Remaking American Indian histories : recognizing their voices, stories, lives
by Miranda MF Buckmaster

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History
Montana State University
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Abstract:
Mainstream histories often do not include detailed and effective narrations about the lives and experiences of American Indian women in North America from the era of contact to the twenty-first century. This thesis critiques historical methodologies that ignore American Indians, their histories, and their roles in the evolution of North American societies. The body of the text focuses on historiography and methodology. It also offers solutions historians and other scholars may consider when writing American Indian histories, including the use of interdisciplinary methods and ethical research of American Indian oral traditions. This thesis is concluded with a brief study of popular culture to illustrate how applying alternative methodologies to mainstream scholarship could help scholars to create more inclusive historical texts.
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APPROVAL

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This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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Abstract

Mainstream histories often do not include detailed and effective narrations about the lives and experiences of American Indian women in North America from the era of contact to the twenty-first century. This thesis critiques historical methodologies that ignore American Indians, their histories, and their roles in the evolution of North American societies. The body of the text focuses on historiography and methodology. It also offers solutions historians and other scholars may consider when writing American Indian histories, including the use of interdisciplinary methods and ethical research of American Indian oral traditions. This thesis is concluded with a brief study of popular culture to illustrate how applying alternative methodologies to mainstream scholarship could help scholars to create more inclusive historical texts.
CHAPTER ONE

HIDDEN LIVES: WRITING THE HISTORIES OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The American Indian has been written about by hundreds of authors of white blood or possibly by an Indian of mixed blood who has spent the greater part of his life away from a reservation. These are not in a position to write accurately about the struggles and disappointments of the Indian...No one is able to understand the Indian race like an Indian.

~CHIEF STANDING BEAR in My People the Sioux

The idea for this essay originated from the study of several contemporary histories of Early America and several articles about the influence of Christianity in American Indian women’s lives in the colonial era. Reading these studies underlined the absence of American Indian women in the metahistories of North America and the United States. In fact, those readings demonstrated that American Indians, women and men, were largely unaccounted for in most mainstream histories. Where did these people go? How did their lives change after contact? What roles did they play in nation-building? According to the portrayals of some twentieth-century historians, Europeans peacefully settled a practically uninhabited continent, and Native communities obligingly stepped back from the scene to let the newcomers improve upon and overcome the wilderness with European civilization.

The questions above served as a catalyst for envisioning a project that would be characterized by a “thicker” retelling of American Indian women’s experiences in North American societies. Initially, it was proposed that this thesis would encompass a brief
review of the historiography of American Indian studies followed by a brief discussion of alternative methodologies for studying American Indian women. The bulk of the project would analyze and rewrite histories of Northern-Plains women using the previously suggested methodology. Instead, this thesis is engulfed, almost entirely, in a critique of methodology. Upon further investigation, the problems in existing scholarship about Natives turned out to be more deeply engrained in Western intellectual heritages and more widely spread throughout historical scholarship than was originally imagined. The author’s initial misconception (or ignorance) of the subject directly reflects the problems of history writing that this thesis illuminates and confronts. The overarching difficulty is twofold. First, how can scholars become aware of their intellectual locations and the influences of their own cultures on their thinking and how might that impede their work? Second, after recognizing and acknowledging their locations, how can they contend with that impediment? Western society has been overwhelmingly effective in hiding the histories of the “Other.”

This thesis critiques Western historical methodologies and their treatment of American Indian histories, then provides more efficient and comprehensive techniques that scholars can use to answer their own questions about those histories as well as larger histories of North America. It examines hegemonic tools that have veiled American Indian histories in scholarship written by Western-trained historians. It focuses on European and Euro-American ideologies (specifically those that are linked to racism and gender biases) that have been used in contact zones to eradicate, or at least attempt to control, indigenous populations. The analysis demonstrates how these same ideologies
have infiltrated the writing of history, making the discipline itself a contact zone, and how the activities in that contact zone have detrimentally affected contemporary perceptions of American Indians and especially American Indian women in scholarship.

This thesis emphasizes the role of two separate knowledges that intermingle in the contact zone of United States history: Western knowledge and Native knowledge. Native knowledge includes oral literatures, Native histories, ceremony and spiritual beliefs. It also includes bodies of information and intellectual methodologies that have developed over centuries in conjunction with and resistance to Euro-American culture and science. For instance, this thesis offers examples of how Native scholars such as Paula Gunn Allen and LeAnne Howe have maintained their own perceptions of humanity, environment, and culture when they approach and create historical scholarship. Discussing Natives and their perspectives of American Indian histories and North American histories can alter the activities in the contact zone so that marginalized people can be more influential in the construction of mainstream histories. Native knowledge inhabits the contact zone as fully as Western knowledge yet its role in North American histories is largely unknown. This thesis creates a platform from which scholars can recognize and challenge hegemonic constructions of history.

Chapter one will begin the analysis by introducing the theory of Western intellectual heritages, reviewing the rise of Western science and Western knowledge, and assessing its impact on Western history. It will describe how notions of “classification” and “progress” have formed the basis of Eurocentrism and imperialism and how those
ideologies are reflected in metahistories. It will discuss how the rise of Western science has led historians to value written historical sources over oral sources and how this valuing of knowledge perpetuates colonial acts in twenty-first century scholarship. The chapter will utilize gender as an analytical tool to explain how Eurocentrism and progress have worked to subvert the importance of women, especially non-Anglo-Saxon women, in the histories of North America, and how valuing oral sources provides resistance to that marginalization.

Chapter two will address the issue of finding available source material to study American Indian women’s experiences. Studying women through the analytical framework of gender alone is insufficient, and this section will show why historians must complicate their work by including race and class in their analysis to better understand women’s experiences within their particular communities. The chapter will introduce the idea of moral geographies to explain how differently Europeans and/or Euro-Americans, and American Indians perceived their environments and cultures. This will explain why written sources alone cannot provide the information historians need to write thicker accounts of women’s histories. The chapter will end with a brief review of the work of some “New Indian history” scholars, point out some of their theories’ strengths and weaknesses, and suggest where scholars can go from their proposed foundations.

Venturing from the “New Indian history,” scholars can begin to explore how the conventional tools of race, class, and gender can be strengthened in American Indian studies by asking how Natives would write their histories. Chapter three approaches this question by arguing that Natives themselves need to be recognized as an integral part of
the historical process. Native knowledge and oral sources must be used in any analysis of American Indian women. This chapter will compare the differences between Western and Native bodies of knowledge and record-keeping. It will define the differences between oral histories and oral traditions and illuminate some of the limitations of Western methodologies in studying oral traditions. Overall, the chapter will convey the immensity of Native knowledge and oral traditions and it will challenge the notion that oral sources are less valuable than written material.

Although oral traditions seemingly offer scholars unlimited resources to study American Indian women, this actually is not the case. There are many ethical considerations scholars must heed when studying cultures other than their own. For instance, not all Native knowledge is accessible, to be collected and publicly displayed by Western, or even Native scholars. This is the subject of chapter four: the careful treatment of Native knowledge. This section will begin by critiquing ethnographic practices and delineating some of the dangers about which scholars need to be aware so that colonial practices are not perpetuated in their scholarship. It will offer some methods scholars can use to critique their own studies and resulting scholarship in order that American Indian women's histories receive the meticulous and conscientious analysis and documentation they deserve.

Finally, chapter five will contextualize this study by offering a historical example of a contact zone where American Indians and Euro-Americans converged to retell the story of the American West. Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show was a form of nineteenth-century entertainment that modeled the ideals of the United States and the
dominant culture in its retelling of the nation’s struggle to conquer the continent. It created the hegemonic culture’s metahistory of the American West and the activities that took place in that contact zone. At the same time, the show was its own contact zone, where Euro-Americans, American Indians, and others negotiated relationships within the confines of popular imagery. This contact zone within a contact zone illustrates the assumptions Euro-Americans made about their own histories according to the ideologies that saturated the show’s messages about what it meant to be an “American” in the nineteenth century. The Wild West show was centered on larger nationalistic, dominant class ideologies, specifically Manifest Destiny. That idea has become part of the larger Western intellectual heritage in which scholars find themselves draped. The displays in the show misrepresented American Indian women and limited Native agency in portraying their own cultures, and this chapter will examine the parallels between this pervasive form of popular culture and the contact zone of writing history.

This thesis attempts to explain why American Indian women have been hidden in North American metahistories. It also attempts to offer some solutions for the inherent problems of Western methodologies—to pare down the weaker components and rebuild with more complicated analytical frameworks, interdisciplinary approaches, ethical conscientiousness, and Native knowledge and theory. Although this project is less about American Indians and American Indian women than it originally set out to be, it tackles the foundational work of methodological critique and reflexivity that must occur before a useful and contributive historical study about American Indian women can be written. It is regrettable that the document’s relatively small amount of available space and limited
time frame do not allow a second part to be written, one that would target a historical
study using the proposed methodological techniques. Therefore, the reader should
consider this thesis to be a launch pad for further study as opposed to a terminal
undertaking. In other words, this critique fails to produce the historical examination
envisioned within its discussion, yet it provides a methodological cornerstone. It is
grounded by asking questions about American Indian women and their histories and
experiences, and by observing popular representations of women, and asking how these
things continue to affect the writing of history.
CHAPTER TWO

THE WESTERN INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE AND ITS FORBIDDEN LANDSCAPE

There is a Natoas bundle opened up and on display in the Museum of the Plains Indian, a government-owned institution located in Browning, Montana, on the reservation of our Blackfoot relatives. One year we traveled to that reservation with Mrs. Rides-at-the-Door...She was shocked when we brought her to the museum and showed her the opened bundle. To her that bundle represented the sacred life to which she has been devoted, for the sake of her people...She nearly cried when she said: ‘Do these museum people have no respect for anything?’

~BEVERLY HUNGRY WOLF (Blackfoot) in The Ways of My Grandmothers

Too often, historians have written the histories of American Indians, and American Indian women in particular, by seeking a firm, linear path, shouldered by “authenticated” evidence. In other words, historians have mainly collected and used information that has been transmitted onto paper in a given time period. Historians have considered these written materials to be legitimate primary resources for academic studies, to the exclusion of many other available historical resources. A piece of evidence that is a seemingly unchanging and immovable artifact, which only upon examination is subjected to the scholar’s interpretation, is the historian’s primary source of choice. Archives, libraries, and museums around the world are stacked with these kinds of artifacts, or flagstones, from which historians and other academics can leap, to and fro, in an attempt to pave the

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1 This thesis will use the term “American Indian” and “Native” interchangeably as opposed to “Native American” or simply “Indian” according to a statement made by the author Sherman Alexie (Spokane/Coeur d’Alene) on an episode of 60 Minutes (July 2001). He stated that anyone could be a Native American if they were born in the United States, but only specific individuals, those claiming a pre-colonial cultural and genetic heritage, can be called American Indian. The redundancy of the two terms, and other terminology in the text, is intentional and supportive of the main argument.
way to an accurate and inclusive account of North American history. To these limited resources historians have applied their analyses of race, class, or gender, which necessarily determined which way the academic path turned. Therefore, this sort of road building, which lacked a complete set of workable tools, mandated which people's histories have been included in North American metahistories. Those metahistories exclude, and continue to exclude, Native women. This omission (in whole or in part) of the lives of American Indian women has occurred even in revisionist North American histories. Yet, as this thesis will demonstrate, certain historians are searching out new methodologies for writing thicker North American histories.

Why American Indian women's histories have been glossed over can be detected historiographically, by reviewing the role of history in wider Western systems of knowledge that include all mainstream intellectual disciplines.² The ways in which Western academics think of the world, and the creation and structure of Western systems of knowledge, are linked to what we may call a "Western intellectual heritage." Intellectual heritage, in terms of Western scholarship, is comprised of the methodological and ideological structures that encompass the educations, past and present, of Western scholars. Many of the methods and ideologies, as we shall see, are crucial tools in any historical investigation, and like the Western tools scientists use in their experimentation, intellectual scholars would no longer be able to make sense of the past or continue to work towards an inclusive retelling of humanity’s story without them. Yet, this

² This thesis will use the term “Western” to define the cultural and intellectual tendencies that have been attributed to Europeans and European descendents in all parts of the world. Although this generic terminology is limiting and risks perpetuating a potentially harmful binary (Western versus non-Western) it is used in this scholarship for the sake of clarity.
intellectual heritage also includes the devaluing ideological legacies of “progress” and Eurocentrism that impede the historian’s search for new ways to understand American Indians and their culture within a national framework. Like scientists, historians and other intellectuals must continue to struggle against hegemonic manipulations of Western methods and knowledge. To understand how the intellectual heritage both subverts and supports the search for American Indian histories, the origination and rise of Western knowledge and its notions of progress and Eurocentrism must be reviewed.

In the United States, and within Western culture as a whole, the discipline of history, its intellectual heritage and its methodologies, originated in the rise of what historians Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob have termed, the heroic model of science, because it “made scientific geniuses into cultural heroes.” Some of these cultural heroes are Galilei Galileo, Sir Isaac Newton, and Charles Darwin. These scientists introduced new ways of explaining the order and mechanics of the earth, therefore changing people’s perceptions of the world. Valuing reason over all other human faculties, eighteenth century Newtonian science was a revolution in thought, which extracted the “natural” from the “superstitious” and made the “true,” “rational” world knowable through scientific experimentation and observation. Appleby and her colleagues wrote, “The heroic model equated science with reason: disinterested, impartial, and, if followed closely, a guarantee of progress in this world.” These tenets and the organization of the Western model are consequential cornerstones in the development of intellectual heritages.

4 Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, 15.
The roots of Western organizations of knowledge can be found in the strategies of observation, collecting specimens, and record-keeping for students of natural history in eighteenth-century Europe. Mary Louise Pratt argued that these European strategies for knowledge-making are critical components of Eurocentrism that can be linked to two events in Europe that occurred in 1735. Carl Linnaeus’s *Systema Naturae* (The System of Nature) was published in that year, and the international La Condamine expedition for scientific exploration began. Each of these events played a large role in modeling science heroically as well as setting the footings for Western notions of progress and Eurocentric behavior.

The state-sponsored La Condamine expedition “marks the onset of an era of scientific travel and interior exploration that in turn suggests shifts in Europe’s conception of itself and its global relations.” The La Condamine expedition was organized to settle the dispute between Cartesian geography and Newtonian theories about the shape of the earth by sending teams to Lapland and South America. Although the question was answered before members of the mission returned to Europe, the trip signifies a shift in scientific inquiry. Europeans were applying theories to field work on a global scale, which led them to, among many other things, create new maps and discover new sea routes, and inscribe developing collective notions of Eurocentrism, and the superiority of Anglo-Saxons. A new system of classification worked hand-in-hand with the growing number of scientific expeditions.

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6 Pratt, 24.
Carl Linnaeus was a Swedish naturalist who developed a system of sexual classification for botanical specimens in the early eighteenth century. During some of his early work he traveled to “Lapland,” Europe’s most northern region, where he was inspired by the richness of the land and the admirable life-ways of the Sami people. While there “He...observed the areas natural resources, but was sad when he realized they were not utilized to their full advantage.” Linnaeus’s work began amongst a rash of nationalist and scientific expeditions, which were supported by several European nations, to observe and record every species or natural event contained in the knowable world. Linnaeus and others then hoped to use that knowledge to “discover” what they thought were the best ways to utilize the world’s natural resources, and therefore, set the world on a linear trajectory of ever-increasing progress. Scientific expeditions were the first of many steps European nations took to position themselves as world managers, so to speak, who had self-appointed authority to decide what manner of living was preferable for all people. Expeditions enabled Europeans to discover and organize new knowledge.

Linnaeus’s classificatory system was one among many in use during the eighteenth century in which the vast amount of knowledge collected throughout the world could be organized. Those systems “created the task of locating every species on the planet, extracting it from its particular, arbitrary surroundings...and placing it in its appropriate spot in the system...with its new written, secular European name.” Already existing indigenous knowledge, like plant names and their medicinal uses, were

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8 Sörlin, 56.
9 Pratt, 31.
decontextualized, and given new meaning (names and uses) by Westerners, for Westerners. These appropriations of indigenous knowledge and material were justified in the Western mind by an overarching and growing trend in which Europeans believed that all valuable ideas and characteristics originated with European people. New organizational systems for accumulated knowledge and communications (collected specimens, written observations) about exploratory expeditions encouraged eighteenth-century Europeans to reshape their perceptions of the knowable world, and they continued to find ways to enforce and maintain Eurocentric ideologies.

While Europeans “discovered” and “archived” a new world, by exploring regions like North America where previously little was known by Westerners they necessarily re-discovered themselves as the global dominant culture within the progressive and seemingly limitless potential of the notions of the Enlightenment. Yet, as the Atlantic slave trade system among the African, American, and European continents illustrates, racism, too, was justified by Eurocentric ideologies and was unfortunately integrated with the new intellectual movement. Thus, Europeans did not limit their collections to the already problematic appropriations of artifacts and non-human organisms, but included among the specimens to be gathered, observed, and sometimes relocated were American Indians. American Indians sometimes traveled to Europe to be displayed as primitive peoples, like so many scientific artifacts. They were subjected the Europeans’ categorizing and decontextualizing schemes of progress, which further perpetuated Eurocentrism.
Inscriptions of Eurocentrism transferred easily to the North American colonies, and later to the United States where the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture needed to enforce notions of its racist and gendered hegemony to maintain overt institutions like slavery and to continue its massive conquest of, and settlement within, American Indian land. The intellectual side of Anglo-Saxon hegemony can be contextualized in the close inspection of what historical sources have been and are valued and used by Western scholars to write North American and American Indian histories. The training of Western historians is founded upon the previously outlined assumptions of progress and Eurocentrism that arose from the eighteenth-century expansion of Newtonian science and Linnaean classification. And like the fences erected in colonial New England, so too has a Western intellectual heritage constructed a concrete wall between Western/(valued) knowledge and non-Western/(devalued) American Indian knowledge. Yet, to the benefit of many cultures, including Western ones, the walls containing so-called valued knowledge are being eroded.

