face” and its companion story, “The Fire-Tribe and the White-Face” dramatize the tension between “warring tribes of copper-coloured people” and “white faces” who want their land.
practices. Reading their texts together, alongside media discourse and other cultural artifacts, demonstrates that late nineteenth-century literary and journalistic practices interested in the “real” were shared and inspired by both Natives and non-Natives. With this final case study of Crane and Eastman, I hope to open for revision an often closed narrative of literary history in which actual Indians are considered immaterial to studies of American literary realism.

Conflicting News from Lakota Territory

Crane and Eastman were both familiar with the range of newspaper discourse about Indians. Crane wrote the majority of his work during the 1890s and Eastman during that time and after; their major work thus came after the exponential growth of the mass media and the development of the New Journalism in the 1880s. Both authors encountered a massive news media that employed sensational clichés about Indians but also allowed for competing points of view, as increasing numbers of correspondents covered Indian-related events across the country, and eastern papers often printed stories

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8 In a recent review of three critical works on American literary naturalism, Lisa Long suggests that scholars would do well to let go of the “screen” of naturalism that distinguishes African-American from white literature during this period: “In the end, naturalism turns back on itself, becomes the uncategorizable category, precisely because the taxonomic and evolutionary tendency of literary history is naturalist in and of itself—concerned in its own way with determining what nineteenth century critic Hippolyte Taine theorized as the ubiquitous ‘race, moment, and milieu’ that have produced literary naturalism and other generic categories” (172). Here, I want to pick up Long’s suggestion and extend it to American Indian literatures, which scholars, including Long herself in this review, consistently omit from studies of realism and naturalism—literary categories that are always-already identified as “white.” Scholarship on Eastman has focused almost exclusively on identity politics. In such studies, Eastman is either assimilationist to white ideology, resistant, hybrid, ambivalent, or “more complex” than these terms allow. For examples, see Warrior 8; Deloria Playing Indian 123; Cooper 24; Carlson 605; Coskan-Johnson 129-30. Here, I hope to demonstrate that Eastman’s “Indianness” need not cancel out his interest to literary history, and that Crane’s “whiteness” need not preclude his interest in Indian-related issues.
Thus, although scholars have demonstrated that late nineteenth-century “news about Indians was created, organized, and received in ways that supported Euro-American ideas and challenged or ignored Native ones” (Coward 10), some stories did challenge Euro-American ideologies. Moreover, Natives had their own ways of witnessing and representing events that New Journalistic practice complemented in some ways. For example, Eastman describes learning about Dakota history in his youth by interviewing his elders and seeking eye-witness accounts of the scenes where events took place. As I will show, Eastman later used eye-witness reports and interviews in periodical articles and news reports; his interest in modes of faithfully representing reality was intercultural, rather than just occurring within white or Dakota society.

News coverage of one of the most widely-reported Indian related events of the late nineteenth-century, the Ghost Dance “war” and Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890-91, in which the U.S. army killed hundreds of Lakota Sioux men, women, and children, provides a key example of the Indian-related media discourse with which Crane and Eastman were familiar. Eastman was working as a physician at Pine Ridge (one of the Lakota reservations) during this period and directly experienced these events. A writer

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To give an example of the latter, a Sept. 18, 1892 report in the New York Tribune titled “Six Nations Reserve: Observations of Indian Life in Canada” highlights the political practices of Eastern Native groups and demonstrates the irony of whites’ assumptions about Indians’ lack of political interest. The article notes that the Six Iroquois Nations in Canada have recently obtained the right to vote that their knowledge of political affairs is impressive. The reporter comments on the discrepancy between the Indians’ political savvy and the white politicians’ assumptions about their political naivete: “What surprised white politicians was that the Indian vote was divided. Naturally the partisans of the Government which brought in the Suffrage bill supposed that the people on the Reserve would all vote their ticket. ... The Indians, however, looked at the matter from their own point of view. After hearing one of them remark pithily, ‘We’d have been fools to vote all alike,’ one could hardly avoid the suspicion that there was more in the division of the Indian vote than mere diversities of individual opinion. Again, it looked as if the white man had trustfully mistaken the secretive humor of the Indian for a guileless naivete.” The reporter implies that the Indians played into whites’ preconceptions of them to manipulate the whites’ voting system. The Indians’ practices raise questions about what else whites may have missed in their assumptions of Indian savagery.
for various eastern newspapers in the early 1890s, Crane surely read widely about Wounded Knee. More news correspondents than had ever been to an Indian “war” covered the events leading up to Wounded Knee, and this wide-reaching coverage in the competitive 1890s news media prompted a range of responses from West and East. Many reports vilified the Lakotas and blamed them for any violence, but many others challenged this viewpoint and used it as an impetus for “truth”-seeking. More thoughtful news articles often followed sensational reports of murdering savages, and certain correspondents analyzed the government’s mistreatment of Indians or carefully contextualized Indians’ actions. Indians reported on their own situations and events, and some reporters questioned conventional modes of representing Indians and explored the consequences of putting forth tropes and incomplete facts as “truth.”

The conflicting news coverage arose in part from the fact that the Lakotas were victims of unnecessary militaristic aggression by the U.S. government. In November of 1890 the U.S. sent troops to Pine Ridge to suppress the Ghost Dance, a pan-Indian, religious, non-militaristic resistance movement in which some Lakotas were participating. The movement’s Messiah, Wovoka (Northern Paiute), preached peaceful cooperation with white Americans but also encouraged dancing to bring about an apocalyptic event in which whites would be overthrown. Although the movement itself promoted cooperation with whites, the Indians’ dancing was considered an act of defiance, an “outbreak” (P. Deloria, *Unexpected Places* 20). Reservation agents raised an alarm to the U.S. government when Lakotas began to practice the dance; U.S. troops ordered the Lakotas to come into the reservation agencies and used force against those
who did not, like the famous Lakota leader Sitting Bull, who was killed during his attempted arrest by Lakota police.\textsuperscript{10}

After several tense moments and skirmishes, violence culminated when soldiers rounded up and disarmed Lakota leader Big Foot’s band, which was on its way to the Pine Ridge agency as directed. During the disarming at Wounded Knee Creek, an Indian supposedly fired a shot, after which the U.S. soldiers opened fire on the Indians. Some Lakotas who were able to regain arms fought back, but most fled. At the end of the massacre, between 170 and 300 Lakotas were dead or mortally wounded; the majority of these were women and children (Ostler 345).\textsuperscript{11} On the U.S. side, 25 soldiers died and 39 were wounded, mostly by friendly fire (Reilly 121). The Wounded Knee massacre galvanized the Lakotas, many of whom were now ready to fight, but by mid-January the U.S. army had surrounded them and forced them to surrender.

Many of the twenty-one newspaper correspondents who covered the Ghost Dance conflict called it an Indian “outbreak,” a common image in the news that, Philip Deloria observes, expressed a “fear of Indian people escaping the spatial, economic, political, social, and military restrictions placed on them by the reservation regime” (\textit{Unexpected

\textsuperscript{10} On December 15, 1890, Sioux policemen tried to arrest Lakota leader Sitting Bull at his home at the prodding of Standing Rock Agent James McLaughlin, who claimed that Sitting Bull was going to leave Standing Rock to join the dancers. Sitting Bull at first complied but then began to resist; his friend shot police lieutenant Bull Head, who immediately shot Sitting Bull. Sitting Bull’s death escalated tensions both among the Lakota and between the Lakota and the U.S. army; Sitting Bull’s band fled south, and the army worried that others would join them and strengthen the “defiant” Lakota contingent in the Badlands (Andersson 85; Ostler 326). It is important to remember that the Ghost Dance posed a conflict of interest not only between Natives and non-Natives but among various Native groups and the Lakotas themselves. Certain Native groups participated in the dance while others did not, and the Lakotas were divided on the issue. The reservation police worked with the agents to arrest try to subdue Sitting Bull and even instigated his death, and Native scouts from various groups sided with the U.S. Army during the conflict, as they had in previous conflicts.

