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“Come Out of the Woods and We’ll Tell You Who You Are”: The Protest

Literatures of S. Alice Callahan, Charles Alexander

Eastman, and Simon Pokagon

by

Steve Harrison

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APPENDIX: Committee Approval

To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of STEVEN HARRISON find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Terry Engebresten
Chair, Graduate Committee

Amanda Zink
Graduate Committee Member

David Lawrimore
Graduate Committee Member

Karen Hartman
Graduate Faculty Representative

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family. Through thick and thin you have supported me in enumerable ways. I especially dedicate this to my parents Annette and Dale as well as to my siblings Jim, Tom, Ruth, Liz, and their spouses and families for their prayers in my behalf.

I dedicate this text to Michelle, who has listened to me ramble on for years about these topics. She has been my sounding board, my rudder in times of consternation, and my motivation when I needed it. Though she has not loved the process, she has stood by my side throughout this seemingly never-ending process. I love you dear.

Lastly, I dedicate this to my children, Andrew, Trevor, Shaelynn, and Braeden, most of whom cannot remember what Dad was like before this all started. I love all of you, my babies.

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

“COME OUT OF THE WOODS AND WE’LL TELL YOU WHO YOU ARE”: THE PROTEST LITERATURES OF S. ALICE CALLAHAN, CHARLES ALEXANDER EASTMAN, AND SIMON POKAGON.

In the original publisher’s preface of *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, H.J. Smith and Co. state that they “give no apologies...for the crudeness or the incompleteness of the work” The fact that an Indian desires to plead her case where judge and jury are chosen from among the oppressors is our warrant for publishing this little volume” and further claim that the book is “protest against the present day Indian policy of our government is sincere, earnest, and timely” (ix).

This dissertation challenges this claim that *Wynema* is indeed American Indian protest literature and further argues that it has been misread as Indian protest when it is really indicative of domestic protest. Using Charles Alexander Eastman’s *From the Deep Wood to Civilization; Chapters in the Autobiography of an Indian* and Simon Pokagon’s *Ogimawke Mitigwaki: [Queen of the Woods]*, I define and defend American Indian protest literature as literature that addresses a divided audience, speaks to the injustices of and broken promises to the American Indian, but it should also be written by, for, and about American Indians to give them a voice in the conversation as well as present their solutions.

Taken together and despite my reclassification of *Wynema* as domestic and American protest, I argue that the presence of *Queen of the Woods*, *From the Deep Woods*, and *Wynema* should be increased in teaching Native American literature generally, and Native American protest literature specifically so that their words, voices and protest will finally be heard by more than a single audience. The discussion and learning of their protest are vital to “open the eyes and heart of the world to [American Indian] afflictions [and successes], and thus speedily usher into existence an era of good feeling and just dealing towards us and our more oppressed brothers. (*Wynema* dedication).

Chapter One

What is an Indian to Do?: Integration, Migration, and Progression

Brothers, We tell you that we seek not war, we ask nothing better than to be quiet, and it depends, Brothers, only on you English, to have peace with us. We have not yet sold the lands we inhabit, we wish to keep the possession of them. Our elders have been willing to tolerate you, brothers Englishmen, on the seaboard as far as Sawakwato; as that has been so decided, we wish it to be so. But we will not cede one single inch of the lands we inhabit beyond what has been decided formally by our fathers.

---Atewanto, Chief Speaker of the Abenakis of St. Francis

Do you believe me such a fool as not to prefer eating good meat, sleeping quietly with my wives and children, laughing and making merry with you, having copper and hatchets and anything else—as your friend—to flying from you as your enemy, lying cold in the woods, eating acorns and roots, and being so hunted by you meanwhile, that if but a twig break, my men will cry out, "here comes Captain Smith!" Let us be friends, then. Do not invade us thus with such an armed force. Lay aside these arms.

---Powhatan, Chief of the Powhatan, 1609

In 1997, American Indian¹ Studies scholar A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff edited and republished a book that had been out of print for over one hundred years. With Ruoff's help, S. Alice Callahan (Muscogee Creek) reappeared as the first American Indian woman to produce and publish a novel. Originally published in 1891, *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, Callahan's only novel, existed in relative obscurity while Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins' (Piute) autobiography, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*, published in 1883, enjoyed extensive attention both in academia and out. Of Callahan's work, H.J. Smith and Co., in the original 1891 preface, state that, as the

¹ Throughout this dissertation, I will use the term "American Indian" rather than "Native American" except where quotations are involved. Because of the multiple names that the people are called and call themselves, I defer to the primary texts and will use their naming. Pokagon, Callahan, and Eastman use the term "Indian" or "American Indian," whereas "Native American" emerges out of critical literary analyses as well as other sources, including political correctness concerns of the late 20th century.

publishers, offer no apologies for any crudeness or inconsistencies of the work. They claim that “the fact that an Indian, one of the oppressed, desires to plead her cause at a tribunal where judge and jury are chosen from among the oppressors, is [their] warrant for publishing this little volume” (ix). Besides being the thought and product of Indian creation, Smith and Co. state that works written by Indians who are pleading their case against mistreatment and abuse are worthy of careful consideration by any audience. This consideration would and should lead the audience to conclude that “this protest against the present day Indian policy of our government is sincere, earnest, and timely” (ix).