In recent years, historical methodology has been influenced by post-modernist thinkers whose “primary goal has been to challenge convictions about the objectivity of knowledge and the stability of language.”\(^\text{10}\) By exposing the subjectivity of knowledge and language so effectively as to change historical methods, the weaknesses of the scientific model’s heroics seem more what like Appleby and her colleagues have called the “clay feet of science.”\(^\text{11}\) Gender bias and racism interlaced with Western knowledge has tainted the Western intellectual heritage and now scholars of all cultural backgrounds

\(^{10}\) Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, 201.  
\(^{11}\) Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, 160.
are challenging the heritage. They are reconstructing narratives that draw in previously marginalized groups of people such as American Indians. Although scholars are composing revisionist narratives that deconstruct the hegemonically manipulated underpinnings of a Western intellectual heritage, the problem of the availability of resources and the biases of written records in this new kind of reconstruction remains. Before the twentieth century, white upper and middle class citizens, missionaries and church officials, and the employees of government agencies most often created primary written historical sources in the United States. The experiences of American Indians have been teased out of these documents. Sometimes the resulting scholarship has been supplemented by the works of academics in other disciplines, such as anthropology. Yet anthropology, and other humanities disciplines originate from the same intellectual heritage as history, and therefore they face the same problems of knowledge creation and discovery in Western systems. Scholars working within these systems must not only sift out the hidden histories, but also the Eurocentric notions that weaken Western scholastic methods. In terms of American Indian histories, this can only be accomplished by the valuing of Native systems of knowledge and methods of study. Western perceptions of scholarship must expand to reformulate the definition of authenticated evidence to include the knowledge of Natives as shared on their own terms.

Historians of all cultural backgrounds are confronted with the same Eurocentric biases in source material, whether written documentation, material culture, or ethnography. Because of the way resources have been handled in the past, twenty-first century scholars are also plagued by terminal forms of the organization of knowledge that
perpetuate the devaluing of non-Western historical sources like oral traditions. Patricia Nelson Limerick wrote, “When academic territories were parceled out in the early twentieth century, anthropology got the tellers of tales and history got the keepers of written records.” Not only are the people scholars study subjected to this parceling out, but the chasm between the disciplines of history and anthropology and their preferences for either written sources, material culture, or ethnography, further hinders the historian’s potential usage of oral tradition and other forms of American Indian histories. For now, it is important to note the parallels between the tragedy of European settlers carving up already inhabited lands in North America and the more abstract, yet no less potent, territorial divisions that have been staked between intellectual disciplines and their respective methodologies. Both these phenomena were influenced by the ideologies of Eurocentrism and the notion of progress.

To make this argument concerning the problems of source material more accessible, an example of a potential case study will illustrate the difficulties inherent to a Western intellectual heritage. If a historian were to write an account of a late nineteenth century Native Lakota woman’s experiences only whispers could be found in written sources of the woman’s experiences. They would be inaudible to the scholar if she or he relied solely on primary written and/or material historical sources, because those sources would not address the cultural aspects of American Indian life. In generalized terms, the scholar’s project is to reconstruct the woman’s cultural world within the framework of U.S. federal policy which determined the potential relocation of her community and its

coerced assimilation into a nation whose dominate culture claimed membership in western European cultural and genetic heritages. This would be a precarious project for any twenty-first century scholar, no matter his or her background, since more than a hundred years separates the scholar from the subject. Yet, Western methodologies alone cannot flesh out this particular woman’s story—nor should they. Since this woman’s experiences included the actions of people from two different worlds, a co-opting of these two cultures’ knowledges and methods are required to write this particular history.

To reroute the study and sever the pathways that perpetuate Western biases toward tangible evidence, written or material, the scholar must ask how the woman’s cultural group recorded its own acknowledgment of past events and how the people in that group ascribed importance to those events. The answers, in part, can be found by investing academic value in oral tradition as a historical source. Native oral traditions are various forms of the continuous and repetitive storytelling of events that almost, if not all, American Indians have used for centuries to track the history of their people, including their origins of existence and important components of their culture. This form of shared knowledge among Native peoples in North America transmits the knowledge and experiences of ancestors and living community members from one generation to the next. Oral tradition differs from ethnography and oral history (a topic which will be discussed in detail in chapter three) in that oral tradition is a more encompassing and complex form of communication and record-keeping. Angela Cavender Wilson (Dakota) stated, “the
definition of oral history is contained within that of the oral tradition." Without including oral tradition as an imperative historical source, historians cannot recreate the lives and experiences of American Indians and American Indian women, much less write a larger, more inclusive history of North America.

Before oral tradition can become a valued resource to write American Indian women's histories, the gender biases of past and present North American histories must be reviewed. Because the intellectual heritage of Western knowledge influences the writing of history, women's history has been largely ignored until the latter half of the twentieth century. Women from subordinate cultures, such as American Indian women, have suffered the devaluing of their own histories even more so because a combination of sexist and racist ideologies within the dominant culture have mandated the ways in which history has been written until recent decades. For instance, Beverly Hungry Wolf wrote, "There are books that tell about horse stealing, buffalo hunting, and war raiding. But the reader would have to assume that Indian women lived boring lives of drudgery, and that their minds were empty of stories and anecdotes." Although the scholarship is now catching up by offering better representations of European women's histories, it is still behind in Native women's histories. The reasons for this can be partially explained by reviewing European gender expectations and European women's status as reflected in North America.

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European women during the Enlightenment were relegated to the private world of the home, which would be later known, in the Victorian Age, as the domestic sphere. European men’s roles were fulfilled in the public arena and therefore males dominated the European business of exploring, colonizing, and eventually settling and governing the North American continent. Women’s roles in North America, with a few exceptions, mirrored those of their Old World contemporaries and the public and private spheres of men and women maintained their rigid boundaries. Traditional European gender roles were transposed, by Westerners, onto Native cultures, and whites in North America mistakenly understood American Indian women’s status as paralleling European and Euro-American women’s gender status. However, the status of American Indian women was much more complex, and varied from Native culture to culture. For example, Navajo and Cherokee women held positions of respect within their communities, but perhaps the most well known variance from Western gender role constructions was the matrilineal societies of the Iroquois Nations, or the Hodenosaunee, in which women controlled land use and food stores, influenced government and intertribal diplomacy and warfare, and performed as religious and spiritual leaders. Laura Wittstock, a Hodenosaunee (Seneca) woman, explained some long-standing gender expectations among the Seneca,

There was cooperation, diversification of roles...There was a certain toughness in the women, who had a tremendous amount of power. Women selected the chiefs, and were consulted in political matters. Women elders were considered special people, with visionary powers. The most knowledgeable about our history and traditions were called ‘faithkeepers’ and taught the young. Men and women were equals.15

Using oral traditions as a historical resource combined with oral histories would clearly demonstrate women’s roles in Native cultures, and, when combined with gender and race analyses, oral sources would subvert the sexist and racist components of the Western intellectual heritage by revealing American Indian women’s roles among their particular Native groups.

New generations of scholars in various disciplines have begun to value histories and knowledge of non-Western subordinate cultures by answering the call of postmodernism and sharing its skepticism concerning the nature of how academic texts are produced. The scholars are able to do this while still maintaining the scholastic strengths of Western knowledge, such as the utilization of varied analytical tools, and the flexibilities of both making inquiries and drawing conclusions. Karen Ordahl Kupperman has written an interpretation of how American Indians (specifically those tribes who participated in early interactions with Europeans in pre-colonial North America) and Europeans may have envisioned one another when their two cultures began to meet on a regular basis in the late fifteenth century. Kupperman argued that as Europeans and Indians “observed each other, they thought in novel ways about their own identities...[they] were engaged in finding the appropriate self-definitions.”16 As the pre-colonial era eventually became the colonial era, Europeans emerged as the dominant culture in North America and their notions of the American Indians’ “appropriate self-definitions” took on racial and gendered connotations. In colonial North America and the United States, Europeans and Euro-Americans perceived race dualistically; there was a

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superior race (Anglo-Saxon) and in opposition to that superiority there was a multitude of inferior races (American Indian, African, Chinese, etc.). To complicate matters, Anglo-Saxon superiority informed the ideals of femininity and it was seen as having only two possible connotations (good or bad). This notion came to be reflected in genetically determined skin color and constructions of culture and good femininity was linked to “civilization,” while bad femininity was linked to “savagery.” American Indian women were most often only seen as occupying the bad/savage half of the female binary. Although the identities of all North American women changed over the centuries, more often than not, Western women more easily embodied prevailing notions of good/civilized womanhood. Native women were consistently compared to the Western model, if only to inform Anglo-Saxon women and American Indian women of their respective hegemonic statuses in the European colonies, and later, in the United States. The projection of European ideals of womanhood onto Native women also contributed to the erosion of their status within Native groups. The shifting identity of the savage/bad Native woman is undeniable in early Euro-American iconography that finds its way into colonial promotional material and other literature that was produced in the pre-colonial and colonial eras for European audiences.17

Later forms of Euro-American popular culture that portray Indian women, such as dime novels, Wild West shows, and World’s Fairs, perpetuated the feminine binary and became stages from which the dominant culture informed members of both the dominant and subordinate groups of a particular time period’s racial and gendered status quo,

17 See Kupperman, pp. 41-76 for a discussion on representations of American Indians produced by Europeans and the campaigns to generate support for American colonialism, from which the images originated.
further masking the experiences of American Indian women. The representations of Native women were not only displays for which women of all ethnicities could compare themselves, but they also became displays to bolster male dominance, Anglo-Saxon superiority, and nationalistic ideologies—all of which were integrated with the Western intellectual heritage. Chapter five will expand this argument and demonstrate how the ideologies of Eurocentrism and progress as embodied in Manifest Destiny were major components in popular culture and history writing. Subsequently, this thesis will discuss stereotypical interpretations of American Indians in Wild West shows and World’s Fairs have permeated the Western intellectual heritage and taken root in contemporary histories about American Indians and the American West.

Scholars of popular culture, such as Shari M. Huhndorf, have shown in their work that popular culture is mutable. Although much of it results in written evidence, artwork, and film, for example, which share the same static characteristics as written documents, the point at which that evidence was produced is illusive and, again, subject to the interpretations of the scholar. The uses of popular culture (if it is assumed that the dominant culture used its mediums, among other communications, to inform its audiences of the status quo) are attempts to control the ways in which people are thinking and making meanings within their societies. For instance, working class audience members at World’s Fairs, Stuart Hall would argue, were not “cultural dopes” but rather, like modern audiences, “they are perfectly capable of recognizing the way the realities of working-class life is reorganized, reconstructed, and reshaped by the way they are

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18 This thesis is concerned with analyzing forms of Euro-American popular culture, as opposed to American Indian forms or European forms. Any reference to popular culture, unless otherwise noted, should therefore be assumed to mean various forms of display produced by and for Euro-Americans.
represented."\textsuperscript{19} Working class audiences who experienced the nationalistic displays of World's Fairs were aware of social organization in the United States and its singular and overlapping hierarchies of race, gender, and class. Therefore, they were knowledgeable participants viewing the representations of various ethnicities of men and women from all over the globe—not humans with blank slates for minds upon which the dominant culture could imprint its prescriptions for society.\textsuperscript{20} Therefore, what the scholar is actually interpreting about popular culture is how it may have influenced its audience. How viewers of World's Fairs were internalizing and appropriating or rejecting the racial and gendered ideologies presented in the displays can only be theorized. Of the millions of viewers of World's Fairs, relatively few left records of their reactions.\textsuperscript{21}

The spectacles of American Indians in popular culture throughout the centuries and congruent representations in contemporary histories cannot be effectively analyzed without merging Native knowledge, such as oral tradition, and Western methodologies, such as interpreting written sources. Avoiding or misunderstanding the ways in which American Indian women think of themselves and their surroundings and the ways in which they relay their knowledge and histories only obfuscates the study of American Indian women. American Indian women's voices, perspectives, and oral histories not only resist their representations in popular culture but are necessary for the deconstruction of stereotypes.

\textsuperscript{20} Hall, 447.
Breaking from the constraints of written and material historical evidence and utilizing oral traditions and other forms of previously de-valued knowledge will allow American Indian women’s histories to be seen in Native terms rather than in terms of Western-trained historians’ imagined representations of Native women in primary texts, some of which are influenced by various forms of popular culture. Oral traditions will show that Native women were and are historical agents in the construction of North American histories and national identities. However, many historians have not yet acknowledged their own agency in the valuing of primary resources—in other words, they have not recognized, or at least have not been responsible for, their influences on which forms of knowledge will be studied, and which will be ignored. This is part of the Western intellectual legacy, which “discovers,” “collects,” and “categorizes” pieces of the knowable world. The particular specimens collected have not yet included American Indian oral traditions, perhaps because the inclusion potentially threatens the very foundations of the Western intellectual heritage. American Indians still inhabit the subordinate position of liminality and marginalization in North America. Yet, this is changing and American indigenous knowledge is slowly being valued in its own right to concomitantly occupy a new intellectual niche along with decolonized parts of Western systems of knowledge.

Considering the historical evidence, its biases, its omissions, and its intellectual heritage, historians who have been trained in strictly Western methods have reference points that are more unstable than they are perhaps willing to admit. Historians and other scholars of all ethnicities and backgrounds who have critiqued their methodologies have
benefited from viewing their particular intellectual heritages as ongoing processes of the creation and dissemination of knowledge. They will have recognized that, as historical agents themselves, they control the hegemony of Western systems of knowledge by contributing to, and/or taking away from the systems' methodological structures. This means that the trail to valuing oral tradition, and Native knowledge as a viable historical and anthropological resource is open to travel. Historians can apply some of their already firmly grounded analytical categories (race, class, gender) in combination with interdisciplinary approaches (anthropology, American studies, and cultural studies) to oral traditions to conscientiously challenge, strengthen, and rebuild their own intellectual heritages. To re-envision the lives and experiences of American Indian women and their contributions to a North American identity, histories must be written to include a retelling in American Indian terms, according to Native treatments of knowledge.
Numerous feminist scholars have expressed concern over the propensity of writers to ignore the heterogeneity among women, particularly women of color. American Indian women are especially multifaceted, and with few exceptions this aspect is overlooked.

~DEVON A. MIHESUAH (Choctaw) in *Commonalty of Difference*

History’s greatest strength is its ability to transform and retell the narratives of humanity’s past; its malleability in the hands of its crafters lends to a complexity of shape that is both daunting and inspiring. In a sense, historians are creators, and like the North American landscape, the stories they retell shape a more abstract kind of geography in which their subjects find themselves atop mountains, or unseen in dark canyons. The makers of history are also many other things: storytellers, investigators, adventurers, teachers, actors, artists, workers, politicians, diplomats, entrepreneurs, and conquerors. Yet, most importantly, the makers of history are also listeners. Unfortunately, this is a skill many historians have forgotten or not yet developed. Some historians have become too dependent on primary and secondary written sources and therefore they have been unaware of or have possibly ignored alternative research sources such as the oral literatures of Native America. Perhaps the absence of oral tradition in the Western scholar’s repertoire is the greatest reason American Indian histories are hidden and marginalized. American Indian women’s histories are further marginalized because historians typically approach women’s histories with only a gendered analysis, rather
than layering their studies by analyzing race or socio-economics along with gender.

There are two major hurdles then in retelling the North American story: including non-Western forms of knowledge, and finding new combinations of Western analyses.

No matter the analytical tools, the sculpting of history is the reiteration, and perhaps perpetuation, of a production of interactions between participants and actors in what Diana Taylor has called “public spectacle.” She wrote, “Public spectacle is a locus and mechanism of communal identity through collective imaginings that constitute ‘nation’ as ‘an imagined political community.’” Public spectacle, whether in the form of colonialism, nationalistic display, or commodity, is an informative tool that concomitantly illustrates and provokes, negotiates and quells. It is a meeting between groups of people with varying status in mainstream society, who, consciously or not, are drawing boundaries within, around, and outside of imagined regions that are politically sanctioned.

In North America, those imagined regions are directly linked to the land in the form of private and state ownership, and federal and local jurisdiction, which are delineated by geographical survey and cartography. However, the instability of the boundaries is apparent in the use of public spectacles that seek to reinforce highly gendered and Eurocentric notions of nationhood, against the threat of subversive borders that arise from cultural disparities. Manifest Destiny is a product of Euro-American ideas of land and how they imagined it should be managed and whether it was being improved. “Americans” were bound by the duty of Manifest Destiny in the nineteenth century and

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later. This thesis will show how those same ideas of ownership and progress influence history writing which is itself a public spectacle and political act.

Americans and the Other participated in public spectacles. The term "American" is contested, and has been used to describe the inhabitants of the United States. The term has multiple meanings, many of which have been determined by public spectacles of colonialism and nationalism. The origin of the word "America" is embedded in histories of the European conquest of the continents that were named after the Italian explorer, Amerigo Vespucci. When American Indians and Europeans related in what Mary Louise Pratt has called the "contact zone" or "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination," they searched for ways to define each other and new ways to define themselves.\(^{23}\) The first "Americans" became "Indians" and the early Europeans (Anglo-Saxons specifically) in North America eventually became "Americans," as they colonized North America and founded their nation, or "imagined political community."

In that nation, the United States, the term "American" came to be widely used among Westerners as a nationalistic tool to describe the dominant culture and its ideals of womanhood and manhood. The term’s exclusivity and rigidity can be interpreted as a sort of trophy from the dominant culture’s victories within contact zones where exploitation and hegemonic displays occurred. As text, the word "American" signified the cultural, intellectual, and racial superiority of white persons of northern European and Protestant descent from the American Revolution up to and through the nineteenth century.

American Indians, African Americans, Chinese immigrants, and other non-Western

\(^{23}\) Pratt, 4.
ethnicities in the nineteenth century, were either excluded from or degraded in "American" representations and public spectacles in forms of popular culture, like Wild West shows that supported Western hegemony.

Within displays that attempted to define what it meant to be American a very gendered language was emerging as Europeans began exploring and colonizing North America. As the colonies, and later, the United States grew, so too did the gendered language colonizers used to illustrate the agendas of the dominant class. From the shifting imagery of colonial iconography, in which America was represented as a Native woman, to the twentieth century representations of the "good native woman" in Hollywood films, the dominant class’s use of public spectacle has negatively influenced the historian’s understanding of American Indian women’s histories, and perhaps vice-versa. Not only have Western historians been trained to rely too heavily on primary sources that are valued in Western methodologies, but they have also had to trudge through the muck of Western hegemony in order to find the histories of Native women.