\textsuperscript{11} The number of Lakota casualties given by historians varies. Andersson cites 150-250 Sioux deaths and does not number the wounded, while Reilly points out that “the exact number of Indian dead is not known, but it is certain that at least 170 were killed, most of them women and children” (121).
False reports of an alarming uprising, coupled with requests from panicky agents on the reservation, led the government to send in more troops (Andersson 247). Western papers like the Omaha Bee and the Aspen Daily Chronicle published sensational depictions of fanatical Indians working themselves into a war frenzy, some in order to bring in soldiers and correspondents who would boost local economies (Reilly 114-116). Reports of a “Messiah craze” reached across the country; for instance, the alarmist reports of Charles Cressey, correspondent for the Omaha Bee, were often reprinted by papers like the New York Times that did not send a correspondent to Pine Ridge (Andersson 192). Those Eastern correspondents who did go to Pine Ridge tried to get the first “scoop” on events, sending quick, often faulty or exaggerated telegraphs to their editors.

A host of Natives and non-Natives countered this “outbreak” narrative in the press. While some papers simply debunked erroneous reports from Pine Ridge (Coleman 110), others exposed the logic behind reports predicated on false assumptions and hearsay rather than eye-witness experience and dialogue. An article published on 1 Dec. 1890 in New York and Chicago papers, for example, attempts to sift the “situation” at Pine Ridge from “a hundred or more handsewed and double pegged lies” (“That Big Indian Scare”). That situation, according to the reporter, consists of “twelve hundred [U.S.] soldiers ... smoking tobacco and drilling ... and wondering what they are here for,” while the Indians participate in “harmless” dances or “are on the way to their homes.” The article explores

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12 False reports resulted from a lack of information and the need to send something to editors regardless, coupled with false assumptions about Indians. News about the Lakotas’ actions was “wildly contradictory” and rumors circulated easily among reporters, who stayed together at a small hotel on the reservation (Andersson 209, 193).
the logic behind this state of events: “Instead of sending a white man in authority to treat with them as the [Rosebud Agency Indians] have requested,” the reporter observes, “the officials here prefer to remain inactive and listen to harrowing stories of war dances, painted horses, and defiant threats against the whites.” Clichés about Indian practices—“war dances,” “painted horses,” “defiant threats”—obscure the precise interests and goals of the Lakotas that could be understood through dialogue and accurate information exchange.

Lakotas themselves, moreover, read the news reports and analyzed the relationship between their own experiences and the media’s stories. The image of Lakotas reading the papers even made the news, surely confounding some readers’ presumptions about Indians: Frederick Remington, Harper’s Weekly’s correspondent at Pine Ridge, described “copies of the New York and Chicago papers on the counters of an Indian trader’s store, where a room was full of Indians, three or four of whom could probably read as well as most men” (“Art of War”). Some Lakotas voiced their concerns about these papers by offering testimony in interviews. Lakota leader Red Cloud, for example, gave interviews with reporters that aimed to revise the narrative of the Ghost Dance as a threatening religious frenzy. “[I]f I can judge from the accounts read to me from the papers,” Red Cloud told Pine Ridge reservation’s Catholic priest in a transcribed interview, “the white people seem to think that the belief in the Messiah has caused all the trouble.” Red Cloud observes that “the papers have looked to the end rather than to the beginning, and have mistaken the troubles they see for the thing that really caused it,” contextualizing the Ghost Dance conflict within a history of U.S. colonial practices (“Red
Red Cloud argues, do not take into account that the army officers should have provided the Lakotas with means to work their land and enough to eat from the beginning of their settling at Pine Ridge, but instead placed them in the hands of greedy government agents who upheld their own interests. Red Cloud encourages readers to look beyond sensational reports of “savage” Indians and engage with the material realities of the Lakotas’ loss of land and sustenance.

The Dec. 29 Wounded Knee massacre both intensified and diffused sensationalistic reports that vilified the Sioux. Certain post-Wounded Knee reports glorified the U.S. soldiers, many of whom had fought in the famous Battle of the Little Big Horn of 1876, in which George Armstrong Custer’s Seventh Calvary was defeated by the Lakotas and Cheyennes. The Chadron Democrat’s correspondent wrote, “We glory in the revenge of the Seventh,” while the New York Times described the burial of the “brave boys” of the Seventh Calvary who “fell with face to the foe in the bloody encounter at Wounded Knee” (Coleman 357). Others, however, drew on conflicting versions of events in the news to show the imprecision of such narratives. For example, the New York Tribune printed a letter from anthropologist George Bird Grinnell that lamented the “massacre” of Big Foot’s band and blamed the U.S. army. Grinnell notes the language used to represent the Indians’ actions in the news—“treachery,” “hatred and rage,” “insanity”—that reduces Indians to tropes of savage warriors and obscures the facts that would help people better understand local events. He then describes the local circumstances that led to the massacre. The Lakotas, starving and discontent, engaged in the “Messiah dance” which gave them hope but frightened the agents and led to the
arrival of troops. Western newspapers “exaggerated the troubles,” which led to the
dispatch of more troops, misunderstanding between the Lakotas and whites, and the
Lakotas’ fleeing and stealing cattle to survive. All of this, according to Grinnell,
culminated in soldiers surrounding the Indians at Wounded Knee and an Indian
desperately firing a shot which, coupled with the “bad judgement” of U.S. officers,
provoked the massacre (“Massacre”). Like Red Cloud, Grinnell inserts the Lakotas’
history and interests into the Wounded Knee narrative, drawing together Native and non-
Native histories in the particularities of events at Pine Ridge.

Lakotas also made their voices heard after the Wounded Knee massacre, shaping
even “official” narratives of the event. Lakota leaders Turning Hawk and American
Horse gave testimony in an official meeting with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in
Washington, transcribed and printed in newspapers like the New York Tribune and
Chicago Interocian. Their eye-witness testimony from the post-massacre site described
bodies of women and children that lay face down away from the main scene of the event,
indicating that they were gunned down while fleeing. Commissioner Thomas J.
Morgan’s official report of the massacre includes such testimony, noting that “the bodies
of the women and children were scattered along a distance of two miles from the scene of
the encounter” (qtd. in Coleman 356). Such testimony surely led General Nelson A.
Miles, leader of the military campaign against the Lakotas, to declare in a letter to
Commissioner Morgan, “I have regarded the whole affair as most unjustifiable and
worthy of the severest condemnation” (qtd. in Abate 116). This testimony did not
produce better material and discursive circumstances for the Lakotas; as historian Jeffrey
Ostler observes, “A portion of the American public was receptive to Lakotas’ criticisms of army conduct at Wounded Knee, but the majority was not” (365). But if the event did not completely change representations of Indians or alter the U.S. government’s treatment of Indians, the competing press narratives it exemplifies, I will show, resonated in the period’s literature, demonstrating the remarkable impact of Indians like the Lakotas even from their oppressed positions.

**Charles Eastman’s Native Realism**

Charles Eastman was working as agency physician at Pine Ridge Reservation during the Wounded Knee massacre and the events surrounding it. His own testimony, sent as a letter to friends in Boston and printed in New York and Chicago papers, gives an eye-witness account of the massacre site as he found it when he travelled there three days after the event to search for survivors. Like Turning Hawk and American Horse, Eastman meticulously describes the locations of bodies; he uses an eye-witness point of view and interviews with Lakotas to build a narrative from the ground up. He reiterates this point of view years later in his memoir *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916). In that text, Eastman describes how, when he traveled in March of 1891 to address the Congregational Club in Chicago, he found that “the press still fostered the illusion of a general Indian uprising in the spring” (118). To deflate this myth, Eastman, like Grinnell, narrates the particular events that led to the Wounded Knee massacre: reservation agents and politicians “first robbed the Indians, then bullied them, and finally in a panic called

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13 As Ostler explains, the Lakotas have contested the narrative of Wounded Knee as the fault of the Indians from the time of the massacre to the present. See Ostler 365-59 for the details of their efforts.
for troops to suppress them” (117). He repeats his eye-witness view of the massacre site, describing where the bodies lay. He then exaggerates the outbreak trope to the point of preposterousness, telling the Chicago reporters, “everything [is] quiet in the field, but if there [is] any danger from the ghost dancers, Chicago [is] in the most immediate peril!” (119). Eastman’s memoir indicates a clear counter-narrative to the “outbreak” trope among Natives and non-Natives after Wounded Knee, a counter-narrative based in local events, material realities, dialogue with the Lakotas, and multiple, grounded points of view. It also demonstrates a method of dealing with false, sensationalistic stories: Eastman mockingly mimics and thereby exposes the press’s ability to create absurd myths. Despite his frustration in Chicago, he would go on to employ the press’ sensationalism to his advantage. Indeed, Eastman extended the narrative tension evident in the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee reportage into the most coherent mythology of an Indian “war”: the narrative of General George Armstrong Custer’s heroic “last stand” against the Lakotas and Cheyennes at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. His writings about that battle draw from non-Native mythology about Indians, his own Dakota experience, and his interactions with the Lakotas; he employs sensationalism as well as fact-seeking, eye-witness accounts, interviews, and multiple points of view, creating an intercultural realism that echoes the noise of the Indian-related news.