The gendered language of the colonizers can easily be detected in popular culture that highlights Europeans’ and Euro-Americans’ overarching notions of land use. The "frontier" and European expansion toward the Pacific Ocean was a favorite theme in dime novels, Wild West Shows, and World’s Fairs. The geography and governance of the western territories of the United States was one of the most contested issues that appeared in these nineteenth century nationalistic displays in which people of different cultures acted and participated in order to construct representations of Euro-Americans and Euro-American accomplishments. These spectacles sought to inscribe and enforce, among
other things, what would eventually become federal and state boundaries in the American West. They also sought to bolster the battle lines of Euro-American hegemony.24

The establishment of the borders appeared to be an innocent act of practicality in the organization and administration of the nation. However, the federal boundaries in the American West/(contact zone) were not limited to divisions between political nations and sovereign states, but they were in effect hundreds of lines of containment that would efficaciously rid Euro-Americans of one problematic ethnicity in particular—the American Indian. As early as the sixteenth century, American Indians were forced out of their ancestral territories; their own political and cultural communities and intertribal socio-economic ties, for the most part, were unacknowledged by Europeans and Euro-Americans in contact zones. In 1830, the Indian Removal Act demonstrated the Westerners' cultural, political, and socio-economic advantages over American Indians, and federal troops began forcibly relocating tribes who had previously lived east of the Mississippi river to reservations in western territories. The reservations were meant to open more areas for white settlement as well as to cap the cultural, political, and economic activities of American Indians by segregating them from the Euro-American population. U.S. politicians and other officials used the geographical administration of land to manipulate, and sometimes annihilate the Natives' own forms of territorial and cultural organization.

24 See, Sam W. Haynes and Christopher Morris, Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism (Arlington: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), for an excellent anthology of essays that examine Manifest Destiny and “American” identities in various specific contexts.
However, federal administration failed to manage what Michael Shapiro has called “moral geographies.”\textsuperscript{25} In her own work with popular culture, Melani McAlister applied Shapiro’s theory of moral geographies and described them as:

cultural and political practices that work together to mark not only states but also regions, cultural groupings, and ethnic or racial territories. Moral geographies shape human understandings of the world ethically and politically as well as cognitively; they consist of ‘a set of silent ethical assertions’ that mark connection and separation. Different moral geographies can coexist and even compete; each represents a different type of imaginative affiliation linked to certain ideas about significant places.\textsuperscript{26}

Moral geographies can also be used to help group members understand sacred issues, gender role expectations, and links to past generations, as associated with the land and its inhabitants. Native communities such as the Laguna Pueblo, Navajo, and Western Apache maintain oral traditions that center on geographical features of their ancestral homelands.

Other groups of American Indians maintained their moral geographies despite being removed from their pre-colonial territories by reinvesting their knowledge of the world and their own histories in new territories and connecting stories that originated from certain places within their old homes, both spatially and metaphorically, to their new homes on reservations. It is precisely the perpetuation of American Indians’ moral geographies, which necessitated the informative public spectacles of nationalism and Americanism in popular culture and history writing in order to reinforce the imagined borders of reservations and forced Indian relocation. Even in this study, for example, the


tensions between moral geographies and U.S. political cartography are played out in consideration of tribal notions of territory and their conflicts with federal, state, and local boundaries; moral geographies ignore the federal boundaries (and legislation) separating the U.S. from Mexico and Canada.

For twenty-first century scholars studying North America, moral geographies provide a welcome addition to more traditional methods of viewing the regional layout of ethnicity and culture across the continent, past and present, as well as clarifying how that layout came to be so arranged. Moral geographies call for a transformation in the form of narratives concerning the American West that will direct the listeners of history to hidden and often denied associations between cultural, political, and socio-economic interests. These interests stand independently of metahistories that have heretofore been exclusive of American Indian participation in the creation of the United States. Moral geographies also defy Western systems of knowledge and the intellectual heritage in which Western scholars are entangled to include oral histories and other forms of previously devalued knowledge. The fleshing out of history's production of inclusive narratives rests solely on records of the past, which form the footpath of American Indian experiences within and outside of the spectacles of American nationalism.

However, seemingly insurmountable obstacles (Eurocentrism, the model of heroic science, and Linnaean classifications of knowledge) litter the path where remnants of the past can be gathered. This is especially evident in the patching together of American Indian women's experiences from the pre-colonial era through the nineteenth century. Only in recent decades has women's history found a stable position in academic
scholarship. Writing women into history and recognizing their participation in the creation of North American societies, from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first century, is crucial to our understanding of the people who have inhabited North America as well as to the evolution of the United States. Yet, traditional frameworks for the compilations of early North American histories that define women’s actions in the colonies and the U.S. in terms of race or gender are problematic because they do not expose the complexity of women’s experiences. Women’s stories must be examined through moral geographies that focus on combinations of race, gender, and socioeconomic, in order to encapsulate the significance of American Indian women’s cultures within the United States. Moral geographies will allow the complexities of women’s histories to be seen. A review of the solutions some New Indian History scholars have suggested concerning American Indian history and American Indian women’s history will allow us to extract useful methods from the writings of women’s history and then combine those tactics with new tools in order to unearth the histories of American Indian women.

Many American Indian histories include the lives and work of women using only gender analyses in their writing. This is one reason American Indian women have been lost in studies of the North American colonies and the early United States. Previous studies, in which gender analysis was used exclusively have also added to the liminality of American Indian subjects. Gender analysis is helpful in finding the autonomous ways in which women participated in history by identifying “a female culture and consciousness divorced from male points of reference [that] have explored...
uninvestigated, even unimagined, topics and sources related to the private world of
women.\textsuperscript{27} However, this framework groups women into one homogenous mass, as
opposed to a heterogeneous mixture of men; it does not delineate individual or collective
differences among the women themselves. Gender analysis alone cannot effectively
describe the disparities between women of differing ethnicities, cultures, and socio­
economic circumstances. Also, outside of a strictly American Indian history, gender
analysis hides the importance of American Indian women’s lives and their interactions
with other men and women in America within and outside of their particular moral
geographies.

The first step in understanding the separations between women of different
cultural groupings is to combine historians’ traditional tools: race, class, and gender.
"The relation of gender to power is at the core of women’s history; yet factors of class
and race make any generalization regarding womanhood’s common oppression
impossible."\textsuperscript{28} Although numerous analytical tools are useful in discovering American
histories, race and class, combined with gender, will help to unveil American Indian
women’s stories. The unveiling cannot be completed, however, without directly
confronting the problem of primary sources for histories of women and men.

Especially from the pre-colonial and colonial period primary documents are
difficult if not impossible to acquire. It is because of that difficulty, Mary Beth Norton
and Ruth M. Alexander explained, that the study of American Indian women is only

\textsuperscript{27} Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “Afro-American Women in History,” in \textit{Major Problems in American
Women’s History}, Major Problems in American History, ed. Mary Beth Norton and Ruth M. Alexander, 2\textsuperscript{nd}
\textsuperscript{28} Higginbotham, 19.
beginning.\textsuperscript{29} There are, however, the written records of the French and English, the artwork of Indians (wampum belts, beadwork, paintings and other artifacts) and the continuing oral histories of present day American Indian women.\textsuperscript{30} There are surviving interviews, like Hannah Freeman's, a Delaware woman who lived in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{31} Also, as American Indian women became literate, they increasingly produced written records such as the 1640 document that has been titled, "Native Women Resist the Jesuits."\textsuperscript{32} These sources are problematic because of inherent biases in record-making and the centuries-later interpretations, misunderstanding of the function and production of oral traditions, and the processes of meaning-making through textual interpretation. Yet, Norton and Alexander believe that if the records are treated with care they can be highly useful.\textsuperscript{33}

In her own work concerning the early interpretations American Indians and Europeans created of one another, Karen Ordahl Kupperman wrote, "A close and thorough analysis of a broad range of texts, including the natives' own traditions, is essential to understanding the true quality of the early interpretation."\textsuperscript{34} Careful treatment of the records would necessitate that scholars recognize their positions within their particular intellectual heritage and how that affects which texts they choose for their studies, and how they approach texts that were produced outside of their own cultures.

\textsuperscript{30} Kupperman, 89.
\textsuperscript{32} Norton and Alexander, 22.
\textsuperscript{33} Norton and Alexander, 20.
\textsuperscript{34} Kupperman, 10.
This means, for instance, that a Western scholar would need to consider how his or her training in Western academics influences their own study as well as how that training clouds understanding cultures and moral geographies different from his or her own. Keeping this in mind, scholars can be successful in their work because although the historical records are scarce, they are available. It must be strictly acknowledged however, that careful treatment includes understanding the ethical values of Native women and men.

Part of the intellectual heritage that has served Westerners so well, until now, is the arrogance of unchecked cultural appropriation for the sake of science or academic study. To end the perpetuation of Eurocentrism in contact zones, past and present, historians must include the desires and motivations of their subjects in any study. This respect can only lead to greater understandings between Western historians and their subjects, whether they are American Indian or not. For example, some archaeological evidence has sacred meaning to Native people, and their cultural expertise can serve to guide historians in the proper treatment of cultural and material artifacts. Native scholars working in the Southwest United States have developed techniques that allow them to study pottery shards without removing them from the ground they are buried in. Even cultural artifacts need this same protection; not all cultural knowledge should be publicly viewed. Western scholars need to work with Native scholars closely in order to decide how best to portray American Indian histories in their work.

Another way to multiply the availability of records is to combine the disciplinary efforts of all scholars interested in contact zones, the areas where people from different
cultures meet and interact from historians to economists, and anthropologists to political scientists. For instance, some New Indian History historians have expanded their resources by including a broad range of archaeological evidence on material culture such as Native artwork. Bruce G. Trigger argued, “a combination of ethnographic and archaeological data may provide significant insights into how native people perceived Europeans and European goods in the early stages of their interaction.” Many scholars would agree that writing American Indians into North American history requires an interdisciplinary approach to Native cultures and histories, especially from the pre-colonial and colonial periods, yet, even recent scholarship suggests that this form of study is rarely undertaken. The canyon separating the historical and archaeological disciplines has left a confused and craggy narrative of Native North American cultures and their interactions with Europeans in its deepest regions.

In his article “Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History,” Calvin Martin argued that there are primarily two different historical perceptions of Indians in academic scholarship: the anthropological subject and the historical subject. The problem with this division in the scholarship, Martin continued, is that anthropologists consider tens of thousands of years in their American Indian research whereas historians are concerned with only the past four centuries. In his article, Martin proposed that anthropologists and historians bridge the canyon. He insisted:

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ethnohistory offers a belated means of resolving the dilemma of the bifurcated Indian—the Indian of anthropology and the Indian of history. In reconciling the two we are presented with an individual who makes sense in his own social and cultural context, operating on a different epistemological and phenomenological track from that of the white man.\footnote{Martin, "Ethnohistory," 33.}

Martin’s ethnographical blueprint demonstrates the view from the bridge, atop the canyon. He wrote:

> The specimen under the glass did not change—an important point. Only the perspective on him changed when the historian scrutinized him through another lens. Blending the vision of the ethnologist with that of the historian has produced a stereoscopic image of the Indian—a three dimensional, or ethnohistorical, view of him that all students of Indian-white relations should employ where possible.\footnote{Martin, "Ethnohistory," 24.}

However, reminiscent of the Eurocentric Western intellect whose “scientific” observations were supposedly unbiased, Martin’s bridge overlooks the canyon, and American Indian history still lies deep in its shady valley. Martin has no solution for how scholars can deal with the Western intellectual heritage since most ethnohistories are written by white scholars. Even the term “ethnohistory” is problematic because it suggests that the histories of non-Western cultures must be segregated by categorical subdivision. The term suggests that only the past events of Western cultures can be thought of as “true” or “absolute” history. Although Martin’s ideas for interdisciplinary cooperation are important, they are less important than halting the perpetuation of imperial scholarship.

Many Early American histories leave students wondering what happened to American Indians after European colonies were established in North America. Europeans, seemingly, no longer relied on the help of or interactions with American

\footnote{Martin, "Ethnohistory," 33.}
Indians to survive and prosper in the New World. They seem to have vanished upon entering stories that have been created by Europeans alone. Their histories have been decontextualized and devalued. Interpreting these metahistories leads to the conclusion that, heretofore, history has been unconcerned with the meanings American Indians, and especially women, were making in new societies, which included, but were not limited to, the constructions of American Indians, Africans, and Europeans. Kupperman argued, “Only in very recent times have scholars begun to acknowledge that, contrary to popular belief, the American natives did not disappear.” Even the recent works of historians allude to an underlying bias toward the stories of European women and European men, as an isolated and strictly autonomous group in the making of America.

Because of this, scholars squint, trying to focus and brighten the shadows on the canyon floor. Martin claimed to know at least one reason why academia’s vision has been impaired:

In a word, the historical fraternity has stripped the Indian of his spiritual powers and perceptions and made him just as ‘secular’ as the rest of us. This is an enormous conceit on our part, imagining as we do that these ‘barbarous superstitions’ can be eliminated from the Indian equation without serious loss. What we lose by doing so is the essence of the Indian’s intellect—a spiritual vision that is vital to comprehending Indian behavior.

To Martin’s credit, he did elucidate the lack of attention many scholars have paid to moral geographies and their variances from culture to culture. Perhaps the greatest clash of ideologies between American Indians and Europeans occurred at the quotidian level, where, among many other things, spirituality and religion played an essential role in how

39 Kupperman, 239.
Europeans and American Indians thought of themselves as well as in how they made a range of daily decisions.

The lives of many American Indians were centered on spiritual beliefs, which were particular to different tribes, and their movements reflected those beliefs in many activities from the preparation of food to the social complexities of warfare. An etic analysis of the every-day lives of American Indians, a view from outside the culture, is problematic because, as Frederick Hoxie argued, “Historians are using tools designed in Europe for an historical enterprise that has arisen in the New World.” Scholars’ current methodological tools are not entirely useful for understanding the conceptual framework of the American Indians’ world, much less for valuing their spiritual life-ways as compared to Europeans’ secular and non-secular evaluations of ethnography and spirituality. The methods and ideologies of scholars trained in Western schools must be sifted through and then remade, in combination with Native knowledges and theories to view the American Indians and Europeans’ perceptions within contact zones while simultaneously regarding American Indian moral geographies and Native ethics of scholarship.

Returning to the example of land ideologies may help to clarify the different ways in which American Indians and Europeans viewed North America in the pre-colonial period. Europeans began to explore and colonize the eastern coast of North America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Through both mutually beneficial and coercive

meetings with Natives, Europeans began to live, on a permanent basis, in what they termed, the New World. Each cultural group had significantly different approaches to the ownership and usage of the land and its ecosystems. Europeans created boundaries of ownership, sometimes as concretely as erecting forts, and later fences, and they valued the land through monetary systems. The exchange of land parcels from one European to another occurred through "legal" forms with material currency, coin or otherwise, and ownership was recorded by the use of titles, deeds, and the like. American Indians' perceptions of the land and its animal inhabitants often had a spiritual base, and they viewed themselves as stewards of the land that was available for collective use, as opposed to seeing themselves as owners of private territories. For example, Joseph Medicine Crow (Crow) described the spiritual link between the people and the land, "Great Spirit made this good land, gave it to all of us to enjoy in common, and no one man should claim, 'This is my land.'"42 Relating early interactions Indians had with white settlers, Veronica Velarde Tiller (Jicarilla Apache) argued that the ownership of the land was a "concept that white people introduced" to the Indians and was the root of conflict between the two cultures.43 This is an example of how greatly European and American Indian moral geographies differed and why the differences can no longer be ignored by any historian.

This example of the opposing views of Europeans and American Indians bolsters countless arguments that the Europeans' emphasis on land ownership and the abuses of resources such as fur and timber led to unfriendly and sometimes violent meetings

between Europeans and Natives. However, a closer examination of the problem shows that for the American Indians, as the socio-economic structures of their communities collapsed, the conflict was not only a threat to their survival, but to their spirituality and ways of living in the world. The example illustrates the importance of understanding the American Indians in a way that emulates an emic analysis, or insider's view, as closely as possible so that the nuances of Native cultures are not missed. Acknowledging the limitations of Western analyses when studying non-Western cultures is imperative to see the American Indians (as much as is possible) as they saw themselves, and as they saw Europeans during early contact and colonization.

Frederick Hoxie asserted that the weaknesses inherent to Western analyses of American Indian history are three-fold: structural, methodological, and conceptual.44 In his article, "The Problems of Indian History," he called for more research on, and more resources for, the study of American Indians at the collegiate level, a review of methodologies which ignore Native oral and material evidence, and a conceptualization of "Indian history as an aspect of American social history."45 Hoxie continued, "As such, Indian history can be understood as the study of a particular group's institutions and ideas about itself, as well as its relationships with other groups within the larger society."46 Collaborating with Native American Studies and American Indian Studies establishments, nationwide, may be the most important component in shifting the balance of history to recognize the contributions of American Indians in the growth of North American societies. The Native and non-Native scholars in these centers are striving to

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44 Hoxie, "Indian History," 40.
45 Hoxie, "Indian History," 41.
46 Hoxie, "Indian History," 41.
find alternative methods of scholarship that acknowledge the wishes of American Indians for the representations of their histories. These organizations are also interdisciplinary in structure and are relatively new academic communities that are more flexible in terms of questioning and rethinking their Western-influenced methodologies. Also, many of the collegiate classes offered by Native American Studies departments are appealing to Native students, and from those students the non-Native faculty can learn immeasurably. The interdisciplinary nature of these centers and their investments in Native culture and history produces new and flexible strategies which, combined with the strengths of other disciplinary methodologies can act as a giant spot-light to reveal the canyon’s floor. To then view Indian history as social history necessitates a rewriting of and even resistance to the metahistories that tell the North American story in ways that do not allow American Indians to represent themselves in their own terms. New frameworks for writing and teaching history need to be developed so that the contact zone of scholarship will cease to encourage colonial methodologies.

Scholars like Kupperman, Martin, and Hoxie would agree that American Indian history can be retold through the various tactics they have proposed so that a new belief—that American Indians have been and still are an intrinsic and contributive force in North American society—can take hold in historical scholarship. Yet, for American Indians to represent themselves, the most important first step of any scholar, especially those trained by Western techniques, is to reconsider the role of oral traditions in American Indian communities, past and present, and value oral traditions as authentic evidence that provides segues into the contact zones of centuries past. It is only by
combining methodological and ideological efforts that scholars from all cultures will be able to adequately represent the world’s historical communities, American Indian, Euro-American, European, or any other.