Custer and his army’s deaths provoked a strikingly uniform series of reports that were quickly consolidated in memorials like monuments, poems, paintings, and history, memorials that endured during Eastman and Crane’s time and well beyond, even to the present day. In June of 1876, in what would become known as the Battle of the Little
Bighorn (or the Battle of the Greasy Grass, in the Indians’ nomenclature), a group of Lakotas and Cheyennes overwhelmingly defeated Custer’s Seventh Calvary. The Indians were quickly vilified in whites’ representations of the event, while Custer’s brave “last stand” was canonized, despite the fact that the Grant administration had purposefully instigated a war with the Lakota Sioux in order to force them to relinquish their claim to the Black Hills, believed to contain gold (Ostler 59-62). The papers made a martyr of Custer, mythologizing his death as a heroic sacrifice to national progress. An article titled “The Montana Slaughter” in Harper’s Weekly, 22 July 1876, reported that

... Custer led his brave men into a fearful slaughter-pen. The Indians poured a murderous fire upon them from all sides, and not one of the detachment escaped alive. ... A survey of the battle ground disclosed a dreadful slaughter. ... The bodies of the dead were terribly mutilated. The Indians are supposed to have numbered from 2500 to 4000, and all the courage and skill displayed by our troops was of no avail against such overwhelming odds.

Such narratives rely on sensationalistic language to vilify the Indians, language recycled from a long line of captivity narratives in which savage Indians massacre and mutilate innocent whites. Indeed, most reports called the battle a “massacre” or “slaughter” of Custer’s troops and emphasized his being far outnumbered by Indians, often exaggerating the numbers (“Massacre of our Troops”; “Custer’s Last Battle”). The papers contributed quite directly to Custer’s memorialization: New York Herald editor James Gordon Bennett quickly used his paper to campaign for a Custer monument, portraying Custer as a tragic victim of the Grant administration’s failure to manage Indian affairs (Elliott 28).

A number of physical, pictorial, and written memorials consolidated newspaper clichés to create a lasting narrative of Custer’s heroic sacrifice that endured during
Eastman and Crane’s time and well beyond, even to the present day. In 1881, a monument was erected on what was then named the “Custer” battlefield to Custer and the Seventh Calvary’s gallant fight on “Last Stand Hill.” Not until 1991 did Congress pass legislation to change the Montana battlefield’s name from “Custer” to “Little Bighorn” and to dedicate a monument to the Lakota and Cheyenne dead, as well as the Crow and Arikara scouts who had fought with the Seventh Calvary. Because of funding problems, this second monument was not erected until 2003 (Elliott 44). As Dana Luciano observes, monuments present “reductive, monologic, and imprecise versions of historical events;” their “task is not to teach history but to instruct people how to feel about it: inspired, reverent, and moved to appropriate action in their own historical moments” (173-74; emphasis in original). This historical feeling usually involves, as Native historian Jean M. O’Brien (White Earth Ojibwe) observes, the obfuscation of a site’s meaning for marginal groups: “Regardless of the precise factual basis of monuments, their presence inscribe[s] meanings on the landscape by privileging particular peoples, events, histories, and interpretations” (66). The “Last Stand” monument at the “Custer” battlefield, and the long absence of an Indian memorial there, crystallized the image of Custer as a sacrificial American hero, a hero whose tragic death outshone a long history of unnecessary Indian deaths and justified to whites their expansion onto the lands of violent “savages.”

Written and visual art disseminated widely the imagery and pathos that would memorialize this battle as Custer’s moment in history. Walt Whitman’s “Death-Sonnet for Custer” (later titled “Far from Dakota’s Cânons”), printed in the New York Herald on
10 July 1876, portrays Custer as “in defeat most desperate, most glorious,” lauding his heroic sacrifice in the “Lands of the wild ravine, the dusky Sioux, the lonesome stretch, the silence.” “Leaving behind thee a memory sweet to soldiers,” the poem’s speaker addresses Custer, “Thou yieldest up thyself” (Complete Poems 493-4). Custer’s “memory” continued to be created to serve U.S. nationalist purposes. A variety of paintings and drawings with some variant of the title “Custer’s Last Stand” depicted Custer’s heroic bearing in the moment of impending doom (Taft 386-90). Such images circulated many years beyond the battle. In a major 1896 advertising campaign, Anheuser-Busch brewery distributed 150,000 copies of a lithograph of one such painting, titled “Custer’s Last Fight,” to hang in bars across the country and promote Busch beer (Elliot 34). In 1942, the brewery shipped copies of the same lithograph, which depicts a heroic Custer standing tall amidst falling soldiers and savage Indians, to U.S. servicemen abroad at a rate of 2,000 per month (Taft 383). Anheuser-Busch’s use of the painting as both an advertisement and motivational iconography for WWII troops suggests the power of the Custer myth to call forth feeling for the nation in various historical moments, either as a symbol of a unique American pioneering spirit or a call to heroic sacrifice in the name of “civilized” humanity.

Eastman’s writings on the Battle of the Little Bighorn, published during the early 1900s, deflate the Custer myth to an unremarkable event within a dynamic history by offering realist narratives that emphasize the immediacy of experience. Reintroducing the chaos of the battle’s movements and moments, Eastman’s accounts disallow a focus on Custer. Eastman’s “The Story of the Little Bighorn,” published in The Chautauquan in
1900, describes the battle as an unexciting, largely predictable meeting of two groups in a particular environmental context. In contrast to articles that had numerically fixed the players involved, describing Custer’s inevitable defeat at the hands of 4,000 or more Indians, Eastman uses government census reports and details about these Indians’ material practices and their relationship to the natural world to show that no more than 1,000 warriors were likely present because of their interactions with this particular environment. Eastman situates the battle within the practices of the Sioux and their understanding of this particular landscape, versus their “savage” presence in a “wild” land like that of Whitman’s poem. He writes:

... I know it to be the habit of the Indians never to camp in large numbers. It was impossible to feed three thousand on the daily hunt for any length of time, and the water question was also very important in that dry country. Such a great number would have to follow the river all the time. Besides, the buffalo ... was likely at any time to leave in a body for other plains. (354)

The details remind the audience of other players in the battle than the fighters; the natural surroundings shape the course of events. The depiction of Native camping practices and subsistence methods in this particular space not only debunks the myth of thousands of aggressive Indian warriors waiting for a fight, but also narrates the battle within a Lakota and Cheyenne context where the land and animals shape action. The Lakotas and Cheyennes simply go about their business in this natural world while Custer’s army, dependent for the moment upon the same environmental factors, approaches.

14 The Chautauqua Institute in southwestern New York state was founded in 1874 as a place to educate Sunday-school teachers during the summer. The Chautauqua literary and scientific circle, established in 1878, promoted education through a weekly news magazine called the Chautquuan. Well-known writers who also published in the magazine include Mark Twain and Theodore Roosevelt.
Eastman makes this rooting of human action deliberate, situating his narrative, in his words, “on the ground” (357). He meticulously describes both the Indians’ and the U.S. soldiers’ movements along ravines, down river banks, and across fords, and notes that he has verified these locations himself. For example, he writes that “[t]he forces under Crazy Horse and Little Horse followed a long ravine that went east from the crossing until it passed the ridge; it then took a southerly direction parallel with and immediately behind the said ridge” (357). Such details make Custer’s death one of various events of a battle in which particular Indians’ strategy, rather than savagery, overpowers the U.S. forces. Eastman thus develops a counter-narrative to the “Last Stand” isolated in vacant space. This leads him to conclude, clearly with Wounded Knee in mind, “Was it a massacre? Were Custer and his men sitting by their camp-fires when attacked by the Sioux? Was he disarmed and then fired upon? No. Custer had followed the trail of these Indians for two days, and finally overtook them. He found and met just the Indians he was looking for” (358). Attention to the immediate, local surroundings contextualize the battle, in which Custer fought the Lakotas and Cheyennes he sought, rather than maintaining a “last stand” against murderous “savages.”