Revamping researching and writing methodologies, rebuilding structures of interdisciplinary cooperation, and valuing American Indian history and oral traditions as a greater part of the whole of American history, will illuminate the study of American Indians in the canyon floor, between history and anthropology, and inevitably, the creation of new analytical tools working in conjunction with new combinations of the old, will reveal that the canyon’s shadows are illusory. The canyon will flood with the sediments of American Indian histories and the landscape will give way to vast, yet rich, plains. On those plains, American Indian women will clearly be seen as integral builders of the American Indians’ socio-economic and cultural world, rather than as bystanders in events whose participants have heretofore been mistakenly represented as being instigated by European and American Indian men.

Daniel K. Richter’s concern in, “Whose Indian History” is how “the predominantly white and male practitioners of the New Indian History now encounter challenges to their basic assumptions that would have been barely imaginable when the field began to flourish in the 1970s.” He discussed the problem of ownership of American Indian history and who should have the authority to write about American Indians. Richter felt, however, that the greater problem is not who is doing the writing of Native history so much, as how much of it is being done and how little of it is impacting white American culture. Richter’s concern is two-fold.

First, although Richter was not speaking directly to the scarcity of American Indian women’s history, it is a serious problem in that canon as well. One solution to the problem of ownership in scholarship and Western scholars’ basic assumptions would be to include overlapping Western and Native analytical frameworks in the interpretation of American Indians’ histories, especially in women’s roles within, negotiations between, and co-productions of those histories. Native women’s histories can only be seen through American Indian, European, and Euro-American texts that are read in ways which reflect, as nearly as possible, the circular notions of time and ceremonial repetitive ways of Native knowledge. In other words, scholars can only understand Native experiences by understanding American Indian culture as it defines itself as opposed to Western definitions.

In combination with that form of analysis, seeing American Indian women through combinations of gender, race, and class is one way to begin the process of understanding the experiences of the women in contact zones in their own indigenous terms. Then, completing the analysis by taking up Hoxie’s challenge to be self-reflexive and critique the methodologies, structures, and concepts used in researching and writing would make the understandings historians come to even clearer for themselves, and for their readers.

Second, it may seem ethnocentric to be concerned over how Native histories are affecting Euro-American cultures, but Ed McGaa (Oglala Sioux) has offered one reason of importance. McGaa’s book, *Native Wisdom*, is dedicated to answering a compilation

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48 Richter, 383.
of religious and spiritual questions from a multi-cultural humanities class taught at the collegiate level at which he participated as a guest speaker. McGaa wrote:

Humanities II was taught in an upper income, midwestern, metropolitan suburban school. I suspect that this class of young minds, their curiosity, wonderment, optimism, skepticism, and their set of convictions, are fairly reflective of present day youth in the realm of philosophy, religion and spirituality. Because I am from a culture that suffered severe religious oppression, I was most appreciative of the progress which I discerned by such a list from young, questing, forming minds. The students who wrote these questions signal a harmonic change that is beginning to stir. In classrooms, and more so in colleges, I sense a healthy rejection of that portion of old religious molds which forbade or restricted questioning religious thought. A new respect for the observed truths of Nature is definitely spawning.

McGaa was speaking about changes he perceived in what may be thought of as a cultural consciousness among young upper class Euro-Americans. This evolution in thought is precipitating a valuing of Native culture, knowledge, and ethics among students who are being trained in secular schools that are largely run by the dominant class. Richter's concern of how scholarship about Native people is affecting white society is really a concern about the Western intellectual heritage and its Eurocentric grip on Euro-American society. However, McGaa's experiences with students attest to a change in the intellectual landscapes, and perhaps in the future there will be no traces of the canyon in which American Indian histories are trapped. As long as scholars like Richter and McGaa continue to address the problems in Western scholarship about American Indians, they will transform traditional methodologies that have heretofore almost completely excluded researching and writing about American Indian women. Students in the future will then learn a more encompassing story of North America that reflects the

complexities of the growth of the United States. This in turn will help students to better understand cultures differing from their own, and they will learn to value different ways of perceiving the United States and its inhabitants in the present.

Understanding American Indian culture must begin with a study of the foundations of Native knowledge. Although there are numerous forms of knowledge keeping and dissemination among American Indian groups, the use of oral tradition is one form shared by all Native North American cultures. Studying oral tradition (its structures, functions, and fluidity) is the most obvious place for a Western trained historian to get on the trail toward writing more inclusive histories.
The rise of Western science and the degradation of Native knowledge is a fundamental problem in writing American Indian women’s histories. The dominant intellectual heritage of Euro-American scholars functions as a wall, severing the historian’s ability to ethically and productively examine the experiences of Native women within, and their contributions to, the societies of North America. However, the structures of Western science (categorization, classification, “objective” observance) are tools that can be rebuilt so historians can tunnel through and undermine the strictures of their intellectual heritages. The wall can then be reshaped into a passageway linking Western science and other forms of knowledge. One important link of this passageway will be the simultaneous use of “oral history” and “oral traditions.”

To effectively use and create oral histories and study oral traditions as analytical tools, historians must have a broad understanding of the structures of each, the functions of each, and the different modes of thought that underpin each corpus, their written and

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CHAPTER FOUR

SHifting bodies: oral traditions and Western knowledge

"Facts change, but stories continually bring us into being."
~ LEANNE HOWE (Choctaw) in The Story of America: A Tribalography

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oral texts. Both bodies of texts are organized in specific, categorical ways. Nancy Shoemaker wrote, "Categories are building blocks in the creation of knowledge and in the application of knowledge to situations...By paying attention to how people in the past used categories, scholars could better understand historical processes." The uses of categories by various peoples create and at the same time are surrounded by cultural meanings that include the negotiation of power. Especially when two or more cultures interact, at least on a psychological level, during the course of a historical study, categories and their relationships to the dominant culture must be recognized. Shoemaker further explained, "Because categories are fictions relevant to particular times, places, and people, it is no wonder that our own categories muddle what we study." The intellectual heritage of Western scholars is one example of how past and present categorizations affect contemporary scholarship.

Linnean categorization and classification, and Euro-American notions of objective observance are useful tools for scientists and other scholars like historians because they lead to clarity in research and analysis, and better communications among colleagues, both students and instructors. The evolution of European and Euro-American science has been tremendously beneficial in countless ways, from aiding the growth of powerful nation-states, to improving the standard of living for people in even the lowest classes all over the globe. Yet, these same tools have been used to create monstrous ideologies of racial superiority, gender discrimination, and political and socio-economic

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52 Shoemaker, "Categories," 56.
domination. For instance, this thesis has already described the damaging tenets of Eurocentrism and male dominance.

For Western historians to reconstruct their analytical tools and confront their intellectual heritage, they should begin with a comparison of the differences between separate forms of knowledge, in this case specifically, the differences between Western knowledge and "science" and North American "indigenous" knowledge. The juxtapositioning of these two world-views and how they influence current awareness of oral traditions demonstrates that the conflicts Westerners have with indigenous knowledge are what many Westerners define as a lack of detailed accuracy and authenticity. Euro-American historians have been trained to recognize scientific knowledge, or fact, by scrutinizing details to determine if they tell a logical, consistent story. Yet, accuracy and authenticity are only two ways to think of knowledge as being valuable and useful.

This chapter will compare the foundations of Western knowledge in terms of separations between categorized information and progressive linear thought to some common foundations of Native thought such as interconnectedness and circular patterns of thought. First, this chapter will consider how Euro-American and Europeans organized their perceptions of the environment and knowledge therein, which includes a dichotomous structure, attention to "factual" detail, and chronological or linear understandings of time.\textsuperscript{53} Second, this chapter will analyze oral tradition and the

continuity of its communal and educational functions, regardless of its variant, non-dichotomous structure, or its exclusivity of minute data.

The first chapter described the La Condamine Expedition and the publication of Carl Linnaeus’s *Systema Naturae*. Mary Louise Pratt argued, “these two events, and their coincidence, suggest important dimensions of change in European elites’ understandings of themselves and their relations to the rest of the globe.”54 Pratt explained that her argument is about:

the emergence of a new version of what I like to call Europe’s “planetary consciousness,” a version marked by an orientation toward interior exploration and the construction of global-scale meaning through the descriptive apparatuses of natural history. This new planetary consciousness, I will suggest, is a basic element constructing modern Eurocentrism.55

In the eighteenth century, Europeans were devising new ways to deal with the wealth of material, culture, and information that the planet contained. Systems of classification and interior explorations in themselves are not problematic until they encroach upon already existing systems of knowledge containment and dissemination.

The European invention now known as “natural history” was more than a tool to aid Europeans in forming their planetary consciousness. Natural history also became a hegemonic tool for educated European men of the leisured classes to create order out of the perceived chaos. Inherent in the process of creating order was the spread of “civilization” and Christianity to the regions outside of Europe, which would remain the ultimate center of order. An initial step in this colonization was the decontextualization of indigenous material, culture, and knowledge. Pratt wrote, “Natural history extracted

54 Pratt, 15.
55 Pratt, 15.
specimens not only from their organic or ecological relations with each other, but also from their places in other peoples’ economies, histories, social and symbolic systems.”56 European elites who explored North America, for instance, would observe the use of a cultural object, such as wampum belts, extract the artifact from its original cultural meaning, and then apply a more understandable and supposedly sensible European one.

In this case, Europeans originally thought wampum belts were simple forms of currency used in trade and diplomacy because they applied their cultural understandings of the value of precious metals and the use of gold as currency in Europe for interactions in mercantilism, taxation, and political affairs. Europeans misunderstood the role of wampum since it was not only used a diplomatic tool and trade item, but was also used as gifts and adornment whose complex artwork signified multiple cultural meanings. “Intricate designs, usually of purple against a white background, conveyed messages and ideas; sometimes the symbolism was more graphic and more simple: belts painted red signified war; white belts, peace.”57 When Europeans decontextualized foreign cultural artifacts and then used their own applications of meaning for their own purposes, they added mortar to the growing notion of white racial superiority and Eurocentrism.

By understanding North American cultures in this way, rather than in indigenous terms, Europeans created a popular belief that American Indian cultures were subordinate and primitive, uncivilized and pagan. This kind of thinking led to the valuing of Western scientific systems as superior, and a commitment to the authority of objective observation and the resulting “discovery” of knowledge that was, of course, accurate and authentic.

56 Pratt, 31.
57 Kupperman, 129.
The issue of authenticated evidence has already been discussed, and it is important to reiterate, at this point, that another cornerstone in the contingent ideologies of Eurocentrism and European knowledge was the power of print. In the early eighteenth century, after the usefulness of scientific exploration and forms of scientific classification were demonstrated to the Europeans by *Systema Naturae* and the La Condamine expedition, among others, natural history became even more Eurocentrically stalwart. “Th[e] systemizing of nature in the second half of the century was to assert even more powerfully the authority of print, and thus of the class which controlled it.” Historians have necessarily relied on printed material in their studies, but it is imperative that scholars understand the influence that must have come into play in order for a particular document to be printed in the first place. Especially for centuries-old documents, accessibility to a press and the surplus finances to pay for the printing were a requirement; therefore, many primary texts are racially and socio-economically biased, and men created most. Because written sources reflect the motives, desires, and beliefs of their producers, they must be treated with great caution.

Although historical methodologies are changing, many American Indian histories have been written long before the development of post-modernism, the civil-rights movements, women’s movements, and other philosophies and events that have impacted mainstream history writing. Older histories written in the first half of the twentieth century and earlier need to be read especially closely while issues of ethnocentricity, socio-economics, and gender biases that may have swayed the authors are considered. The reader should ask: when was this study written, who wrote it, and for whom did they

58 Pratt, 30.
write it? Another important question the reader should consider is: did the historian consult with Native women and men during his or her study, and were American Indian women and men accepting of the project? In a study of oral tradition, Angela Cavender Wilson emphasized:

Since its inception, the area of American Indian history has been dominated by non-Indian historians who use non-Indian sources to create non-Indian interpretations about American Indians and their pasts. These historians have rarely bothered to ask, or even seem to care, what the Indians they are studying might have to say about their work. Very few have attempted to find out how native people would interpret, analyze, and question the written documents they would confront, nor have they asked if the native people they are studying have their own versions or stories of their past that might be pertinent to their analysis. As long as history continues to be studied and written in this manner, the field should more appropriately be called non-Indian perceptions of American Indian history. 59

To change the way history is written about American Indians, historians need to consider the researching and writing of history as another contact zone in which white scholars are relearning to interact with Native people and their histories. An essential responsibility scholars have in studying and writing about cultures other than their own is to ask them about the ways in which their subjects think about knowledge; what issues, details, and events are important to the subjects, and how do they differ from what Westerners find to be important? Although scholars can never attain complete objectivity in their work because their own educations, academic training, and personal experiences affect their work to various degrees, scholars can successfully write about American Indian women if they are willing to continually improve their methodologies in ways that will help them to reveal, as best they are able, accurate information about the people which they are studying. In studying and writing about American Indian women specifically, the first

step in enhancing Western academic techniques is to find and recognize the differences in what kinds of knowledge Natives seek as opposed to Europeans and Euro-Americans. The so-called problems Western scholars have with the fluidity of oral traditions should be examined.

An example of the disparities scholars have found between what they term “fact” and Cherokee oral tradition can be seen by reviewing the Cherokee story, “The Origin of Corn.” The story telling how corn came to grow in North America has been with the Cherokee people for an unknown number of centuries. It is an origin story that has been told over and over and is meant to “entertain, instruct and inspire.”

The story is about the lives of an old woman called Selu, or Corn Mother, and her two grandsons who hunt to provide food for the small family. Among the first few lines of the story in a recent retelling, Western scholars come to a stumbling block that causes many to perceive the story as inauthentic. A Cherokee elder, Siquanid’ told the story in this way: “At one time there was a very old woman who had two grandsons. These two grandsons were always hunting. They hunted deer and wild turkeys. They always had plenty to eat. Later on, after many hunting trips, when they got ready to go hunting early in the morning, they were cleaning their guns.” Obviously, this story retells events that happened before American Indians had contact with Europeans and their firearms. According to Marilou Awiakta, some Euro-Americans find the mention of guns in this story to be a point of contention because it defies linear time, and some even go so far as to use this detail to dismiss the story as fiction rather than acknowledging it as an

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61 Awiakta, 10.
authentic primary source from which much can be learned about Cherokee history. Awiakta explained that “American society (and Western society as a whole) is so oriented toward science, technology and legality that a discrepancy in a fact calls the validity of what is being said into question.” The story, its Native tellers, and its Native listeners are not necessarily interested in the story’s authenticity (by Western standards) because its details are historically and chronologically accurate, but rather, because the story informs the participants about their culture’s moral geographies, and about their own history as a group.

Awiakta asserted, “Revealing spiritual truth, not facts, is the purpose of Selu’s story which the storyteller keeps alive and current by adapting details such as guns to the times.” Changing details makes stories more relevant and accessible to listeners, and in oral tradition, the changes over time show only the surface of how Native people are thinking about their collective past. For many Euro-Americans listening to the stories, how they entertain, instruct, and inspire American Indians is more nuanced and harder for Westerners to retrieve from the layers of meaning they inadvertently apply to Native culture. Euro-Americans often link their observances of Native culture with Eurocentric stereotypes. This further obfuscates what historians believe to be the purposes of oral tradition and their comparisons of Native knowledge to Western knowledge, if they see the importance of comparison at all.

In summary, many Westerners would deny the authenticity of the origin story of Selu because they were no guns at the point when the story is supposed to have taken

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62 Awiakta, 15.
63 Awiakta, 16.
place. Yet, Natives who keep oral tradition knowledge and pass it on to Native listeners are not concerned with that kind of authenticity. Instead, they are more interested in what can be learned from the story, and how it can strengthen bonds between successive generations of American Indians. What is of great import to American Indians is the function of oral tradition over time—centuries. The changing of details simply makes it more easily understood by current listeners. Therefore, it is important to comprehend the relevance of oral tradition for Native people in order to understand their histories and their moral geographies as compared to European and Euro-American histories and moral geographies. The various kinds of knowledge Europeans, Euro-Americans, and Natives have been trained to seek affects the way the people lived and continue to live in their daily lives, as well as how they relate to one another in contact zones and perceive the opposing cultural group’s behavior and world views. Speaking for Euro-American scholars, Julie Cruikshank wrote, “A gap remains in our knowledge about the contribution of expressive forms like storytelling to strategies for adapting to social, cultural, and economic change.”64 There is much to be learned from oral tradition.

In *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of Spirit*, Leslie Marmon Silko described how oral traditions play a fundamental role in the lives of her people, the Pueblo, “Human identity, imagination and storytelling were inextricably linked to the land, to Mother Earth, just as the strands of the spider’s web radiate from the center of the web.”65 Silko explained that the strength of oral traditions and their functions in the Pueblo community are and were reinforced by the landscape that is relatively unchanging. Stories and memory were, and

remain, tied to geographical features that remind the Pueblo of not only their collective history, but also personal histories, that are, according to Wilson, an intrinsic part of oral tradition. Wilson explained, “personal experiences, pieces of information, events, incidents, and other phenomena can become part of the oral tradition at the moment they happen or at the moment they are told, as long as the person adopting the memory is part of an oral tradition.” Compared to Western histories, oral traditions are vast systems of knowledge in which all parts of daily life and cultural history are connected, rather than classified into sub-categories that are seemingly independent of one another.

Another important point Silko made is that the Pueblo “are all from the same source: awareness never deteriorated into Cartesian duality, cutting off the human from the natural world.” This is true for many American Indian groups in North America. As described in chapter two, Europeans and Euro-Americans in the colonial period had very different ideas of land use and ownership. These Euro-American land ideologies stem, in part, from the partnership of Newtonian science and the Judeo-Christian tradition that reinforced the notion that man is somehow separate from nature. The book of Genesis, a Judeo-Christian text that contains written origin stories, confirmed for Europeans and Euro-Americans their duty and right of domain over the land and its animal inhabitants. All of these beliefs became entangled in Eurocentrism and led to the rise of natural history in which American Indians were (and in some cases still are) subjected to Europeans’ planetary consciousness in which Europeans believed they participated only as objective observers and discoverers of knowledge they would manage.

66 Wilson, “Power of the Spoken Word,” 103.
67 Silko, Yellow Woman, 37.
Most American Indians however, viewed the land and its non-human inhabitants as being inextricably connected to themselves and therefore, their world views did not have the same dualistic nature of Europeans and their descendants. For example, many modern Euro-Americans think of a rational and irrational world that separates tangible/rational life from spiritual or religious/irrational life. Some Westerners, including those influenced by the Enlightenment and deism for example, even went so far as to mythologize and undermine the unifying power of their own culture’s origin stories, such as is found in Judeo-Christian texts, in their categorization between the rational and irrational, the secular and the sacred. Science and religion necessarily battle in the dichotomous structure of European and Euro-American knowledge. What is ironic about this is that many Westerners used the same texts they scientifically scrutinized in an attempt to seal their hegemonic dominion in centuries past and present. Instead, many American Indians saw little or no division between their quotidian practices such as working or relaxing and their ceremonial and spiritual practices and beliefs. In other words, for many Natives, there is an interconnectedness between all parts of their individual, social, and political activities; many of these people believe that each activity or behavior affects the whole spectrum of their lives. This belief is reflected in oral traditions.