Eastman’s grounded version of the Battle of the Little Bighorn can be understood more fully by comparison with that of another Native historian and artist. Eastman spent much time with the Lakotas, and although no evidence exists that he knew Lakota artist and historian Amos Bad Heart Bull (1869-1913), their versions of the Battle of the Little Bighorn echo one another in striking ways. Bull used oral testimony from his father and uncle to create over 60 vivid images of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, rendering
Custer’s death but one event among many. The images appear in Bull’s pictorial history of the Oglala people (a division of the Lakota), drawn from 1890 to 1913 on the pages of a large ledger (Blish 7). Prior to creating this comprehensive history, Bull had kept a traditional Lakota winter count (waniyeti wowapi), a record that marked the passage of time by depicting visually one memorable event of each year. He expanded the idea of the winter count to depict many Lakota events in great detail, from multiple angles and with varying degrees of verisimilitude and intensity (Blish 8).

Bull’s text offers visual images intended to produce narrative effects. His notes set up the Battle of the Little Bighorn as an incursion into Oglala history: one of the first images in the Little Bighorn series reads, translated from Lakota, “Long Hair came with a challenge” and depicts Custer and his men approaching the Lakotas with raised swords, while Lakota leaders Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull stand ready to meet that challenge (Figure 10). Bull’s notes elaborate: “The Indian nation did not wish to fight; it is always they [the whites] that start shooting first and the Indian who starts last” (213). The images of the battle themselves depict many, chaotic, shared moments of the fight, slowing down the story and contrasting the neat narrative closure of the scene of Custer’s death in non-Native memorials. They highlight the feats of the Lakotas and Cheyennes,

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15 Bull was a young boy at the time of the Battle of the Little Bighorn and thus did not take an active role in the battle. His father and uncle both fought in the battle, and he got the information for his history from their eye-witness accounts. Bull’s history is available to scholars today because of Helen Blish, who learned of the existence of Bull’s history in 1926 when she was a graduate student at the University of Nebraska. She obtained permission from Bull’s sister to study the manuscript, and from 1927-1940 she made copies of the images and interviewed Bull’s relatives, from whom she got her information about Bull’s composition of the text. The original manuscript is buried with Amos Bull’s body, according to Lakota custom (“Publisher’s Preface” vii).

16 Ledger drawings became common among Plains tribes during the second half of the nineteenth century; as early as the 1840s, Plains Indians began to use large ledgers obtained from Euro-Americans to chronicle their and their peoples’ lives, a practice continued from previous drawings on animal hides (Berlo 12).
as well as their wartime practices such as rounding up captured horses (Figure 11). Such images suggest a larger context for Eastman’s narrative strategies; they reveal an impetus arising from Indians’ historical practices and current situations to create complex modes of representation, of seeing events through the moments that shape narrative.

Figure 10: An image from Amos Bad Heart Bull’s series depicting the Battle of the Little Bighorn. A note in Lakota reads: “Long Hair came with a challenge” (Bull 14).
Eastman’s interview with the Lakota warrior Rain-in-the-Face, published in *Outlook* on 27 Oct. 1906, further elucidates this interaction between Lakota realism and the Custer romance. Rain-in-the-Face, born in 1835, was a Hunkpapa Lakota who was well-known in the popular mythology about the Battle of the Little Big Horn, of course in relation to Custer and his soldiers. Some speculated that Rain-in-the-Face had killed Custer, while others, including Custer’s wife Elizabeth, claimed that he tore out the heart of Custer’s brother, Tom Custer.  

Eastman presents his interview with Rain-in-the-Face as contributing to the Rain-in-the-Face mythology, creating irony as this “real” Indian’s testimony interacts with the popular lore surrounding him. Eastman begins his article with an epigraph that consists of stanzas from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and John

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Elizabeth Bacon Custer recorded this story in her first memoir, *“Boots and Saddles,” or Life in Dakota with General Custer* (1885) (Elliott 27). The story was repeated elsewhere, with the sensationalistic detail of the ripping out of a man’s heart staying the same but the identity of the man changing.

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Greenleaf Whittier’s poems about Rain-in-the-Face. Their poetic appropriations of the Sioux warrior’s voice interact with his testimony transcribed by Eastman. While the poems figure Rain-in-the-Face as a player in the Custer myth, Eastman’s transcription figures the Custer myth as embedded within Lakota renditions of the battle, which, in the realist vein, both describe the immediacy of the battle and ironize modes of representation.

The stanzas Eastman includes from Longfellow’s “The Revenge of Rain-in-the-Face” (1878) presents Rain-in-the-Face as a vengeful warrior, ventriloquizing his bloodthirsty thoughts at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Eastman quotes the first two stanzas of the poem in his article:

> In that desolate land and lone,
> Where the Big Horn and Yellowstone
> Roar down their mountain path,
> By their fires the Sioux Chiefs
> Muttered their woes and griefs
> And the menace of their wrath.
>
> “Revenge!” cried Rain-in-the-Face,
> “Revenge upon all the race
> Of the White Chief with yellow hair!”
> And the mountains dark and high
> From their crags re-echoed the cry
> Of his anger and despair.

The poem’s romantic image of a “desolate” landscape with roaring rivers and “mountains dark and high,” unlike Eastman’s grounded depiction of the landscape described above, provides a fitting setting for the menacing Sioux chiefs Longfellow portrays. Using the Indians’ nomenclature for Custer, the “White Chief with yellow hair,” Longfellow gives the impression that his poem is written from an Indian perspective, creating an
authoritative “Indianness” without consulting actual Indians. Indeed, the poem seems to take an “Indian” side when it acknowledges the Sioux’s “woes and griefs” and “anger and despair”; the end of the poem (not printed in Eastman’s text) in fact mentions the U.S. government’s fault in causing the battle by breaking treaties with the Sioux. Yet even so, Custer and his men’s deaths remain the tragedy, rather than the detrimental aftermath of the battle for the Indians, their own countless dead from acts of U.S. aggression, and their forced removal from their lands. The poem relies on a cursory consideration of a Sioux point of view that allows it to remove Sioux material concerns.

Stanzas Eastman includes from Whittier’s poem, “On the Big Horn” (Atlantic Monthly, 1887) mark the end of Rain-in-the-Face’s supposed vengeful campaign against the whites. Whittier wrote the poem at the prompting of J.F.B. Marshall, treasurer of Hampton Institute, who in 1886 received a request from Rain-in-the-Face for admission to the school. The poem describes a transition from epic western battle to pastoral peace: “The hatchet lies overgrown / With grass by the Yellowstone.” The speaker wonders how Rain-in-the-Face, who fought at the battle where “the chief with the yellow hair,” went “Straight into a slaughter pen, / With his doomed three hundred men,” could now desire a white education: “Can this be the voice of him, / Who fought on the Big Horn’s rim? / Can this be Rain-in-the-Face?” The speaker cannot grasp that Rain-in-the-
Face might change over time and now view education, rather than war, as a way to help his people. Whittier’s poem presents the Sioux leader’s desire to attend Hampton as an ironic spectacle rather than a practical move by which Rain-in-the-Face might exercise agency; it re-inscribes the chief within the Custer mythology, where he appears incongruous when not playing the part of a dark villain in the heroic romance.

These poems claim Rain-in-the-Face as part of an American mythology by erasing Lakota history and interests. Eastman’s juxtaposition of these memorializing poems with Rain-in-the-Face’s own account of his life, delivered orally to Eastman by the living Rain-in-the-Face long after the poems had been written, exposes them as myth. Eastman plays with the idea of Rain-in-the-Face’s mythic, mysterious status and Eastman’s own role as mediator, writing “It has been my experience that you cannot induce an Indian to tell a story, or even his own name, by asking him directly” and describing a ceremony of smoking tobacco with Rain-in-the-Face and telling “an old mirthful story to get him in the humor of relating his own history.” In his rendition of his history, Rain-in-the-Face explains practical reasons behind so-called “Indian wars,” such as the U.S. government’s failure to prevent settlers from moving onto the Black Hills, and describes diverse actions of the Lakotas in the face of such injustice. Indeed, Rain-in-the-Face’s story offers a Lakota history and context, in which Rain-in-the-Face is not a mythic figure but a strategic leader. Eastman integrates this story with the Rain-in-the-Face myth, indicating that representations of Indians are always intertwined with tropes.

When Eastman interjects in Rain-in-the-Face’s story to ask questions about the Battle of the Little Bighorn, he receives a grounded relation of events that, nevertheless,
hints at the creation of another myth. When asked whether the famous Lakota Sitting
Bull participated in the battle—another rumor had circulated that Sitting Bull killed
Custer—Rain-in-the-Face notes that, had the Indian who killed Custer lived, according to
Sioux custom he “would have told of the deed, and called others to witness it.” Here the
ability to tell and witness lies with the Lakotas; the “true” story has to come from the
immediacy of the battle scene. Rain-in-the-Face also deflates the myth that he cut out the
heart of Custer’s brother, telling Eastman:

> Many lies have been told of me. Some say that I killed the Chief, and
> others that I cut out the heart of his brother [Tom Custer], because he had
> caused me to be imprisoned. Why, in that fight the excitement was so great
> that we scarcely recognized our nearest friends! Everything was done like
> lighting. After the battle we young men were chasing horses all over the
> prairie, while the old men and women plundered the bodies; if any
> mutilating was done, it was by the old men.

Rain-in-the-Face’s narrative echoes the many scenes of Lakota warriors rounding up
horses in Amos Bad Heart Bull’s images of the battle. With subtle humor that indicates a
withholding of knowledge, he debunks the idea of a young Indian warrior cutting out a
white soldier’s heart, giving instead a practical image of old men doing this work while
young men round up horses. Rain-in-the-Face’s emphasis on the battle’s chaotic
moments and the carrying out of Lakota customs draw the narrative away from iconic
images of Custer’s death, savage Indian warriors, and the idea of a “last stand.” At the
same time, the story’s inconclusiveness—*if* any mutilating was done—suggests that Rain-
in-the-Face and Eastman too can play with myth and reality, presenting an “authentic,”
“Indian” version of the story that may deliberately distort the facts. Hero-worship of
whites and spectacles of Indian savages rely on such distortion; Eastman, Rain-in-the-
Face, and Bull reattach narratives to experience, various perspectives, and particular moments, aware of the myths with which their narratives interact.

**Stephen Crane’s Indian Ironies**

While Stephen Crane did not intervene in the Custer narrative, his Indian-related works indicate his familiarity with the mythology of Indian-fighting heroes and savage Indian warriors, as well as with actual Indians whose practices defy such tropes. Crane’s ironic treatments of Indian clichés in sketches, news reports, and fiction demonstrate the inadequacy of “the mechanical perpetuation of hackneyed tropes” in the news to reflect Indians’ material situations (Cook 55). In a variety of forms, Crane exposes the manufacture of myths in popular discourse by drawing together multiple tropes, narratives, and perspectives that, in their juxtaposition, reveal each other’s preposterousness. Although his writings foreground the ridiculous perpetuation of Indian tropes, they nevertheless constantly point to actual Indians that confound the myths.

Although not focused on Custer, Crane’s essay “Not Much of a Hero,” published in the *New York Tribune* in 1892, demonstrates like Eastman’s work that Indian-fighter myths fall apart on a local level, when the contingencies of particularity and place come into conversation with widely disseminated, nation-building narratives. The essay responds to the erection of a monument in 1889 to Tom Quick, a so-called “Indian-slayer” from Milford, Pennsylvania. Papers like the *New York World* and the *New York Times* reported the monument’s erection without interrogation of its logic; the *Times* described “The unveiling of the newly-completed monument to the memory of Tom
Quick, the Indian slayer, whom tradition credits with unrivaled strategy and success in fighting the savage foe” (“In Honor of Tom Quick”). Crane’s sketch, in contrast, draws out the story the monument obscures. The sketch begins by revealing the irony of Quick’s monument’s inscription, which reads, “Tom Quick was the first white child born within the present borough of Milford.” Crane wonders, sardonically, why the memorial “quickly mentioned a fact for which [Quick] apparently was quite irresponsible,” rather than “those qualities of pitiless cruelty which rendered him famous” (211-12). The irony, of course, is that the authors of Quick’s memorial can assume its audience will ascribe to the myth of white superiority and can avoid reference to the more overtly sinister aspects of Quick’s memorialization.

To expose the narrative behind the monument, Crane draws it into relation with other narratives about Quick that clarify how the Quick myth works. A biography of Quick displays the odiousness of his deeds. The book reads, according to Crane, not as the story of an Indian-fighting hero but as a practical guide to murdering Indians: Crane writes that “Youths going westward to massacre the devoted red man with a fell purpose and a small-calibre revolver always carry a cheap edition of Tom Quick’s alleged biography” (212). Quick’s “cheap” biography, like the cheap, mass-produced urban dailies of the 1880s and 90s and popular dime novels about the “wild” West, provides a ready medium for discursively dominating Indians. However, Crane’s word choices—“massacre,” “fell purpose”—make Quick the vengeful, murderous savage, rather than the Indians he kills. Quick, Crane observes, is “a gory-handed avenger of an advanced type who goes about seeking how many Indians he can devour within a given
Words like “gory,” “avenger,” “devour,” and “slaughter” echo sensational dramatizations of Indian savagery in popular discourse. Quick even “knocked [a] babe’s brains out against a tree” (214), another echo of sensational images used to describe Indians murdering whites in texts from captivity narratives to newspapers. Yet Quick’s mechanical and precise killing exceeds that of “savage” Indians: Quick “perforates Indians with great rapidity and regularity, while they, it seems, persist in offering themselves as targets with much abandon and shoot at him with desperate wildness, never coming within several yards of their aim” (212). The word “perforate,” in its evocation of a series of precise holes used to tear paper, conflates physical Indian-killing with the mechanical reproduction of Indian tropes in mass-produced texts like newspapers.

Quick’s rapid and regular murder of Indians, who are all the same, parallels whites’ methodical reproduction of generic Indians in newspapers, which allows actual Indians to be ignored, displaced, or killed.

But, Crane indicates, the helpless mass of Indians in Quick’s biography is only a myth necessary to perpetuate an exalted image of Quick, just as the idea that Rain-in-the-Face has no voice allows for poets like Whittier and Longfellow to reproduce that voice and to make Custer the center of the story. The Indians in Quick’s biography lack a voice or history; they simply jump in the way of Quick’s gun, offering no resistance. Crane relates how Quick tricked a group of Indians that had plotted to kill him into helping him split a log: Quick convinced the “imbecile redskins” to place their fingers in a crack in the log and heave, to which they “innocently and guilelessly agreed” and were trapped in the log by their fingers when Quick removed his wedge from the crack. Quick proceeded
to cut the Indians to pieces with his axe. “It is a notable fact,” Crane writes, “that no one in the history of the country has ever discovered that kind of an Indian except ‘Tom’ Quick in this alleged adventure” (214). Without “that kind of an Indian,” the Quick myth falls apart entirely, for should the Indians have a factual presence in the story, Quick would be unable to mechanically kill Indians and popular lore unable to aggrandize Quick.

Crane’s depiction of Quick in “Not Much of a Hero” depends on an awareness of actual Indian presences that register the immense irony of “that kind of an Indian.” Later, Crane would report on actual Indians in a venue that evoked more media images of Indian “savagery”: college football. Crane’s news article on the Harvard vs. Carlisle Indian School football game of November 1, 1896 demonstrates that the press and popular audiences default to clichés even when they witness Natives in “modern” settings performing the same actions as whites. Carlisle, an industrial boarding school for American Indians in Pennsylvania, was making headlines in its first competitive football season against the eastern universities in 1896. Despite or because of football’s violence that simulated war (Crane himself claimed that he got a “sense of rage and conflict” that helped him write *The Red Badge of Courage* on the football field), many considered the game beneficial to the cultivation of white masculinity in industrialized, urban settings (*Correspondence* 228). When Indians began to play, many news reports reiterated their warlike savagery. Others proclaimed their masculinity or “gentlemanly” behavior, while others simply reported on Carlisle’s games as if they were any other football team.

Carlisle players even reported on their own games: for example, a *New York Times* report
from 1896 quotes the Carlisle half-back Metoxen before the Thanksgiving game between Carlisle and Brown. Metoxen explains Carlisle’s recent loss to Pennsylvania:

‘It has been our custom,’ said he, ‘when about to take part in a big game to sleep the night previous in the town where the game is to be played. This resulted in giving our team plenty of rest. We didn’t follow the plan this time, however, but remained in Carlisle over night. Then, in order to make time, we were called very early in the morning, ate our breakfast at 5 o’clock, and took the train for Philadelphia. Rising so early and traveling several hours in the train tired the boys very much, and they were quite listless when they went on Franklin Field.’ (“Carlisle-Brown Football”)

Metoxen contextualizes the Brown game within a disruption of the Carlisle players’ regular schedule, based on spatial and chronological details that shaped the lives of most Americans in the late nineteenth-century. The mundane facts of the Carlisle players’ schedule situate them in modern time with every other team, rather than in a “savage” past.