What is important about this analysis of Cartesian duality is the recognition that Western written primary sources are not as static as they may seem. Rather, they are mutable pieces of evidence that are constructed around a particular way of thinking and context, and precisely because of that fictitious construction they are not steadfastly
reliable. For example, Pratt insisted, “natural history was unquestionably constituted in and through language...knowledges exist not as static accumulations of facts, bits, or bytes, but as human activities, tangles of verbal and non-verbal practices.” Therefore, since all forms of knowledge are imaginatively constructed they occur in their specific conglomerate forms by chance, and those resulting forms are dependent upon human interactions, whether those comings-together are political, economic, intellectual, or otherwise. Because knowledges are mutable, it is not important to value one over another, nor is it useful. What is significant is how knowledge is constructed, whether by application of binaries or lack thereof, and how the systems function in their particular cultures of origin and what scholars can learn from another culture to write a stronger framework for history. An examination of Pueblo knowledge will better define the function of non-dichotomous oral traditions.

Since many Pueblos do not usually think in binary terms (and perhaps none of them ever did before a Spanish contact zone emerged in the sixteenth century), there are no delineations in their oral traditions like there are in Western history, such as history versus women’s history, or political history versus social. Silko declared, “we make no distinctions between types of story—historical, sacred, plain gossip—because these distinctions are not useful when discussing the Pueblo experience of language.” Silko and many other Native writers, thinkers, and educators agree that oral tradition (storytelling) functions in many ways; its most imperative function is its ability to strengthen communities.

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68 Pratt, 29.
69 Silko, Yellow Woman, 53.
Oral traditions have played and continue to play an important role in binding Native community members together by carrying out a variety of tasks that defy the dichotomous nature of Western knowledge. For instance, oral tradition includes personal experiences, the main focus of oral history. David Henige suggested a contemporary use of the term oral history as referring "to the study of the recent past by means of life histories or personal recollections, where informants speak about their own experiences." Yet, as Wilson stated, personal stories and remembrances are just one small part of the oral tradition. On the other hand, Wilson found that Henige's and scholar Jan Vansina's definitions of oral tradition as compared to oral history only touch the surface of the various components of Native oral tradition and their functions and evolutions among oral tradition creators and participants. Henige and Vansina determined that oral traditions only include information that has been handed down for at least several generations; in other words, they suggested that oral traditions contain information that is no longer contemporary, as compared to oral history. Henige also stated, "Strictly speaking, oral traditions are those recollections of the past that are commonly or universally known in a given culture. Versions that are not widely known should rightfully be considered as 'testimony' and if they relate to recent events they belong to the realm of oral history." This is not the case, however, as the work of Wilson, Silko, Cruikshank, and Awiakti attests. Henige's clear cut definitions may be useful for oral historians and ethnographers from Western backgrounds whose subjects

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73 Henige, 2.
are Western, but his definitions also smear together the numerous possibilities for oral traditions from cultures around the globe, in effect marginalizing the histories of those people. American Indian oral tradition is not segregated into the binary system that Western scholars often find useful: collective knowledge and personal testimony. Instead, there are no separations at all in oral traditions among most Native people. Rather, oral tradition is a blending of all forms of knowledge that can be spoken, and therefore, it is also an excellent means of cultural continuity, as written knowledge was and still remains among Europeans and Euro-Americans. If historians ignore personal testimony and other components of oral traditions because their methodologies parallel David Henige and Jan Vansina’s, they will also inadvertently ignore critical information about the subject culture that could lead to misunderstandings between Native and Western cultures as well as patchy scholarship.

Beverly Hungry Wolf’s *The Ways of My Grandmothers* offers an excellent example of oral tradition’s multifaceted structure among the Blackfoot communities in Canada and Montana. To a Western-trained reader, the book appears to be a combination of various kinds of knowledge important to Blackfoot women, including origin stories, personal life stories, and even food preparation tips. For example, one review of the book read, “A strange and tantalizing mix of history, legend, myth, gossip, and recipe.”

Obviously there is a chasm between oral tradition and how Euro-Americans understand its overarching nature.

Perhaps because of the technique Hungry Wolf used to transfer oral tradition to paper and make it a written primary source, Western scholars assume the chapter heading

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74 Hungry Wolf, jacket.
and subheadings in the book signify distinctions between oral tradition and oral history. For instance, one subheading is, “How the Holy Woman’s Headdress Came to Be” and another is, “Childhood Memories (by Paula Weasel Head)”. The former title describes a story that has been with the people for many generations, and the story itself might be categorized by anthropologists as “myth” or “legend”.

The latter title refers to an ethnographic recording, or an oral history. However, these subcategories are only one useful interpretation of the information contained within the pages of this book; the format is simply more readable and understandable to the Western mind, and perhaps easier to submit to print. The entire text is considered oral tradition by the Blackfoot, and the heterogeneity of Hungry Wolf’s organization of the text shows that the Blackfoot tradition is not subdivided, but cohesive.

It is important to note, however, that because the knowledge was transmitted onto paper, its nature was changed by the limitations of the written word. Human gestures, moods, hesitations, excitement, and other nuanced conveyances during oral communications cannot adequately be captured by pen and paper. Linguist and cultural historian Robert Bringhurst has focused years of research in Haida oral literature and he wrote a remarkable analogy concerning what is lost when Native oral traditions are transcribed into text, “all classical Haida literature is oral. By definition, therefore, it is something printed books cannot contain, in precisely the same sense that jazz, or the

75 Like the term “oral tradition”, the terms “myth” and “legend” also carry political and colonial connotations. “Myths” and “legends” are not considered by many Western scholars to be factual or reliable sources of evidence. Rather they are seen as superstitious artifacts, to be collected and transcribed by anthropologists. Ethical considerations concerning oral traditions will be examined in chapter four. See Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, “Tlingit Origin Stories,” in Stars Above, Earth Below: American Indians and Nature, ed. Marsha C. Bol (Niwot, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart Publishers for Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 1998) for a discussion on the conventional definitions of these terms and how the authors have contended with political connotations in their own work.
classical music of India, is music that a score cannot contain.76 Oral tradition, Bringhurst explained, is readable in a way that is not unlike the readability of theatre. In a performative sense, the actors and spectators are interacting in ways that create meaning for the displays of theatre and the retelling of Native oral knowledge. In this way, oral tradition is similar to creations of ethnography and the recording of personal experiences in Western terms. Concerning oral history, Dana C. Jack wrote, “we must remember that the researcher is an active participant in qualitative research.”77 In her own field work interviewing white women in North Carolina, historian Mary Murphy found that her gender alone affected the speech and mannerisms of her interviewees. When working with a male colleague, one female interviewee in particular deferred to him in her answers and ignored Murphy. Murphy also explained that the situation was often much different when she worked individually, talking with women as a woman. Like the testimonies of many other female historians and ethnographers, Murphy found that women were often more willing to express themselves than if they had been talking with a male interviewer.78 Therefore, as Pratt argued, history is a form of communication that is fluid, rather than stagnant, and it is determined by human actions and human experiences with language. History, whether written or oral is shaped by attitudes about

78 Mary Murphy, interview by author, written transcript, Bozeman, M.T., 16 October, 2002; Gwen Etter-Lewis found that women were less likely to give themselves credit for their occupations and accomplishments than were men. Joan Sangster found that race and class sometimes overshadow gender; See, “Telling our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History” in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 89. Also see, Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), concerning her own problems speaking with women who experienced Partition.
culture, ethnicity, class, age, gender, and all other perceptions of belonging linked to one
group or another.

The interactive processes and experiences in oral tradition are even greater than
within oral history because in oral tradition the number of participants is countless, the
information is not categorized like Western knowledge, and the information spans
various amounts of time from several seconds to several centuries or more. Among the
Pueblo for example, “Traditionally everyone, from the youngest child to the oldest
person, was expected to listen and be able to recall or tell a portion of, if only a small
detail from, a narrative account or story.” Silko suggested that there was a great
responsibility for the Native people who participated in oral tradition. Because the history
of American Indians was not written, collective memory spurred by communal and
individual story-telling was one of the only ways Natives could preserve the experiences
and lives of their past and present friends and relatives. Some community members were
known and greatly respected within the group for their positions as tribal historians and
storytellers. Even after Europeans and Euro-Americans introduced writing materials and
written alphabets to those American Indians who did not already write their own
languages, oral traditions remained intact. The present day continuation of oral tradition
illustrates the “power of the spoken word.”

Ethnographer Julie Cruikshank worked with Athapaskan and Tlingit women
Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned. These women are/were Native elders from
the Yukon Territory “who were interested in documenting memories and having me

transcribe their narratives for children, grandchildren, and other family members.\textsuperscript{81} These women taught her the power of the spoken word.

Cruikshank’s ethnographic work took place in the 1970s and 1980s, and she began the project wanting to ask questions about and record the experiences and memories of Athapaskan and Tlingit people surrounding the Klondike Gold Rush and the construction of the Alaska Highway. However, when she began interviewing the three women elders, her work turned into a project Cruikshank had not anticipated. She wrote, “From the beginning several of the eldest women responded to my questions about secular events by telling traditional stories. The more I persisted with my agenda, the more insistent each was about the direction our work should take. Each explained that these narratives were important to record as part of her life story.”\textsuperscript{82} Cruikshank claimed that the work was “framed as a collaborative project from the outset.”\textsuperscript{83} Yet, in order to make the study viable, Cruikshank needed to learn not only the objectives of the three women, but also the reasons and ways of thinking behind their efforts.

Cruikshank utilized categories, what she called “secular events” as a launch pad for her analysis and interviewing techniques. However, the Klondike Gold Rush and the Alaska Highway are specific events that are part of a greater whole: the Western exploration, extraction of resources and colonization of Native north-western North America. Western scholars often begin with the particular in their studies to gain a


\textsuperscript{83} Cruikshank, “Oral History,” 5.
glimpse of the whole and eventually tie it to the backbone of North American history. In contrast, Native peoples typically begin with the whole to catch sight of the particular. Natives often recognize their connections to and place within their larger communities, histories, geographies, and cultures when they share experiences on a personal level. Cruikshank explained, “a recent review of American Indian women’s autobiographies identifies these themes as precisely the ones they all share—an emphasis on landscape, mythology, everyday events, and continuity between generations.”  

For these women, and many Natives in North America, these themes represent the whole. Oral tradition begins with the collective and moves to a particular event, such as individual Native experience during and within the Klondike Gold Rush.

This stands in stark contrast to Western histories that are centered on documented and often monumental political and social events that occur at state and national levels. Only in the past five or six decades have historians become concerned with “social” history, or the events of everyday life and how people are affected by their world views and moral geographies, including their landscapes, mythologies, and generational ties. That change in historical interest was a segue into ethnic studies, and race, class, and gender became widely used analytical tools. Nancy Shoemaker reported that the 1970s saw the beginning of new conceptualizations in American Indian studies—the “New Indian History” proposed by Robert Berkhofer. From there, Marxist and world-systems theories also became influential in the 1980s, and by the 1990s, “scholars in Indian studies were reading and responding to theoretical literature designated as postmodern,

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84 Cruikshank, Life Lived like a Story, 2.
postcolonial, deconstructive, and/or self-reflexive. The changes theoretical applications wrought in humanities scholarship have allowed historians and anthropologists to consider the importance of oral history and oral tradition, and to deconstruct colonial methodologies that, in many cases, prevented scholars in the past from gaining a broad understanding of the cultural differences in historical processes between Euro-Americans and American Indians.

Perhaps the most critical trend in American Indian studies has been the use of self-reflexive methodologies. Part of an acknowledgement of intellectual heritage when working from the position of a Western-trained scholar in American Indian studies includes recognizing ethical responsibility. Not all oral tradition is available to the Western public; some knowledge is considered sacred and is unavailable for analysis. This is also true of material and archaeological artifacts. The following chapter will address ethical concerns in studies that are based in ethnographic work and supported by written and material documentation and evidence.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESHAPING THE LANDSCAPE: ETHICS AND INTELLECTUAL LOCALE IN RESEARCHING WITH ORAL TRADITIONS

Why do historians and anthropologists write about Indians anyway?

~DEVON A. MIHESUAH (Choctaw) in Natives and Academics

A historian should bear many issues in mind when researching and writing about American Indian women. The importance of using oral traditions and oral histories to write thick histories about Native women is a decision each historian must make individually, and that choice will determine how useful the resulting scholarship is in shaping non-Indian views on Natives. Once the decision to use oral traditions in a study is made, however, there are several overarching concerns scholars must acknowledge. These concerns, which include respect of cultural standards and an acknowledgement of intellectual location, apply to any subject community and its histories; they can also lead the scholar to more specific considerations for each American Indian group being studied. Avoiding the responsibilities that are attached to researching Native communities and Native women too often perpetuates colonial processes of historical scholarship that undermine American Indian agency.

Working with oral traditions and oral histories is similar to creating anthropological ethnographies. By first analyzing colonial processes in ethnography and other inherent problems in the field, historians can learn how to be cautious in their treatment of Native knowledge and be continuously aware that their work is a joint
project between subject and scholar. Like the interviewer, the interviewee in any oral project has a large degree of autonomy. Also, the relationship of power, or which party has control over the interview, is constantly being renegotiated through questioning and answering.

There is a continual negotiation in the relationship between tellers of oral traditions and listeners as well. Often, there are many versions of the same Native story. Therefore, the teller is choosing a specific version to relate and the listener is comparing his or her knowledge of the story to that version. Also, Leslie Marmon Silko described storytelling as an interaction between tellers and listeners where the accuracy of each story that was told was judged to some degree.

Communal storytelling was a self-correcting process in which listeners were encouraged to speak up if they noted an important fact or detail omitted. The people were happy to listen to two or three different versions of the same event of the same *hunmah-hah* story. Even conflicting versions of an incident were welcomed for the entertainment they provided...Implicit in the Pueblo oral tradition was the awareness that loyalties, grudges, and kinship must always influence the narrator’s choices as she emphasizes to listeners that this is the way *she* has always heard the story told. The ancient Pueblo people sought a communal truth, not an absolute truth. For them this truth lived somewhere within the web of differing versions, disputes over minor points, and outright contradictions tangling with old feuds and village rivalries.  

The widely read *Pretty Shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows*, by Frank Bird Linderman, offers another example of the self-correcting process of oral traditions and oral histories. Linderman’s project was ethnographical; he set out to record Pretty Shield’s life while learning the cultural ways of the Crow people. Phenocia Bauerle (Crow) explained that another Crow woman, Goes Together, always accompanied Pretty Shield during the interviews with Linderman. Telling Crow stories required that another member of the

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86 Silko, *Yellow Woman*, 32.
community be present to censor the narration.\textsuperscript{87} In this instance, the power negotiation was three-fold.

The power struggle in an ethnographic setting is a microcosm of a much larger conflict that occurred in the United States as ethnography grew into a major scholastic field. Philip Deloria (Yankton Dakota) argued that ethnography has worked to create what he called an “exterior Indian,” or an “Indian Other,” who had a binary nature, savage and/or noble. Deloria argued that the exterior Indian, as a popular notion, first came into being at the time of European contact with American Indians, and the Native outsider survives into the twenty-first century. “For most English colonists,” he wrote, “so-called savage Indians defined the boundaries and character of their civilization. Conversely, noble Indians allowed the romantic intellectuals of the Enlightenment to embody a critique of European social decadence.”\textsuperscript{88} As Deloria further explained, throughout the centuries, as the colonies became a nation and the question of national identity became paramount, non-Indians inverted and reshaped the imagery tied to the exterior Indian and used it to search out their own “American” identities, and “by the early twentieth century...many Americans had become fascinated with a positive exterior Indian Other.”\textsuperscript{89} Ethnography was a powerful tool in white America’s identity search. Deloria described ethnography as “an extraordinary, contradictory way of knowing that has permeated American encounters with Others.”\textsuperscript{90} The contradictions in this anthropological field can be traced to a Western intellectual heritage. For instance, in

\textsuperscript{87} Phenocia Bauerle, interview by author, written transcript, Bozeman, M.T., 27 March 2002.
\textsuperscript{89} Deloria, \textit{Playing Indian}, 74.
\textsuperscript{90} Deloria, \textit{Playing Indian}, 74.
its earliest years, the field of ethnography was founded upon a “subject-object
dichotomy.” Nineteenth-century anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan and Matilda
Coxe Stevenson constructed the framework of ethnographical studies of American
Indians and their scholarship greatly influenced and supported the notion of the exterior
Indian. Early ethnographers were motivated by vanishing Indian ideologies, and they set
out to preserve Native culture by collecting artifacts and oral knowledge. In order to
collect evidence, however, ethnographers necessarily interacted with Natives on a daily
basis in order to learn their languages and customs. Observing at such close proximity
required subjectivity and sincere intentions for familiarity, yet that intimacy between the
observer and the observed threatened objective, authoritative scholarship.

In practice, anthropology proved to be a problematic science at best, and its
adherents bolstered their intellectual authority by insisting on its objective
character. The insistence on ethnographic objectivity helped reinforce the
perception that its primary research object—Indian people—existed far beyond
the pale of American society.

The dominant culture marginalizes the Other in order to carry out its colonialist
policies and to ensure its own hegemony. Nineteenth-century ethnography continued its
own processes of colonialism and imperialistic ideologies, like Western science and
Western history. Ethnography is a categorized collection of evidence, most often
retrieved from “the field” by Western-trained scholars, and “any collection implies a
temporal vision generating rarity and worth, a metahistory.” However, metahistories are

91 Deloria, Playing Indian, 93.
92 Deloria, Playing Indian, 93. Also see, Margaret D. Jacobs, Engendered Encounters: Feminism and
93 Deloria, Playing Indian, 93.
94 James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art
dangerous not only because of their exclusivity, but also because they are usually written by the dominant culture, which in this case, and more often than not, searches for the absolute truth that Silko described. There is only so much room in "truth," therefore, writing a metahistory comes down to valuing and devaluing knowledge. One example of an early twentieth-century anthropologist, Elsie Clews Parsons, provides twenty-first century historians with an idea of just how treacherous valuing another culture's knowledge can be. Yet, before Parsons' work can be discussed, the relationships between government policies and intellectual ideologies should be briefly examined.