Crane’s article captures this newspaper noise, drawing irony from the contrast between the event of Indians playing a football game and the inevitable clichés the public would apply to such an event. Crane reported on the Carlisle/Harvard game for William Randolph Hearst’s sensationalistic New York Journal, a pioneer of the mid-1890s “Yellow Journalism” characterized by huge type-set for attention-grabbing headlines, liberal use of pictures, and fake stories and interviews (Mott 539). In line with this sensationalism, Crane’s article appears below eye-catching images of mostly naked,
athletically-posed Carlisle players (Figure 12), “exotic” and “scientific” specimens for the Journal’s readers (Oriard 240; Buford 51).

Figure 12: Stephen Crane’s article on the Harvard vs. Carlisle football game in the New York Journal, 1 Nov. 1896 (Oriard 240).
The photographs register a belief in the virile masculinity of more “primitive” races that newly popular sports like football aimed to replicate for a white, urban middle class worried about the weakening effects of industrialization. Crane’s article parodies the spectacle of male virility and war-like Indianness that the Tribune would make of the Carlisle players. When one of the pictured Carlisle players, Frank Cayou, experiences a minor injury during the game, Crane jars his narrative of the game’s events with a choppy, very brief paragraph that stands out from all of the other lengthy paragraphs: “At this moment, a singular thing happened. An Indian got hurt. Cayou’s head was cut” (672). The paragraph mimics the audience’s sure shock at the possibility that such a prime physical specimen of the Indian race could experience an injury. Crane quickly notes, however, that Cayou “recovered in a moment” and moves on to another long paragraph, pointing to Cayou as a football player, not an indomitable Indian warrior.

Throughout the article, Crane interweaves ironic tropes with the players actions. His report draws together a number of newspaper clichés about Indians that appear ridiculous in their juxtaposition and irrelevance to the particulars of the game. The article begins by noting that the Indians lost the game 4-0, evoking romantic imagery to represent the Indians’ distress at their loss: “There is sorrow in the lodge of Lone Wolf, and despair sits upon the brow of Cayou” (669). These despairing Indians that echo Longfellow’s Sioux warriors contrast the Apache outlaws--the Apache Kid and Geronimo--to whom Crane directly compares the Carlisle players in the next few paragraphs of the article (669). Geronimo and the Apache Kid were famous in the news for their depredations against whites in the Southwest, and were never represented
romantically in the papers. Crane then describes vengeful Carlisle players who supposedly muse before the game: “Let us ... brothers, be revenged. Here is an opportunity. The white men line up in their pride. If sacrifice of bone and sinew can square the thing, let us sacrifice, and perhaps the smoke of our wigwam camp fire will blow softly against the dangling scalps of our enemies” (669-70). The crowd, Crane makes clear, craves such a spectacle of Indian vengeance, to see “the red man ... make a show of the white warriors at their favorite sport” (669). Yet immediately afterward Crane notes that the Indians are indifferent to the spectacle the crowd would make of them, replicating a trope of stoic, impassive Indians: “if they knew that the attention of a multitude of palefaces was centred [sic] upon them they did not seem to care.” (670). The combination of myths creates a nonsensical narrative completely detached from the actions of the game, which Crane narrates in between such imprecise references.

One final trope that Crane includes in his representation of the Carlisle players is that of the Indians as “mightily well-behaved and docile children.” This cliché of childlike Indians dependent on white “adults” to guide them, like the trope of vengeful, warlike Indians, had circulated in American discourse throughout the nineteenth century, and Crane captures the nonsense of these two tropes’ coexistence in the football article. The “childlike Indian” also informed scientific theories and an entire literary genre in which both Crane and Eastman participated: the boy book. As I will show in the coda to this chapter, Crane and Eastman’s permutations of the boy book disrupt its logic, building upon the myths and realities of late nineteenth-century mass discourse to redraw the boy book’s boundaries.
Coda: The Mythology of the Boy Book

The logic of the boy book was the logic of recapitulation theory, which held that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, or that an individual passes through an evolutionary progression from savagery to civilization in his or her personal growth. According to late nineteenth-century psychology, boys should therefore indulge their “primitive” traits by playing outdoors and reading books that depicted boyhood savagery. Indeed, the boy book was the literary replica of the Boy Scouts and other groups that advocated rigorous outdoor activity and “Indian woodcraft” for boys and young men in order to maintain the vitality of the urbanized, industrialized late-nineteenth century U.S. As Bill Brown observes, the boy book works in the service of nationalism: in such texts, boyhood is “a site where a residual America can be preserved, where the American exceptionalist vision can be projected, where nationhood can be embodied outside history” (176). Indeed, “[p]roducing the boy ... is part and parcel of preserving the nation” in the face of a consumerist, urbanized modernity (Brown 177).

Howells’s A Boy’s Town demonstrates the role of Indians in this nation-building boy story. The Wyandot Indians who visit the Ohio of Howells’ childhood are “old and young alike, savages, and the boys who looked on and envied them were savages in their ideal of a world where people spent their lives in hunting and fishing and ranging the woods, and never grew up into the toils and cares that can alone make men of boys” (151). Even as Howells builds this representation upon an actual Indian group he knew in his childhood, the Wyandots, in his text these Indians lose their particularity and history as they signify a lost, primitive stage of human existence and of boyhood, to be
remembered yet surpassed. Of course, the white boys also remain largely static in the boy book, for according to the recapitulation theory in vogue at the time, in which individual growth replicates the “progress” of society as a whole, they too are savages. And yet the white man’s nostalgia is predicated on the fact that the boys have a history: they will grow into “civilized” men, while Indians are presumed to remain outside the boundaries of modern America.

Crane and Eastman unsettle this national fiction promulgated in the boy book. Crane wrote 14 boy stories that take place in the fictional town of Whilomville. Far from presenting an idyllic, free, empowering boyhood, however, the Whilomville story “His New Mittens,” demonstrates the troubling distance between representation and event in genres like the boy book.20 “Mittens” can be read as an explication of how myths about Indians work, by overwhelming the details of events and Indian presences with distanced, imprecise stories. The story’s protagonist, a young boy named “Little Horace,” joins a snowball fight that neighborhood boys have carefully planned to be “between Indians and soldiers,” indicating their immersion in copious stories of “Indian wars.” The boys’ play reveals their awareness of the usual outcome of these battles: the soldiers, “had all won great distinction, devastating Indians materially, and they wished the war to go on as planned. They explained vociferously that it was proper for the soldiers always to thrash the Indians” (55). The large boys “explain” that soldiers always thrash Indians, but no explanation is given: rather than analyzing the logic behind this statement, the boys simply take it as true, parroting adult narratives of Indian-white relations. The small

20 “His New Mittens” was published in *McClure’s Magazine* in 1898, after *The Monster* (also set in Whilomville) but before the 13 other Whilomville stories, which were serialized from August 1899 to August 1900 in *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*. 
boys, too, accept the theory that soldiers always win over Indians and articulate their desire for a change within this paradigm: “the little boys did not pretend to deny the truth of this argument; they confined themselves to the simple statement that, in that case, they wished to be soldiers” (55). A reasonable choice in boyhood play, perhaps, but a troubling narrative outside the boundaries of the boy book.

Indeed, although the boys’ simple acceptance of the argument that soldiers always win might seem innocuous in isolated Whilomville, their paradigm of weak Indians and triumphant soldiers overrides the actual events of the game so that representation becomes entirely untrustworthy. Horace, a small boy and therefore an Indian, quickly learns that he must both physically and discursively lose no matter what happens. Horace hits a larger boy with a snowball, but the boy denies being hit and therefore “dead.” Nobody witnesses the hit, and “Horace's opponent [goes] about contending, ‘He never touched me. He never came near me. He never came near me.’” (56). The “formidable” boy then tells Horace: “‘What was you? An Indian? Well, then, you're dead -- that's all. He hit you. I saw him.’” Thus although Horace insists, “‘He never came within a mile of me --,’” the declaration that Horace is dead, rather than the actual event of an Indian killing a soldier, creates the reality of the situation (56). In the narrative perpetuated by the powerful--Indians always lose--Horace, an Indian, has no history; the mechanically reproduced idea of the Indian overwhelms the particularity of his situation.

When Horace eventually quits the game at his mother’s command, he remains entrapped in this static category of “Indian” and contends with a colonialist aggression in which his only options are to play the dependent child or fight and lose. Horace had
joined the snowball fight at the risk of dirtying his new red mittens, which his mother had warned him not to get wet on his way home from school. Horace’s attempt to escape her punishment for disobedience--making him eat dinner in the kitchen alone--by running away to California evokes both Longfellow’s despairing, vengeful Sioux and reports of a number of so-called Indian “hold-outs” who refused to move to reservations, most famously the Apache Geronimo. Horace, “resolved not to sell his vengeance for bread, cold ham, and a pickle,” refuses to eat his dinner (58). Like a stereotypical Indian warrior, he dreams of “deadly retribution,” a “slaughter”--here, “of feelings”--that would make his mother repent (58). But when he leaves the kitchen for California, circumstances prevent him from moving far beyond a shed in the back yard. After the cold drives Horace out of the shed, he wanders to the nearby family butcher’s shop, and the butcher, the ultimate caricature of virile masculinity with his huge hands, booming voice, and surroundings of raw meat, promptly escorts Horace back home, where his mother is literally sick with worry. Thus both forceful masculinity and reformist femininity overcome Horace, who, in the end, plays the child, running to his prostrate mother on the couch and crying “Ma-ma! Ma-ma! Oh ma-ma!” (61). With no options for making his own history other than control by others, Horace has no choice but to remain a caricature of an Indian.

With its bleak view of the power of discourse, Crane’s boy story demonstrates that popular clichés and myths guide representations of Indians and white Indian-fighters. Rather than align boys with Indians in an isolated, primitive state, “Mittens” demonstrates that such an alignment relies on the discursive annihilation of both Indian
histories and eye-witness accounts. Such an annihilation renders Indians the helpless mass that supports the mythology of Quick, Custer, and the boy soldiers, creating Manichean sides where the Indian side will always lose. In contrast, Eastman’s *Indian Boyhood*, serialized from 1893-94 in *St Nicholas*, emphasizes that realist accounts trouble the mechanical creation of white and Indian categories—soldiers who always win, Indians who always lose. Eastman’s “Indian boyhood” is grounded in processes of fact-finding, witnessing, and narrative experimentation that demonstrate an Indian realism and encourage readers to explore a new ontology in Indian-white relations.

The Santee boys of *Indian Boyhood* play games that, unlike the Indians/soldiers fight in “Mittens,” derive from the boys’ immediate observations and thus express uncertainty rather than the fixity of sides. “Our knowledge of the pale-face was limited,” Eastman writes, “but we had learned that he brought goods whenever he came and that our people exchanged furs for his merchandise” (61). They paint some of the boys faces with white clay, and these “white” boys trade pretend commodities—“sugar, wild beans for coffee, dried leaves for tea, pulverized earth for gunpowder, pebbles for bullets and clear water for the dangerous ‘spirit water’”—to the Indian boys for “skins of squirrels, rabbits, and small birds” (61). Even as actual wars are occurring between Native people and the U.S., and Eastman’s Dakota tribe was in exile in British Columbia for this very reason, Eastman and his friends play based on what they have seen of white men’s practices, imitating everyday encounters that arise from grounded experience rather than distant, imprecise narratives.

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21 *St. Nicholas* was a popular children’s magazine, “still described as the finest literary magazine ever produced for children” (Kidd 102).
The war games the Dakota boys play in *Indian Boyhood* likewise function not based on sides but on the learning of the player. One such game is “a war upon the nests of wild bees,” in which the boys imagine the bees’ nest is a tribal foe, sneak up on it, and try to destroy it (54-6). Once during this game, Eastman’s “quite small” friend Little Wound is unable to reach the nest “until it had been well trampled upon and broke and the insects had made a counter charge with such vigor as to repulse and scatter” the Sioux boys (68). Little Wound does not want “to retreat without any honors,” so he jumps on the nest and yells out his feat, following the Sioux custom of doing so on the battlefield: “I, the brave Little Wound,” he declares, “today kill the only fierce enemy!” (68). However, he then screams “as if stabbed to the heart” because the bees begin to sting him, and, following the advice of his friends, jumps into the water (68). Because he screamed, Little Wound is not allowed to join in the mock scalp dance the boys hold after the bee battle and instead sits on a log, ashamed that his weakness “would be apt to recur to him many times in the future” (68). Yet although Little Wound has to sit out, he does so because the consequence corresponds to what actually happened. Unlike Horace in “His New Mittens,” this small boy does not lose because he is assumed to be inherently weaker. Instead, he has more work to do in cultivating bravery and can address his weakness over time: his situation is mutable and based on his own actions.

Adult games in the text reflect these practical circumstances of play. When Eastman’s tribe plays lacrosse, the master of ceremonies announces that “if the Wahpetonwans should win, this little warrior [Eastman] shall bear the name Ohiyesa (winner) through life; but if the Light Lodges should win, let the name be given to any
child appointed by them” (32). Eastman had been named “Hakadah,” or “the pitiful last” at his birth, because his mother died in childbirth and he was therefore her last child. Here, the match provides an opportunity for a renaming based on the outcome of events. During the game, “First one side, then the other would gain an advantage, and then it was lost, until the herald proclaimed that it was time to change the ball. No victory was in sight for either side” (35). When Eastman’s side does win and he gains the name “Ohiyesa,” the master of ceremonies remarks that “this was a friendly contest in which each band must assert its prowess” (37). The winner is not a side, but rather Eastman himself, who has gained from the Santees’ productive interpretation of the event as a naming ceremony with real-world consequences.

The boys in Indian Boyhood not only learn through play and sport but also cultivate representational modes through interactive processes of reasoning, storytelling, and record-keeping. Eastman’s father was absent in his boyhood, believed to have been hung after the Dakota “war” of 1862 discussed in the previous chapter, as was his mother, who died at his birth. Despite their absence, Eastman’s uncle and grandmother carefully develop Eastman’s knowledge by guiding him yet urging him to make his own decisions and observations. His uncle frequently “catechizes” him in the evening, asking questions about what he had observed that day, such as “‘How do you know that there are fish in yonder lake?’” (44). According to Eastman, his uncle did not expect immediate, correct answers to such questions, but aimed to make Eastman “observant and a good student of nature” through an ongoing process of knowledge formation based on observation of local phenomena (45). In this case, he encourages Eastman to take a comprehensive view
of the lake and the natural processes that shape it, asking him, “What do you think of the little pebbles grouped together under the shallow water? and what made the pretty curved marks in the sandy bottom and the little sand-banks? Where do you find fish-eating birds? Have the inlet and the outlet of a lake anything to do with the question?” (44). Where in “His New Mittens” the boys’ logic that Indians always lose is portable because it is not empirically based, here Eastman gains a logic that is portable because he must consider the material details of any particular context.

Eastman describes an ongoing, dynamic process of information transmission among the Santees in which *Indian Boyhood*, in its integration of oral narrative with written text, participates. Like his own teachers, Eastman does not tell his young audience what to think but relates stories that encourage them to consider all aspects of a situation. He details interactive processes of storytelling between himself and both his uncle and the “preserver of history and legend” Smoky Day. Such moments encourage his audience to view history as a process of telling, able to be questioned and altered according to the situation and the teller. Smoky Day is “a living book of the traditions and history of his people;” linking physical records with oral tradition, he makes use of “bundles of small sticks, notched and painted,” which represent “the important events of history, each of which was marked with the number of years since that particular event occurred” (99). Similar to the Lakota winter counts, Smoky Day’s sticks record events like “the year when so many stars fell from the sky,” a reference to the Leonoid meteor shower of 1833 (99). The sticks provide a tangible reference for Smoky Day’s stories of the Santee past, which might vary with the audience and situation: for example, he tells
Eastman particular stories of Eastman’s paternal ancestors, “still among the bravest of [his] tribe” (100).