Margaret D. Jacobs argued in *Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures, 1879-1934*, that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) shared the same views about American Indians as Morgan. He was interested in nineteenth-century scientific theories about race that concluded that human races could be neatly arranged in gradient fashion, starting with the most primitive or child-like Africans, and ranging to the most civilized and evolved Europeans.\(^95\) Linked to these Eurocentric discourses were racist, gender-biased ideologies that informed the BIA in its policy-making decisions. "In 1913, for example, the superintendent of the Santa Fe Indian School wrote that 'among all primitive people descent is usually from the mother, owing to the fact that paternal origin is apt to be hard to trace because of the loose marital relations among such peoples.'"\(^96\)

Jacobs explained that one of Morgan's beliefs was that "matrilineality signaled loose

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\(^95\) See Gustav Jahoda, *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), for an in depth discussion of nineteenth-century scientific racial theories concerning humans and how those ideologies are linked to popular images and stereotypes.

\(^96\) Jacobs, 13.
sexual relations." The connections between ethnographic scholarship and BIA policies are too coincidental to ignore. American Indians in the Southwest did not overlook the actions of anthropologists.

In the twentieth century, thanks largely to Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and the work of others like Frank Hamilton Cushing, ethnographic styles and methodologies changed dramatically and began to lose their grip on Eurocentric and binary systems of perceiving the Other. From 1912 to 1930 Boas and his colleagues developed an idea that came to be known as "cultural relativism." Cultural relativists tried to illustrate that different cultures developed divergent, but not inferior, standards. Cultural pluralism was a similar theory that paralleled the work of Boas and Benedict. Parsons defined it as "democratic tolerance of all nationalities as against the melting-pot propaganda." However, the key word in Parsons definition is nationalities, a categorical term that was not guaranteed American Indians in the early twentieth-century. Her work is characterized by an overarching feeling of superiority and it has become part of the Laguna Pueblo oral tradition.

Elsie Clews Parsons worked at a time when ideas about race, culture, and gender were transforming, and concerns about industrialism and capitalism were deepening. Euro-Americans were reworking their nationalist and gendered identities and the Victorian ideals of womanhood and scientific racism were being undermined. "According to many historians, transformation in ideas about both gender and race..."
played important roles in shifting America from one cultural paradigm—Victorianism—to another—modernism.”101 The intellectual and social changes that Parsons contended with detrimentally affected her ethnographic work on the Pueblos, and for the Pueblos, it was an experience that has determined their recognition of and resistance to colonial agendas. Paula Gunn Allen’s (Laguna Pueblo) personal story reflects how Pueblo oral tradition has encapsulated their experiences of being gathered and collected for display by Parsons.

Allen wrestles with her dual responsibilities as a Pueblo woman and as a professor in a Western-dominated university system. As a Pueblo woman she understands that parts of her culture should not be available for public scrutiny. Yet, as a professor, she is obligated to present students with all the known evidence about Pueblos when she teaches Silko’s novel *Ceremony*. The pedagogical ethics of Allen’s two cultural habitations are in deep contention. She wrote about the expected behavior of a Pueblo concerning Laguna oral culture:

I was told that an anthropologist, Elsie Clews Parsons, had come to Laguna to collect material for her study of Pueblo religion and social culture. They had given her information readily enough and everything seemed fine. But when Parsons published the material, Lagunas saw how she treated their practices and beliefs, and they were horrified. In accordance with her academic training, she objectified, explained, detailed, and analyzed their lives as though they were simply curios, artifacts, and fetishes, and discussed the supernaturals as though they were objects of interest and patronization. Her underlying attitude for the supernaturals, the sacred, and the people who honored them didn’t evade notice.102

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101 Jacobs, 82.
According to Allen, the Pueblo people were more than willing to share aspects of their views and life-ways with outsiders, but anthropologists, activists, and missionaries in the Southwest in the early twentieth century abused that privilege by representing Native culture as inferior and worthy only as display for the dominant culture. Because of the Pueblo’s experience with Euro-American scholars, they have almost completely closed their culture to study by outsiders.

Other cultures welcome the professional intellectual help of Westerners in recording their histories, yet they have very strong commitments to how the knowledge should be used and what form a repository will take. For instance, in the late twentieth century, Ronnie Lupe, chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe suggested to anthropologist Keith H. Basso that he make maps of significant Apache places using Apache names. Basso explained:

Basically, the project had three parts: traveling with Apache consultants, many of whom were active or retired horsemen, to hundreds of named localities in the greater Cibecue region; talking with consultants, frequently at their homes, about places and place-names and the stories that lie behind them; and listening with a newly sensitized ear to how place-names get used in daily conversation by Apache men and women.103

The long-term project lasted from 1979 to 1984 and over that period of time, Basso reported learning not only how important places and place-names, and the stories and histories attached to them are to the Western Apache, but he also emphasized learning how differently people from various cultures think in physical and temporal terms. His experience as a Western scholar working with the Apache for almost twenty years led him to the conclusion that in ethnography “the problem we face is a semiotic one, a

barrier to constructing appropriate sense and significance which arises from the fact that all views articulated by Apache people are informed by their experience in a culturally constituted world of objects and events with which most of us are unfamiliar.”104 Basso’s devoted understanding of the Western Apache allowed him to cultivate a detachment to his project in a specific way that many Western scholars would find troubling. After all the years of ethnographic work was done, the maps Basso recorded for the Apache people were not published. Instead they remain in the possession of the Western Apache who use them as they best see fit.

Devon A. Mihesuah (Choctaw) noted that Western scholars often profit from the work they do recording the oral and material knowledge of Native communities while the communities themselves remain in poverty.105 For many reasons, including the intellectual heritage that mandates a specific format for authoritative scholarship, Western scholars are bound to institutions and institutionalized policies that make it hard for them to conduct a project in American Indian terms as did Basso. Also, when sources are unavailable to Westerners, or publication is not warranted, “choosing another topic is not an acceptable solution for many scholars.”106

Not all American Indian groups feel as strongly as the Pueblos and the Apaches about having their histories written and/or published by Euro-Americans and other non-Indians. Often for legal reasons concerning tribal acknowledgement by the federal government or land rights issues, for example, many Natives actively seek the

104 Basso, 39.
106 Mihesuah, Natives and Academics, 10.
professional and methodological assistance of Euro-Americans. However, Donald Fixico pointed out “some American Indians feel that the writing of American Indian history, mostly by non-Indians, is merely another example of the exploitive and unfair treatment of Indian people.” In other words, some American Indians are aware that history writing is just another form of colonialism.

James Clifford described one of the largest problems the field of ethnography has had to and still must contend with since the United States evolved through its paradigmatic shift from Victorianism to modernity. Clifford argued that objectifying indigenous cultures all over the world, including American Indians, is problematic because the process solidifies a place for them in the past and they are no longer seen as autonomously occupying a place in present and future North American societies. He wrote:

whenever marginal peoples come into a historical or ethnographic space that has been defined by the Western imagination...their distinct histories quickly vanish. Swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West and by various technologically advanced socialisms, these suddenly “backward” peoples no longer invent local futures. What is different about them remains tied to traditional pasts, inherited structures that either resist or yield to the new but cannot produce it.

Clifford specifically remarked about the Western imagination in this passage because it is imperative to recognize that Western standards of ethnography and history are constructed and reconstructed almost daily. The production of research and scholarship is a process that draws on itself and informs itself. It is made up of a particular set of

108 Clifford, 5.
standards, the Western intellectual heritage. In her own work with and writing about Native women, Mihesuah insisted, “Indian women are usually evaluated by standards set by white society—and that usually means male bias.”\textsuperscript{109} This leads to the conclusion that before any work in writing history can be done, scholars need to learn all they can about the culture and the communities about which they are writing.

Angela Cavender Wilson (Dakota) asserted, “To truly gain a grasp of American Indian history, the other historians—tribal and family historians—must be consulted about their own interpretations of and perspectives on history.”\textsuperscript{110} Collaborating with Natives in historical and ethnographic projects can illuminate ethical problems as well as solutions. Objectivity and detailed accuracy need not be sacrificed simply because a scholar has compassion for the subject. To reiterate, the production of ethnographic and historical texts are constructions in which the subject and object are in control. Both parties are not only aware of their role in the construction but are consistently making choices about how that construction will take shape. What Western-trained historians can do to obliterate colonial acts in historical writing is not only to exhaust available written records but also to consult with Natives about which oral sources are available for analysis and how best to go about the treatment of those sources. In the process, historians will learn about and get to know the people about whom they are writing; that new familiarity will illuminate intercultural differences and similarities. Knowing the


disparities between the ways people think about their experiences, their surroundings, and each other will help to alleviate some of the problems that arise when scholars from the Western intellectual heritage publish literature about American Indians.

Whether a scholar’s project is ethnographic or historical in its scope, the same considerations apply in halting the production of colonialist history—the recognition by Euro-American scholars of their intellectual heritage and their personal motives and experiences and how that affects their scholarship. The works of Western-trained ethnographers James Clifford, Renato Rosaldo, and Janice Radcliff offer clues for historians about how recognition of one’s individual intellectual position can enhance and strengthen one’s scholarship about American Indians.

An interesting idea about intellectual location is becoming popular among Western-trained scholars who deny colonial and exclusive practices in scholarship, however nuanced those practices may be. Regarding the previously discussed problems concerning motivation and desires in writing American Indian women’s histories, one remedy that will help to move scholars away from exclusionary practices of the Western intellectual heritage is what Renato Rosaldo termed, a "pluralistic vision of culture" in Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis.111

Scholars must make an interdisciplinary and personal commitment in their work to be accountable for their intellectual actions while studying and writing about American Indians. Although many would agree that an interdisciplinary approach is relevant and even commonplace in some instances, introducing personal politics to classic Western

111 Renato Rosaldo, Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis, (Boston: BeaconPress, 1989), X.
studies is a bit more awkward. Rosaldo acknowledged the awkwardness of personal politics as applied to anthropological studies: "If classic ethnography's vice was the slippage from the ideal of detachment to actual indifference, that of present-day reflexivity is the tendency for the self-absorbed Self to lose sight altogether of the culturally different Other." Yet ideas and ideologies of intentionality (research motives, intellectual desires, and anticipated outcomes) and experience (personal and professional histories, perceptions, and psychologies) are entangled in scholars' personal lives, and it is impossible for them to be removed from their own histories even in academic work.

In *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, bell hooks engaged the idea of the personal being political. Personal experiences and histories are the building blocks of individual internal and expressed ideologies. She applauded her mentor Paulo Freire, "Freire ... has always acknowledged that he occupies the location of white maleness, particularly in this country." Class, ethnicity, gender, nationality, age, and a multiplicity of other factors, some of which are nameless, determine intellectual location. Location is born of circumstance as well as individual choice and from that point constructions are developed during the course of historical and ethnographic research. In her own ethnographic project analyzing the reading of romance novels, Janice Radway found that her locale's level of interplay in the project influenced the work enough to change her objectives in research. She wrote:

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112 Rosaldo, 7.
even ethnographic description of the 'native's’ point of view must be an interpretation or, in words adapted from Clifford Geertz, my own construction of my informants’ construction of what they were up to in reading romances...even what I took to be simple descriptions of my interviewee’s self-understandings were produced through an internal organization of data and thus mediated by my own conceptual constructs and ways of seeing the world.”114

Like the Western intellectual heritage, the personal politics associated with any given locale are not inactive ornaments that may merely be admired or discarded. They penetrate each and every act of research and writing, making a homogenous mixture of intentionality and experience. However, the political scholar is of major concern in academic work: “Ethnographic truths are thus inherently partial—committed and incomplete. This point is now widely concerted—and resisted at strategic points by those who fear the collapse of clear standards of verification.”115 The ethics of Western science and history are indeed blurred by the introduction of individual politics and authority over a subject can be compromised. Eurocentric notions are clear-cut and a shift away from those ideologies introduces the problems underlying so-called objective cultural descriptions that were once part of a metahistory. To undermine colonial processes, scholars must be responsible for their intentionality and experience.

Scholars derive their questions and resulting arguments from their interests and those interests are subject to the fabric of what Rosaldo called the Self. For example, upon remembering and reanalyzing his own personal history, Deloria, or what he called his “2002 self,” acknowledged that his book Playing Indian was a highly personal

undertaking disguised in authoritative intellectual study.116 Becoming detached can be accomplished in part, but there will always be a trace of the scholar's essence in any work. Therefore, academic work is not derived from pure intentionality. From the idea that a writer is attached to his or her work, the problem of who has the authority to study what subjects, such as American Indian culture, again arises.117

Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, for instance, offers a seemingly "safe place" for Euro-American scholars to explore this problem, yet an in-depth study revealed that safe places are illusions. Similar problems of authority and colonialism in American Indian studies are found whether the subject of study is culturally segregated or if it is interactive with Euro-American culture. Research shows that hegemony is a significant factor in the Wild West Show. As the creators of the show and audiences dealt with the rise of imperialism and the continuance of Manifest Destiny, the struggle between the dominant and subordinate groups continued. Though the struggle was nuanced in the interactions taking place in the space of Wild West displays, ideologies were as ingrained as if it had been a physical battle such as Wounded Knee or the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Historians and ethnographers carry their intentionality and experience into every facet of their lives and work. Acknowledging location and personal politics can reroute academic work in a way that allows the scholar to write with authority. Metahistories attempt to embody an absolute truth yet post-modern theories and Native theories

117 See, Clifford, Predicament of Culture, p. 8, for a review of the “post-colonial crisis of ethnographic authority.”
contest that absolute and suggest that all grounds of authority must be viewed with skepticism.\textsuperscript{118} Perhaps it is most important to remember interpretations of cultural meanings and texts are never complete. Authority in writing is contingent upon a broad base of knowledge, ethical practices, and acknowledged locale. A great deal of accessible knowledge and critical analysis is not enough to produce an ethnographic or historical text that undermines the hegemony of the Western intellectual heritage. To challenge a metahistory, scholars must accept and include their personal motives and desires as an inextricable part of their work.

For instance, the works of Western-trained scholars that this chapter draws on, including Janice Radway, bell hooks, Renato Rosaldo and James Clifford, acknowledge their author's locale, intentionality, and experience in the introductory literature. In this way the authors challenge metahistories by claiming a specific and individual perception that influences the interpretation they offer readers. Thus, their acknowledgements upset the hegemony that Antonio Gramsci theorized was determined by a reciprocal balance of force and consent.\textsuperscript{119} Members of both the dominant and subordinate classes have questioned the consent of the subordinate group. This adds to the meaning of a pluralistic vision of culture by also making it a tool for rebalancing the hegemonic status of the dominant group.


The next chapter's analysis will ground itself in viewing the roles of American Indian women in nineteenth-century representations of Manifest Destiny and national identity as portrayed in Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show. Although the analysis is less about women and more focused on demonstrating how scholars are enmeshed in the historical events of their own cultures, it will incorporate the idea of a pluralistic vision of culture that will be obtained by applying the methodological considerations for studying American Indians that have been discussed in this and preceding chapters.

Studying Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show will demonstrate how Manifest Destiny was an intrinsic part of popular beliefs and how that ideology has pervaded the writing of history in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The study will examine how Wild West show audiences misinterpreted American Indians and how some present-day historians have been unable to escape similar assumptions about American Indians. The analysis will explain how a scholar's intellectual history is shrouded in events that happened a century or more earlier and how that affects American Indian women's histories. How women were portrayed in the shows sometimes parallels how they have been understood in historical scholarship. The analysis will be shaped by the historiographical concerns of the past four chapters: the Western intellectual heritage, the historiography of American Indian histories, the devaluing of oral traditions, and the proposals this chapter offers concerning ethical scholarship.

The next chapter explores the negotiations of power in the productions and usages of oral traditions and oral histories as well as written records. It attempts to avoid the intellectual heritage of subject-object dichotomies, as Allen and other scholars have
attempted in their work. Instead it will utilize reflexive techniques by remembering the tensions between Native knowledge and ethics and Western ethical practices.
The nineteenth century was a tumultuous time in the United States for a multitude of reasons. Industrialization, territorial expansion, recurring cycles of economic booms and busts, increased immigration, and other economic, social, and political changes continually shaped the construction of the United States. These transformations were paralleled by the introduction of new technologies and scientific theories that changed everyday life for many people in the United States. However, at mid-century, Euro-Americans were still faced with resistance from Native groups in what is now the western United States. American Indians claimed and defended their ancestral territories that the U.S. government also claimed. During the nineteenth century, the Louisiana Purchase, and other western regions that came under the domain of the United State government, would become familiar in the popular imagination as the Wild West. “At the turn of the twentieth century, millions of people around the world thought they remembered the American Wild West because they had seen it, full of life and color, smoking guns and galloping horses, presided over by the most recognizable celebrity of his day: William F.
Cody, or Buffalo Bill. What audiences saw in Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show was a representation of national identity, one that encouraged the imperialistic and expansionist ideologies of Manifest Destiny. Intellectuals, politicians, and other Euro-American social leaders pieced this set of ideas together in the nineteenth century using the notions of progress and Eurocentrism and the concept that Euro-American dominance of the land would unite and strengthen the nation. This chapter will illuminate the lingering effects of nineteenth-century ideologies in contemporary scholarship.

Popular entertainment like Wild West shows informed not only the public at large, but scholarship as well. In terms of identity, Euro-American laypeople and intellectuals alike turned to the Other to imagine themselves and the boundaries of their own dominant cultures. Scholars Philip Deloria (Yankton Dakota) and Shari M. Huhndorf, among others, argued that Euro-Americans, since the time of European and North American contact, have consistently looked to American Indians to define themselves in both their scholarship and their daily lives.

This chapter will argue that, as Diana Taylor has speculated, public displays are a center at which participants and spectators gather to inform and be informed of the status quo within the ideas and ideals of nationhood. Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show was just such a locus where people of differing races and genders renegotiated their hierarchical relationships within the “imagined political community” named the United States. Where American Indian women figured in that community was hidden; they were relegated like ghosts who possessed no autonomy or authorship in the writing of the Wild West’s

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metahistory. In many ways, historical scholarship is also a point of public display where ideologies are used to shape racial hierarchies and gender status. However, combining written evidence with oral tradition and oral histories, American Indian women's histories can slash through the imperialistic wilderness of the American West metahistory to lead scholars, who are accountable for their intentionality and heritage, to clearer views of nineteenth-century North America's composition.

“Metahistory” is a term that has been used frequently in this thesis. It is a postmodern term that can be used to understand a generalized representation of Euro-American and American Indian culture that developed over the last five centuries in the North America and the United States. A metahistory is an overarching idea or story that a dominant culture perpetuates consciously or unconsciously, thereby maintaining and enforcing its collective interpretation of history. The dominant history necessarily ignores and excludes the interpretations of the subordinate cultures concerning their shared history. Therefore, a metahistory is a tool with which the dominant culture bolsters its hegemony over the subordinate cultures in the contended space of the interpretation and representation of history. The dominant culture used metahistories with the support of traditional intellectuals, like Frederick Jackson Turner, whose cultural, economic, and/or educational capital exceeded the lower classes. Metahistories were also institutionalized through forms of popular culture, typically low culture, as often as they were viewed in high culture and academic scholarship. Concerning American Indian

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121 See Pierre Bourdieu, “Distinction & the Aristocracy of Culture,” in Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader, ed. John Storey, 2nd ed. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998) for a discussion of how various understandings and definitions of culture are a significant aspect in the struggle between dominant and subordinate groups in society.
culture in the U.S., the dominant culture (Anglo Saxon males, and increasingly the more inclusive group, Euro-American women and men) utilized, and continues to utilize, a historic metahistory to exercise its hegemony over the subordinate cultures (American Indians, and non Anglo-Saxon and/or non-Euro-American groups) through a "combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally."\(^{122}\)

Challenging the metahistory of the American West is a significant action many historians have taken to seek a complex view of history and subvert the power of elites, or dominant class, yet more problems emerge as scholars consider cultural perspective, political imperatives, and academic authority. Defying this particular metahistory is requisite when studying American Indians because many Native histories and experiences are rooted in completely different systems of knowledge that have only recently been combined by some Natives with Western systems. For instance, Keith H. Basso pointed out, a metahistory "appears to be in search of final historical truths, of which Apaches believe there are very few indeed."\(^{123}\) Many North American Native communities parallel this mode of thinking. Yet, writing thicker histories of the American West, that include multiple perspectives necessarily requires representatives of one culture's retelling of another's histories. The vulgarization of a culture's histories is at stake during the retelling, and the authority of the teller is debatable. Often the most controversial histories are those written by representatives of the dominant class. These scholars are enmeshed in a Western intellectual heritage that is weakened by its Eurocentric ideologies and binary systems of thought, as well as its conduct in collecting


\(^{123}\) Basso, 34.
and categorizing data. Therefore, when studying popular culture, it is paramount that historians are aware of the damaging nature of metahistories, and how popular culture has pervaded academic intellectual heritages.

Intentionality and experience are just two of many concerns for which a scholar must be accountable. This chapter will focus on those two concerns by making an interdisciplinary approach in studying images of American Indians, women and men, in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. The show provides an excellent platform to consider the metahistory of the American West, the histories that challenge that metahistory, and the necessary accountability of historians in resisting Manifest Destiny and colonialist ideologies in writing American Indian histories. In *The Predicament of Culture*, James Clifford asks, “Who has the authority to speak for a group’s identity or authenticity?”

As discussed in preceding chapters, academic authority is precarious and the means of obtaining it are controversial, yet recognizing personal politics and locale along with accessing a broad base of knowledge and experience can enable a scholar to work with confidence while circumventing metahistories rooted in the Western intellectual heritage.

First, the value of studying popular culture must be discussed. By evaluating Euro-American forms of popular culture scholars can understand how stereotypes of American Indians have played out in the popular imagination. They can also see that the same dominant ideologies being presented in popular culture too often also inform historical scholarship. Even a quick perusal of Frederick Jackson Turner’s work at the turn of the twentieth century illustrates how stereotypes have influenced academic

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124 Clifford, 8.
scholarship. Popular culture and history form their own contact zone, one that, as has already been stated, continues to affect scholarship in the twenty-first century. To study this contact zone, scholars need to understand what tools the hegemonic groups used to promote support for their actions and policies. It is not possible to study racism and gender dominance without looking at popular imaginings of cultural Others. In the case of Buffalo Bill’s shows, viewing American Indians allowed Euro-Americans to define their own moral geographies. Stereotypes have had a continuous and pervasive political bearing on not only images of American Indian women, but on their personal experiences as well. Popular culture and its spectacles are as powerful as they are invasive, therefore they are highly effective tools in hegemonic struggles.

Several theoretical positions, albeit grounded in European intellectual traditions that are suspect of colonialist ideologies, can still be useful in determining how popular culture informs the Western Intellectual heritage. The work of Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, and Shari M. Huhndorf all use traditional Western methodologies to undermine Eurocentric and elitist ideologies.

First, according to Gramsci, the dominant class exercises its hegemony through a combination of force and consent, which are reciprocally balanced. The force the dominant class employs must “appear to be based on the consent of the majority, expressed by the so-called organs of public opinion.” The dominant class must acknowledge the interests and belief systems of the subordinate groups in order for force

\footnote{For example, see Frederick Jackson Turner’s “The Problem of the West,” in \textit{Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: \textit{The Significance of the Frontier in American History} and Other Essays}, ed. John Mack Faragher (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994).
\footnote{Gramsci, 210.}}
to appear as the consent of the majority. This chapter will later discuss how the Wild West show demonstrates the working out of that balance between the producers of the show, sanctioning and support from dominant class representatives and spectators, lower class audiences, and non-Euro-American performers.

Second, as explained in chapter one, Hall postulated that audiences are not “cultural dopes.” Attempts to control people’s opinions through uses of popular culture were ineffective in various forms of nineteenth-century entertainment because audiences then and now, “are perfectly capable of recognising the way realities of working-class life is reorganised, reconstructed, and reshaped by the way they are represented.”127 This idea applies not only to working-class groups, but also to other groups that are not necessarily homogenous masses in terms of gender or race, but are mixes of all definitions of people. No matter the moral geography that an individual may claim, they are not duped by the dominant class, but can claim their own agency in the balance of power within interactions at the personal or national level.

Third, Huhndorf worked with the theories of Gramsci and Hall to form her own analysis of the functions of popular culture and how Euro-Americans use the imagery of Natives to formulate their own identities. She wrote, “culture serves as a key site for articulating and resisting the power relations that characterize American society.”128 She continued, “particular visions of the nation’s history have become dominant and...their inherent contradictions both conceal and betray white America’s colonial past and its

127 Hall, 447.
128 Huhndorf, 12.
Huhndorf’s work offers examples of members of the dominant class testing the boundaries of their hegemony by challenging the interests and beliefs of the subordinate classes.

Huhndorf’s study of World’s Fairs led her to the conclusion that the creation of the fairs, such as the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 and the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, and their political displays were tools for the dominant class to delineate the boundaries of their moral geographies to exclude American Indians and other non-Anglo-Saxons. The Midway Plaisance and the White City, two distinct areas in the World’s Columbian exposition, were polar opposites considering the materials and people they showcased. Between no other two areas was the divide between races more striking. The Midway contained spectacles that fascinated and disturbed white onlookers, such as West Indian voodoo ceremonies and Egyptian belly dancers. The White City was literally whitewashed and showcased the technological and cultural achievements of Euro-Americans. This comparison of the two sections of the fair tied directly into the popular scientific racist theories of the nineteenth century, which held that all the world’s races could be located on an evolutionary scale, and the technological superiority of Europeans and Euro-Americans was evidence of their racial superiority. Huhndorf explained:

In the particular case of exposition displays such as those on the Midway, images of colonized peoples both reflected and reinforced their subjugation to Western.
colonial power. But these spectacles also transformed Western viewers in part because the very act of seeing conjured a fantasy of their own dominance.\textsuperscript{132}

The politics of display can be analyzed to determine the hegemony of particular social groups. Robert Rydell’s work, \textit{All the World’s a Fair}, focuses on the hegemonic function of display in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Euro-American expositions in the United States, including the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition and the World’s Columbian Exposition. His work shows that World’s Fairs often included constructions of historical battles between the dominant (Euro-American) and subordinate classes (American Indians). Rydell argued, “World’s fairs performed a hegemonic function precisely because they propagated the ideas and values of the country’s political, financial, corporate, and intellectual leaders and offered these ideas as the proper interpretation of social and political reality.”\textsuperscript{133} In effect, World’s Fairs not only served as a moral arena for the dominant class to educate the classes they led and ruled, but the fairs also displayed utopian social cohesiveness in an “American” realm that was facing the uncertain issues of race, gender, and Manifest Destiny. Huhndorf agreed; World’s Fairs “created the illusion of a unified and homogeneous white American citizenry by glossing over the domestic conflicts that ravaged 1890s society.”

The fairs attempted to create a uniform “we,” or homogenous mass of Euro-Americans in the United States that blatantly excluded American Indian women and men.

The discipline of history, whether it is considered “political,” “military,” “social,” or “women’s,” is really the study of society, and in this instance, North American society. It is about the people who made up the political, military, social, and gendered

\textsuperscript{132} Huhndorf, 48.
\textsuperscript{133} Rydell, \textit{All the World’s the Fair}, 3.
experiences Euro-Americans and American Indians. Therefore, the importance of studying popular culture and its inherent politics and links to the dominant class can be summed up in one statement: “Recognizing that there are other, non-hegemonic ways of seeing also suggests the possibility of social change.”

History writing and social shifts are inextricably linked in numerous ways. By undertaking an interdisciplinary study of Native and Western histories and popular culture, non-Indian historians who are sensitive to the colonial experiences of North American Native communities, and who are aware that those groups maintain their own valid systems of knowledge, can begin the process of decolonizing the knowledge and methodologies of the dominant intellectual class and its productions of exclusive metahistories.

Like World’s Fairs, Wild West shows were also hegemonic displays mostly created by and for the dominant group. Both forms of entertainment and instruction took place during the late nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. Both were also espoused from colonial ideologies that were concerned with the expansion of the United States into the Western territories that were under federal government and military jurisdiction. Part of the displays’ functions was to perpetuate imperialist ideologies that began to develop during pre-colonial exploration in North America.

Studying the Buffalo Bill Show is an excellent way to understand the macrocosm of the United States during the nineteenth century. Precisely because it consisted of reenactments of the wars for the American West and the daily life of the people who lived there, it offers an active text that can be interpreted by historians to see how Euro-

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134 Huhndorf, 13.
Americans were thinking about the socially, economically, and politically unstable century of which they were a part. Colonization still played a major role in the structuring of the nation and it deeply affected the lives of American Indian women. The form of colonization that Buffalo Bill’s show took was the “Indian Problem” and the challenge and duty of Manifest Destiny in expanding the nation into the western territories.

Paul Reddin argued that William F. Cody embraced the ideology of Manifest Destiny which “postulated that the United States should expand to fill all or most of North America, preferably taking territory by peaceful means, but using force if necessary, supplanting native peoples and their societies with Anglo-Saxon institutions, Protestant Christianity, and U.S. civilization.”135 Buffalo Bill and his Wild West Show were rooted in the tenets of Manifest Destiny.

The politics of display in Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show illuminate the locations of hegemonic boundaries within Manifest Destiny and show what actions by the dominant class constituted the racist and gendered agenda that popular culture carried out in the nineteenth century. Yet, although the creators of the Buffalo Bill Show attempted to establish and enforce their ideologies of the American West (Manifest Destiny and the social, industrial, and economic progress of the United States), they were only able to do so within the confines of the hegemonic balance that the subordinate classes enforced.

The lexicons of Manifest Destiny and colonialism are linked to a specific metahistory of the United States in which Euro-Americans imagine themselves to be superior to all other cultures. The methodology of this chapter rests on the terms

metahistory and hegemony and how these notions are linked to the Western intellectual heritage. The terms can be used to clarify some Native theory and forms of resistance to colonialism, like Gerald Vizenor’s (Ojibway) concepts of “manifest manners” and “survivance”. “Manifest manners are the course of dominance, the racialist notions and misnomers sustained in archives and lexicons as ‘authentic’ representations of Indian cultures.” Manifest manners are the building blocks of the metahistory that informs the dominant and subordinate groups of their hegemonic positions in relation to the generalized representation of American Indian culture. Savagery, backwardness, and heathenism characterize the dominant culture’s interpretation of American Indian culture. Vizenor’s work argues that the balance of force and consent within the metahistory is often worked out through popular culture like Wild West shows. Over time the metahistory is remolded by Westerners as the balance of power is challenged by resistance, Native and otherwise, yet its developmental framework remains the same; it is fundamentally a hegemonic struggle between dominant and subordinate groups.

To reiterate Gramsci’s theory, a group “is dominant in two ways, i.e. ‘leading’ and ‘dominant’. It leads the classes which are its allies, and dominates those which are its enemies.” Therefore, the dominant group leads its allies (“Americans”) and coerces its enemies (marginalized communities that are both non-Indian and non-Euro-American) and the reciprocal balance of force and consent within the metahistory is shaped and reshaped between them. The dominant group appears to control American Indian culture,

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however, American Indian groups defy the hegemony of the metahistory through the process of survivance.

Survivance is an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry. Survivance means the right of succession or reversion of an estate, and in that sense, the estate of native survivancy. By maintaining and creating their own histories, American Indians challenge the metahistory by introducing alternative interpretations and representations that inform the dominant and subordinate groups, even in terms of popular culture. In the Buffalo Bill Show, for example, American Indians were concerned with their on-stage images and how their histories were communicated to their audiences; they were concerned with claiming their constructions in the Wild West Show. Those “Show Indians” built an estate of survivancy by participating in the production of their stage images, and remaining involved in oral traditions, the creation of their own histories.

Survivance undermines the metahistory and its inherent manifest manners. It is a reaction against the hegemony of the dominant culture. Survivance protects American Indian moral geographies as it introduces alternate independent interpretations of North American and United States histories by articulating its own narratives and rejecting the manifest manners of the dominant culture. The new interpretations that make up the estate of survivancy are perilous ground for a scholar reared in the Western intellectual heritage. The problem then, is how can the intellectual, in a course of study, enter the estate without corrupting it? To answer this question the context of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show and images of American Indians within that show will be analyzed using

138 Vizener, vii.
written primary texts. Finding out women’s roles will be managed by introducing the study of oral traditions to a typically Western analysis.

As stated earlier, Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show was similar to World Fairs in that it was a display of a perceived American legacy. In the nineteenth century the displays were tied to Eurocentric ideologies such as imperialism and Manifest Destiny. The Wild West Show was a fantastical retelling of the legacy of the West and it reassured audiences that, for Euro-Americans, and Anglo-Saxons especially, Manifest Destiny was a dutiful endeavor. Like World’s Fairs, the Wild West Show was a highly profitable form of popular entertainment, “the Wild West succeeded to the extent that it convinced its audience that it was both ‘authentic’ and ‘entertaining’. What is important to remember is that the show was created by and for the dominant culture to retell their version of the story of the American West, how it was conquered, and how it was being civilized in the late nineteenth century. “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West represented a kind of memory showmanship…a link between Americans’ understanding of their history and their consumption of spectacularized versions of it.” Buffalo Bill Cody was himself an embodiment of the romantic memory tied to the metahistory of the American West.

Born on the frontier in Iowa in 1846, Cody took part in almost every imaginable occupation available in the western territories. From the time he was young he worked as an ox-team driver, a messenger for the pony express, he prospected for gold, worked on wagon trains, lead hunting and trapping expeditions, and hunted buffalo for the U.S. army and the railroad. He had numerous encounters with American Indians and he often

139 Kasson, 55.
140 Kasson, 8.
served as a sort of interpreter between American Indians and whites. By the 1870s and into the 1880s Cody was involved in the production of dime novels and stage shows.

In 1883, along with various business partners Cody created the Wild West Show. Joy S. Kasson argued that his show was “his real contribution to the history of American entertainment and of public interpretation of the frontier experience.” The entertainment included melodramatic stage play, sportsmen’s exhibitions such as marksmanship, and animal performances reminiscent of circus shows. The show featured performers like Wild Bill Hickok, Annie Oakley, and Sitting Bull. Cody and his partners advertised the show using an educational and historical emphasis while simultaneously calling it an authentic and entertaining replica of the West. “In fact, Cody promised so much accuracy that he claimed his exhibition was not a show at all but ‘reality itself.’”

Paul Reddin wrote that the Wild West Show was “a potent molder of ideas and images.” The ideologies implicated in the show bolstered the “authentic” American metahistory. That history denied women, and especially non-Euro-American women, access to representation. Cody’s display of the American West was a highly gendered and racist performance.

The Buffalo Bill Show ratified the gendered superiority of Anglo-Saxons and other Euro-Americans as well as the dream of the American frontier. One space of contention within the show was the images of American Indians as performers and

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143 Kasson, 41.
144 Kasson, 55.
145 Reddin, 61.
146 Reddin, ?.
representatives of reality. American Indians were most often cast in battle scenes in World’s Fairs and Wild West shows alike. They were sometimes able to demonstrate their hunting, trapping, and survival skills and certain aspects of their culture such as dancing, especially in the Buffalo Bill Show. In part, what made the Wild West Show so successful was Cody’s, perhaps unconscious, representation of a hero against the struggle of evil.\textsuperscript{147} It was symbolic of the collective struggle of Europeans who faced endless dangers and fought countless enemies to settle the New World and carry out their duties as mandated by Manifest Destiny. In order to construct the display, Cody needed a villain, and that villain was the American Indian.

Joy S. Kasson, Paul Reddin, and L.G. Moses all emphasize in their studies of the Wild West that the expectations of the audiences reflect an understanding that they were witnessing an “authentic” display of plains life. Therefore it is reasonable to imagine that audiences may have taken the gendered and racist images of American Indians they saw in the Wild West into their daily lives and associated American Indians with the horrendous roles they played in the show. American Indians were always cast as the enemy in the battle plays, and Cody was always the hero. The show was a form of popular culture that upheld manifest manners, yet there is evidence of survivance within the show as well.

American Indian performers in the show included Luther Standing Bear, Black Elk, Sitting Bull, Fools Crow, Plenty Shawls and many more. These people were active participants in the creation of the roles they played. Although they were most often cast as evil enemies there were positive displays as well and according to the records the

\textsuperscript{147} Kasson, 161.
Show Indians left behind, they were aware of the meanings embedded in their Wild West Show images.