The young Eastman cultivates a similar manner of storytelling that combines material references with oral narratives. His uncle tells him the story of “Manitoshaw’s Hunting,” about a young Cree woman who goes hunting to feed her starving people and kills two moose with the help of her grandmother’s advice. In the process, she falls in love with Kangiska, a Sioux warrior and thus a tribal enemy who nevertheless leaves his tribe to live with Manitoshaw and hunt for her people. Eastman’s uncle sets the scene for each part of the story; when describing the spot where Manitoshaw killed the moose, Eastman’s uncle notes that he has “seen this very place many a time,” which, Eastman points out, “gave to the story an air of reality” (172). Each time Eastman questions the facts of the story, his uncle replies with explanations based in the material world, such as that Manitoshaw was able to kill the moose because she was so close to them, and they did not smell her because she was downwind (176). His uncle’s connecting of the narrative to physical space encourages Eastman, listening to the story, to engage with it in space: he takes “a stick and began to level off the ashes in front of [him], and to draw a map of the lake, the outlet, the moose and Manitoshaw” (175). Linking visual understanding with oral telling, Eastman generates his own storytelling process, a process, we have seen, he would enact in his own telling of history. The story, Eastman learns, also has a particular relevance for his people’s current situation; when he asks, “Is that story true, uncle?,” his uncle responds: “Yes, the facts are well known. There are
some Sioux mixed bloods among the Crees to this day who are descendants of Kangiska” (180).

This cultivation of realist modes serves the Santees well in their interactions with whites. Eastman describes one afternoon in camp when a scout arrives “with the announcement that a body of United States troops [is] approaching!” (209). This report causes “uneasiness,” but the Santees examine the scout carefully, during which time another scout arrives with a different story: “He declared that the moving train reported as a body of troops was in reality a train of Canadian cart” (210). “The two reports differed so widely,” Eastman writes, “that it was deemed wise to send out more runners to observe this moving body closely, and ascertain definitely its character” (210). Eastman continues to describe the process of investigation almost in excess; the runners report that “there are no bright metals in the moving train to send forth flashes of light,” and the “separate bodies are short, like carts with ponies, ... not like the long, four-wheeled wagon drawn by four or six mules, that the soldiers use” (210). The details continue, until the Santees conclude that they were “soon to meet with the bois brules, French call their mixed bloods,” rather than with U.S. soldiers (210). This slow process of careful delineation of one national group from another, Eastman suggests, is crucial in any exchange. Realism is a political move, both for the Santees and for Eastman. Practices of narration must be compared and unpacked in order to arrive at alternative possibilities for Indian-white interaction.
Together, Crane and Eastman’s writings demonstrate that Indians have a much more significant place in American literary realism that has yet been acknowledged. With exceedingly different relationships to actual Indians, Crane and Eastman came to similar conclusions about Indians, myth, events, and representation. Their texts demonstrate that, by reading boy books and journalistic writings from this period without attention to actual Indian presences and writings and Indian-related events, scholars risk replicating the reductive memorials that erase Indians from modern America. Scholars should begin to explore the relationship of Indian presences to questions of truth, narrative, and representation in literature, rather than ignore the remarkable impact that Indians, however subdued on reservations, stereotyped as romantic, or viewed through a racist ideological lens, continued to have in the face of extreme physical and discursive trials.
Epilogue

Stephen Crane’s exposure of how mass-produced Indians erase Native knowledge in the service of national ideology remains pertinent today. Tom Quick’s monument and the little boys’ jeers in “His New Mittens” evoke a similar, if less sinister, approach to Indians within present-day, mainstream American consumer culture. From sports mascots to “sexy” Pocahontas Halloween costumes to “tribal” fashion trends current at the time of this dissertation’s writing, “Indianness” continues to be produced by a nation in which, as Eastman wrote a century ago, “the dollar is the measure of value” (Deep Woods 194). A salient recent example is the dispute between the Navajo Nation and clothing retailer Urban Outfitters, which, as of October 13, 2011, was selling 21 products with the appellation “Navajo” attached to them. These products included printed oversize sweaters, a “Navajo Hipster Panty,” and even a wrapped flask (Figure 13). On June 30, 2011, the Navajo Nation sent Urban Outfitters’ CEO Glen Senk a cease-and-desist order demanding that the appellation “Navajo” be removed from these products. An attorney for the Navajo Nation remarked, “When products that have absolutely no connection to the Navajo Nation, its entities, its people, and their products are marketed and retailed under the guise that they are Navajo in origin, the Navajo Nation does not regard this as benign or trivial” (qtd. in Fonseca, par. 5). The Navajo Nation called for a grounding of its associations, a re-attachment of its name to place and community. As of October 20,
2011, Urban Outfitters had removed the name “Navajo” from the 21 items on its website, although it continued to sell these products.

Evocative of geometric Navajo designs but empty of Navajo history and knowledge, the patterns on the mass-produced Urban Outfitters items read like the vanishing Indian, the noble savage, and the brooding Indian warrior. As I hope to have demonstrated in this dissertation, studying those stereotypes without reference to actual Native presences, practices, and knowledge traditions risks allowing the vacant image to stand in for the particular Native people that have maintained their identities over a long history of colonization. Beyond their legal rights to the Navajo name (the Navajo Nation
holds at least 10 trademarks on its name), the “Navajo Nation, its entities, its people” fear that the mass production of “Navajo”-identified products will replace interest in and knowledge of their actual community. Studies of Indians in literature that do not look beyond stereotypes and Euro-American ideology to the places, actions, and intellectual traditions according to which one can locate tribal and national input and influence risk a similar elision. Indeed, seeing only “Indians” in writings by Byrd, Wheelock, Sigourney, Irving, and Crane denies history to groups and individuals who identified as Catawba, Nottoway, Meherrin, Oneida, Mohegan, Osage, Pawnee, and Lakota and who asserted those identities to the point that they shaped a wide range of American literary forms.

Instead, we must read generic images of Indians as contested and look to the sources that create other narratives. I have argued that scholars must consider images of “Indianness” alongside the ways in which particular Native groups and individuals, with their own histories and methods of knowledge production, contributed to American literary traditions and disrupted stereotypes. Such an analysis opens up space for new understandings of American national identity and literature. Indeed, bringing Native knowledge and interests to bear on American literature can revive and rejuvenate our approaches to American literary history. Charles Eastman identified himself as an “American” but, like Luther Standing Bear, deemed it crucial to incorporate a “Native school of thought” into American society. In his continuation of his autobiography, *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916), Eastman wrote, “I am an Indian; and while I have learned much from civilization, for which I am grateful, I have never lost my Indian sense of right and justice.” He advocated “development and progress along social and
spiritual lines, rather than those of commerce, nationalism, or material efficiency” (195). Eastman and Standing Bear’s calls to reevaluate America along Indian lines emerged out of their retaining the sources of their Native knowledge during and after interactions with mainstream America. Such knowledge persisted and influenced not only these Sioux men who had been immersed in it during childhood but, I have shown, American literary forms throughout the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries. It has served as the inspiration for this project, which has attempted to reconfigure American literary history along Native lines by locating a long history of intercultural literary production.

Indian tribes today, despite a long, shared history of colonial oppression, remain in situations as diverse as they were prior to European emigration to North America. Finding a place for their particular histories in literary studies can help overcome widespread, non-Native ignorance about their current presences and issues. Moreover, tribes themselves, in their efforts to gain Federal recognition and thereby reclaim much-needed territory and resources, are “reorganizing archives and activating expressive possibilities in old materials” (Glover, “Early American Archives” 181). Reorganizing our own archive to consider the presences and contributions of countless diverse Native tribes, nations, and individuals can aid them in this effort. We can begin such a project by locating more deliberately what Native author and critic Thomas King (Cherokee) calls the “disjunction between reality and imagination” when it comes to Indians, between something “alive and kicking”--actual Indians--and something that “has never existed”--“the” Indian (53). The Navajo claimed by Urban Outfitters has never existed, but we do not assume that because of these products a Navajo nation does not exist. In
our studies of Indians in literature, we likewise must interweave images of Indians with
the particularities of Native people and their cultural traditions. Such a project is crucial,
for as King reminds us, “For those ... who are Indians, this disjunction between reality
and imagination is akin to life and death” (54).


“Lo, the Poor Indian!” *Chicago Tribune* 19 Nov. 1862: 3. Web 11 July 2011.


“Publisher’s Preface.” Bull vii-viii.


---. *Continuation of the Narrative of the Indian-Charity School in Lebanon, in Connecticut; From the Year 1768, to the Incorporation of it with Dartmouth-College, and Removal and Settlement of it in Hanover, in the Province of New Hampshire*. 1771. Web. 6 Aug. 2011.