From contracts, autobiographies, interviews, photographs, and drawings that the American Indians created, their experiences in the Wild West Show can be interpreted. American Indians willingly signed contracts to perform in the Wild West Show season after season, therefore, it can be assumed that they benefited from their participation in several ways. American Indians found steady work with the shows as well as the chance to travel and opportunities to interact with the world outside reservations. Although the indigenous performers were most often acting out battles and being defeated by heroic Euro-Americans, they were also able to show off their skills of horsemanship, dancing, singing and their creativity in game making. It seems that they had authority over those sections of the show in which they displayed their skills and culture. Black Elk, an Oglala Lakota performer stated in his autobiography, “I liked the part of the show we made, but not the part the Wasichus made.” Looking into the work of another Lakota performer, Sitting Bull, it can be seen that a liking for the part of the show the Indians made implies that the performers were aware of the image-making process and how, in some cases, that process could be utilized to better Euro-Americans’ views of American Indians. In other words, image-making was a process of survivance.

Sitting Bull was interested in projecting images in the white world and finding ways of self-representation that would benefit his culture. As a temporary member of

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149 Kasson, 173.
the Wild West show Sitting Bull was able to further his study in American entertainment and the perceptions of white audiences involved with various forms of media.

Sitting Bull’s biographer Robert M. Utley has argued that his exposure to the white press helped to change the Euro-American public’s simplistic, demonized view of American Indians in general and Sitting Bull in particular. If so, the Buffalo Bill tour offered many opportunities to advance this process.150

Joy S. Kasson argued that the Lakota performers, Sitting Bull, Black Elk, and Fools Crow were well aware that popular culture was a vehicle for shaping American Indian images.

There can be no doubt that audiences and performers had complex interactions and that image-making was a source of contention. As stated earlier, the show was linked to national identity and Manifest Destiny. Cody’s show might not have been the most successful traveling entertainment in the nineteenth century if it did not exceed or at least meet the expectations of the audience. Therefore, the performances necessarily reflected the desires of the audience. The show acted as an informant and a source of assurance to Euro-American people that the dream of the American West had been realized and that European superiority and dominance in North America was inevitable. This desire for validation mandated the repertoire of Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show.

Manifest Destiny and national identity as represented in the Wild West Show and many other nineteenth century events are a part of many Western-trained scholars’ heritage. The legacies of these doctrines have trickled into the twenty-first century and have helped to shape political personalities. Intentionality and experience are filters that distract scholars from pure analysis when studying any historical event, but especially one encompassed in a culture differing from that of the scholar. The predicament then is

150 Kasson, 175.
how to remove or at least displace the filters enough in order to avoid upholding manifest manners so that thicker histories about American Indian women can be written.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and its display of national identity excluded many inhabitants of the United States like American Indians, and especially American Indian women. A century after the founding of the Wild West shows, Manifest Destiny and its role in Western-produced histories was still a mainstream process. The imperialistic ideologies of the nineteenth century lingered throughout the late twentieth century, and according to Huhndorf they have penetrated the twenty-first century as well. Colonial acts in history are perpetuated because scholars either ignore, or are detrimentally unaware that their methodological biases are producing imperialist and exclusive histories. Vizenor is one scholar who has offered a form of resistance to the lexicon of Manifest Destiny and its links to a North American metahistory that claims European racial superiority and male dominance. Vizenor has used the language of Western scholars in his own work and turned notions of progress in historical scholarship upside-down by infusing the intellectual language with Native theory.

Without Vizenor's theories, a first reading of the Buffalo Bill story would lead one to think that Manifest Destiny was indeed an isolated ideology. Although the ideology was dominant and leading, the participation of the American Indians, upon closer inspection, proves that Manifest Destiny required the consent of the American Indians. Performers such as Sitting Bull and Black Elk were strictly voluntary participants. They had the option to remain at home on the reservations, yet they chose to

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construct images in popular culture. This then raises the questions of why they cared to perform in a show that seemingly represented them as forces of evil and spectacles of savagery. It is because the meanings of their images were more complex than simply being villainous and because they found a degree of autonomy in their work.

This is a viewpoint that can only be reached by questioning manifest manners and becoming a part of the struggle the estate of survivancy assumes. Whether manifest manners are chosen over survivancy or vice versa is not a question of the scholars' intentionality or experience but rather their means of dealing with their own histories and internalized ideologies.

Understanding meanings within the images of American Indians in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show is a project that can never be completed because a scholar's intentionality and experience is not static and each student of American Indian studies brings with her a new sense of interpretation. Also, each Show Indian had his or her own perceptions of culture and how it was displayed in the Wild West. It is imperative that historians acknowledge their intentionality and experience. The filters that intercept historical and ethnographic work persist, yet that does not imply that the importance of the politics of display and the experiences of American Indian women in those displays is lost. Historians, who carry with them new and different ways of thinking, experiencing, and applying intentions to their work, must simply excavate them.

The unearthing of American Indian women's histories within the Buffalo Bill Show should begin with a review of how women are perceived in North American
metahistories. Scott Vickers argued that colonization depended upon the dominant class’ ability to bring everyone under the same ideologies of social progress. To accomplish this, colonizers needed to see American Indians as one homogeneous mass. Wild West shows and World’s Fairs played heavily on this notion of a “single Indian entity.” In order to create a singular identity for American Indians, stereotypes were created and widely used by the colonizing and dominant groups.

Gustav Jahoda discussed anthropological definitions of stereotypes in *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture*. Citing anthropologists, he defined a stereotype as “an exaggerated belief associated with a category” that reflects “ingroup motives, wishes, guilts, fears and frustrations.” Jahoda, however, preferred the term “images” as opposed to “stereotype” because it “has the advantage of conveying a far richer range of meanings, encompassing not only perceptions and mental representations but also, importantly, feelings.” The stereotypes, or images, that Europeans and Euro-Americans developed about American Indians reflect conflicting feelings that the dominant class held for Native people.

Two overarching images are the “noble savage” and the “ignoble savage.” Over time and in different regions of North America, these terms varied, but the feeling behind them remained essentially the same. Europeans and Euro-Americans both admired and were repulsed by American Indian women and men. Gary B. Nash and other historians have explained that the sentiment behind these split images at the time of contact and

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153 Jahoda, xiv.
154 Jahoda, xv.
155 Vickers, 4-5.
European settlement were intertwined with colonial aspirations. On one hand, noble savages were admirable for their strength, knowledge, and hunting abilities, and they often provided a sort of tape measure against which European and Euro-American elites could critique European societies. On the other hand, the ignoble savage justified European conquest and the “Christianization” and “civilization” of Natives. This image also served as a measuring stick for Europeans in North America; it reminded them of what they did not want to be. It is important to note that even though the noble savage image seems positive and benign, it still “deprives Indians of a historical reality apart from white projections.” This is significant because one of the omissions that these stereotypes make is a denial of the existence of American Indian women, which is demonstrated in Wild West shows as well as the American West metahistory. The two opposing images, noble vs. ignoble, are gendered in their imaginings and refer mainly to men. However, recent analyses of representations of Pocahontas, a famous seventeenth-century Powhatan woman from what is now Virginia, show that, at times, it was impossible to ignore American Indian women, yet when their presence had to be acknowledged, they were pigeon-holed into a similar binary.

Pocahontas is one of the most famous Native women in the dominant class’s collective memory. When she was represented in nineteenth-century popular culture she carried an “unwieldy ideological burden: to represent and legitimate American colonialist and nationalistic projects; to serve as both the implicitly sexualized object of conquest

157 Vickers, 40.
who offers herself freely to the conqueror and the sanctified figure of the nation-as-mother who unites all her citizens/children in a unified ‘family.’”  

Kim Anderson (Cree/Métis) described Native female images that have persisted even into twentieth-century popular culture:

In both western and Indigenous frameworks, Native women have historically been equated with the land. The Euro-constructed image of Native women, therefore, mirrors western attitudes towards the earth. Sadly, this relationship has typically developed within the context of control, conquest, possession and exploitation…‘Indian princess’ imagery constructed Indigenous women as the virgin frontier, the pure border waiting to be crossed.  

Pocahontas was the female counterpart of the noble savage and she embodied the good/civilized half of the womanhood binary. She was seen in Euro-American culture as a “Princess” or “good Indian” woman as opposed to a “squaw.” In order for a Native woman to be perceived as a princess she was expected to “defy her own people, exile herself from them, and become white, and perhaps suffer death.” Rayna Green explained that Pocahontas was a national model for Euro-American understandings of Native women as well as a means of quelling perceived societal crises. She wrote, “the Princess intrudes on the national consciousness, and a potential cult waits to be resurrected when our anxieties about who we are make us all recall her from her woodland retreat.”  

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160 See Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, eds., *Women and Power in Native North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 4-6, for a historiographical overview of studies on female Native stereotypes.
162 Green, 701.
West, the princess stereotype served its function right into oblivion. As the territory was eventually claimed by Euro-Americans, the “sexualized object of conquest” no longer had any purpose, and as the Buffalo Bill show illustrates, American Indian women therefore disappeared. Yet, the stereotypes remained and recent historical scholarship reveals how women continue to be pushed to the margins, just as they were in nineteenth-century popular culture.

According to a program printed for Buffalo Bill’s Wild West in 1893, the show featured mostly activities that were considered masculine such as horseracing, a re-enactment of a Native attack on the Deadwood Stagecoach line and other battles, and marksmanship contests. In the program, Nate Salisbury, the vice president and manager of the show was quoted:

Our aim is to make the public acquainted with the manners and customs of the daily life of the dwellers in the far West of the United States, through the means of actual and realistic scenes from life...each scene presents a faithful picture of the habits these folk, down to the smallest detail.

However, Salisbury and his co-producers completely omitted an important detail in their displays of the American West. Women, both Euro-American and American Indian, were far from adequately represented in the show. Apart from the most famous women involved in the show, Annie Oakley and Lillian Smith, most women only participated on the sidelines. American Indian women especially were relegated to the backstage where they could be viewed in their lodges by Western observers like so many museum artifacts. Stephen Currie wrote, “Indian women did not have to be performers to make the

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164 Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, 4.
shows seem even more realistic. Indian women were a big draw for people who toured the grounds of the show before the program began.” 165 It appears that even some contemporary writers are not ready to question the gender imbalance the Buffalo Bill Show portrayed as “life as it is witnessed on the plains.”166

According to Currie, the major reason American Indian women were involved in the show was to “keep their husbands in line.”167 He explained, “The Indian Bureau urged show promoters to hire married Indian men and have them bring their wives or entire families along. Single men, agents reasoned, would be more likely to create havoc on tour.”168 Historians like Kasson, Reddin, and Moses do not offer much more evidence about women of any ethnicity and their experiences in the show other than the women who were headliners, like Oakley, than did Currie. Kasson and Reddin each have one illustration of a Native woman (Plenty Shawls and Arrow-head, respectively) in their studies, accompanied by one-sentence explanations of the activities in the tour.169

Therefore, it can be assumed that only a handful of American Indian women performed in the show and historians have found little historical evidence of their experiences therein. What is most disturbing however, is the lack of literature expressing and analyzing the gender biases of Buffalo Bill’s show according to the evidence that is readily available. To repeat an important point, Kasson wrote:

Buffalo Bill’s Wild West represented a kind of memory showmanship. At stake were not only the invention of a great entertainment form and the creation of a

166 Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, 4.
167 Currie, 50.
168 Currie, 49-50.
169 Kasson, 194-5; Reddin, illustrations between pages 85 and 86.
worldwide celebrity, but the forging of a link that would grow stronger over the course of the next century, a link between national identity and popular culture, between Americans’ understanding of their history and their consumption of spectacularized versions of it.170

Kasson recognized the importance of combinations of popular imagery and history, yet her work is a striking example of how historians and other scholars continue to infuse their work with misconceptions that are created and enforced within popular culture. In this case, Kasson closely examined notions of racial hierarchy within the show and their meanings for Native performers, yet her omission of a discussion about American Indian women and their glaring absence in the displays of the show only perpetuates the notion that those women had no place in nation-building in the American West. Kasson did not complicate her methodologies, which would have led her to stronger conclusions about audiences’ understandings of history. She would have recognized how deeply ingrained Victorian notions of womanhood were in the show and how that public spectacle has influenced the historiography of the American West.

Analyzing the primary texts using the frameworks of race, class, and gender alone leads to the conclusion American Indian women and men were thought of as impediments to the spread of progress and that they challenged Euro-Americans’ abilities to enforce Manifest Destiny. Stereotypes were the chosen hegemonic tool of the Buffalo Bill Show, and in the 1893 program Natives were referred to as “red terrors” and “squaws.”171 Kasson and Reddin addressed these racial issues of conflicts and interactions between the dominant and subordinate groups within this specific contact

170 Kasson, 8.
171 Buffalo Bill's Wild West, 11, 39.
zone, yet neither historian fully recognized the moral geographies of American Indians. The analyses are missing discussions of gender and socio-economics, not to mention a broader understanding of Native cultures. Since most American Indian performers were from Plains cultures, especially Lakota, that broader understanding could have been reached by including studies of Plains Indian oral traditions. Looking at the oral literatures would more accurately define women's roles within those communities and illuminate the gendered and racist language of the dominant class in the displays. For instance, most Native women in the show were seen only in their lodges tending children and producing hand-made crafts. Yet, from studying oral traditions, scholars would immediately recognize that the importance of those women in their communities as social leaders and decision-makers, as contributors to socio-economic activities, and as spiritual and ceremonial leaders was not being represented in the shows. They would also recognize that twentieth and twenty-first century scholarship continues to represent American Indian women in the same two-dimensional fashion, as is seen by the work of Kasson and Reddin. Neither scholar acknowledged the roles women occupied in their communities as opposed to those they occupied in the Buffalo Bill Show. Western standards of Victorian domesticity were transcribed into the stereotypes of American Indian women in both the Buffalo Bill Show and the historical scholarship.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was a contact zone in which hegemonic struggles and the dominance of Manifest Destiny and its inherent manifest manners hid the significance of American Indian women as historical agents. History writing is itself a contact zone that perpetuates the lexicon of Manifest Destiny by implicating notions of
progress, and gendered and racist hierarchies. Studying the Buffalo Bill Show and the correlating major historical scholarship shows that the Western intellectual heritage has transported representations of American Indian women into the twenty-first century. Current representations of Native women reflect the nineteenth-century stereotypes, and therefore, the conflicting feelings some scholars have for those women.

Although the metahistory of the American West is being challenged, this analysis demonstrates that further steps should be taken in order for American Indian women’s histories to come to the forefront of history writing. To challenge the popular images of American Indian women, scholars will find that studying oral traditions in combination with interdisciplinary work, and the inclusion of race, gender, and class as analytical tools will strengthen conscientious studies written by Western-trained scholars. To further undermine the power of hegemonic displays, and their linked histories, scholars must be reflexive in their work and consider the ideologies the dominant class has sanctioned throughout centuries of colonization. Continuing to defy the metahistory of the American West to write American Indian histories in their own terms is an act of survivance any responsible scholar can undertake, even within the contact zone of history writing.
CHAPTER SEVEN

SURVIVANCE

This thesis offered a critique of current historical methodologies that bolster metahistories and undermine moral geographies by hiding the histories of American Indian women. It described “history writing” as an action that occurs in a contact zone and therefore is in danger of perpetuating colonial acts which denigrate the histories and experiences of non-Western people who have little or no access to the dominant class and the ideologies it seeks to enforce. Although Western methods that are applied in writing history are valuable, they must be continually critiqued, revamped, and, at times, even discarded if historians wish to write thick histories that improve our understandings of social and political conditions of people of differing cultures. This is the strength of history—its ability to be changed and made new to better serve its writers and its students.

Native scholars, more often than not, are trained in Western institutions that both uphold and challenge the Western intellectual heritage. Gerald Vizenor (Ojibway) is one of those scholars, and his scholarship is an example of how Western intellectual traditions and Native theory can blend, almost harmoniously, to remake intellectual disciplines, to form them into tools that that are simultaneously flexible and sound. In Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance, Vizenor worked as a trickster writer, using Native knowledge and Native ways of perceiving in combination with postmodern
and post-colonial theories to undermine the Western metahistory of the American Indian.

He wrote,

The postindian warriors encounter their enemies with the same courage in literature as their ancestors once evinced on horses, and they create their stories with a new sense of survivance. The warriors bear the simulations of their time and counter the manifest manners of domination.  

Vizenor recognized the writing of history as a contact zone, one in which moral geographies can be successfully represented.

Therefore, Native resistance to the dominant culture took place not only on the battlefields in the American West, but also in abstract intellectual “spheres of interaction.” LeAnne Howe’s (Choctaw) article, “The Story of America: A Tribalography,” is an example of where scholarship concerning American Indians may be headed. Her work is a mixture of Western method, Native theory, and oral tradition. In the article Howe began with a story, and mingled it with biology, or what Westerners would call “hard scientific fact.” Then she returned to story, then back to biology, on to history, and finally to theory. These delineations are made only for clarity within this analysis of Howe’s article. However, her article is not segregated in this manner, it is entirely tribalography: it is survivance.

Howe’s tribalography confronts the weaknesses of Western methodologies: the authority of print, the devaluing of Native knowledge, and the valuing of linear and progressive thought. Her critique of Western scholarship centered on the notions of categorization and classification and their damaging roles in colonization. She defined tribalography:

172 Vizenor, 4.
it achieves a new understanding in theorizing on Native studies...Native stories, no matter what form they take (novel, poem, drama, memoir, film, history), seem to pull all the elements together of the storyteller's tribe, meaning the people, the land, and multiple characters and all their manifestations and revelations, and connect these in past, present, and future milieus...I have tried to show that tribalography comes from the Native propensity for bringing things together, for making consensus, and for symbiotically connecting one thing to another. It is a cultural bias, if you will.\textsuperscript{173}

Howe's work is a model for all students considering writing the histories of American Indians. It encourages interdisciplinary study and complicating analytical tools, and it is even aware of intellectual locale.

This thesis began with the idea that historians often feel they need authenticated and written evidence in order to write history. It ends with the idea that historians are agents, making history to serve certain purposes. It ends with the ideal that by stepping outside the Western intellectual heritage and looking to other knowledges, even indigenous knowledges, those scholars can create histories that defy Eurocentrism, Manifest Destiny, and other racial, gendered, socio-economic, and political forms of domination.


Braund, Kathryn E. Holland. “Guardians of Tradition and Handmaidens to Change: Women’s Roles in Creek Economic and Social Life During the Eighteenth Century.” *American Indian Quarterly* XIV, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 239-258.