It is unfortunate that little documentation other than *Wynema* can shed light on Callahan’s thought regarding her own text. The position that the text is American Indian protest originates from both Ruoff and Smith and Co. Aside from her text, the only other documents where she expresses her wishes are located in letters to her family, which (according to Ruoff) do not shed any light on how she desired her text to be classified. Ruoff suggests that Callahan’s purpose lies in her “Dedication”: to “arouse her readers’ anger about the outrages perpetuated against Indians” (xx)

who have felt the wrongs and oppression of their pale-faced brothers . . .
praying that it may serve to open the eyes and heart of the world to our
afflictions, and thus speedily issue into existence an era of good feeling
and just dealing toward us and our more oppressed brothers. (Dedication)

Both Ruoff and Smith and Co. contend that the protest contained in *Wynema* is self-evident. Because of Callahan’s ancestry and because of the assumption that any work written by an Indian about Indians must be protest literature, *Wynema* has been classified

as such without much critical inquiry as to how, or if, it functions as protest. However, just because the editors claim that *Wynema* is traditional Indian protest, in that it is the Indian arguing for the Indian cause, does not absolutely make it Indian protest.

In this dissertation, I examine the extent to which two representative examples of American Indian protest literature in Simon Pokagon's *Ogimawke Mitigwaki: Queen of the Woods* and Charles Eastman's *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* can rightly be classified as Indian protest. I further claim that S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*'s editors falsely categorized it as American Indian protest, when it is conceivably mainly domestic protest in that it protests the idea that women are to stay at home and be submissive to their husbands².

The Protest Tradition

Zoe Trodd, in *American Protest Literature*, suggests that the American protest tradition has been present since the founding of the United States of America, though she argues that representations of protest within American Indian tribes, especially those written by American Indians, have been sparse. Speaking of his own texts specifically and about novels in general, Ralph Ellison broadly defines protest as something which all novels do "implicitly." He suggests that "in the very act of creating something, there is implicit a protest against the way things are—a protest against man's vulnerability before the larger forces of society and the universe" (62). He believes that the key to protest is to make the communication "meaningful, significant, and eloquent of human nature" (63). Building upon the ideas of Ellison, historian John Stauffer, in the *Foreword* to Trodd's

² This will be explored in-depth in chapter 4.

American Protest Literature, defines protest as how language (words, art, music, and film) works to “transform the self and change society” (xii). His protest functions as a “catalyst, guide, or mirror of social change.” For Stauffer, protest should focus not only on critique but also on “suggest[ing], either explicitly or implicitly, a solution to society’s ills” (xii). Further defining protest literature, Howard Zinn stated that protest is “any form of communication that engages social consciousness and may move someone to action ... all protest literature says to the reader, ‘have hope - you are not alone’” (Trodd 500).

Brian Norman, in *The American Protest Essay and National Belonging: Addressing Division*, asserts that in protest literature, “writers bring the experiences of those lacking full social status into the public arena by directly addressing a divided audience, documenting with journalistic fervor representative instances of injustice, and citing state promises of full social participation for all” (1). Stauffer states that the difference between literature and protest literature is that while “the former empowers and transforms individuals, the latter strives to give voice to a collective consciousness, uniting isolated or inchoate discontent” (qtd in Trodd xii). Gordon K. Lewis, an expert on race, class, and ideology in the Caribbean, suggests that protest literature is literature that is created either by a minority group or by the majority group representing the minority that argues for the benefit and social change of all (qtd. in Crick and Robson 87-88).

Arguing that protest literature was present prior to the forming of America, historian Timothy Patrick McCarthy, claims that “protest is in America’s DNA. Acts of dissent and protest are essential to American culture” and its rich history (video). McCarthy claims that once rumors of protest in the United States of America began, other champions emerged supporting the move toward independence. McCarthy names

Thomas Paine and his pamphlet *Common Sense* as one of these champions. Originally identified as *Written by an Englishman*, and published anonymously, *Common Sense* appeared in January 1776. Written for a broad audience,

it was an instant success, and copies of the pamphlet were soon available in all the thirteen colonies. Paine's was an unequivocal call for independence, and many Americans wavering between reconciliation with and independence from Britain were won over to separation by Paine's powerful polemic against monarchy, in general, and the British, in particular (Foot and Kramnick 65).

Though short (only forty-eight pages), *Common Sense* develops the idea that it is wrong for a nation to be led by a king, more so when that nation (a small island) rules over another nation (an entire continent). Paine argued that a king who has not acted appropriately in his role as a ruler has forfeited any allegiance owed to him and must be resisted. He writes "Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island (16).

In his third section, "Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs," Paine offers "simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense" on the subject of the struggle between America and England. Paine introduces the idea that even though England has been called America's "mother country," no mother would so brutally treat a child as America has been treated by its "mother"; America was not a British nation because the American people were comprised of many people from many countries; America does not belong in European wars because, geographically, it is not a European country; the

distance between the two nations is so great that it could take over a year for complete communication to occur; and Britain does not rule for the benefit of the American people, but instead for its own benefit. Paine states that the time for discussion has come to an end and that the only recourse that men in America now have is to take up arms and “decide the contest” (Paine *Common Sense*). In December of 1776, Paine published the first of his Crisis papers where he stated

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value.

Although this was just the beginning of his protest literature, throughout his life and writing Paine helped to inspire a people to stand up for themselves against a superior power, shamed those seeking reconciliation with England into supporting America's creation, and created a legacy of patriotism by American people for America. He would follow *Commons Sense* with his *Crisis Papers* written during the Revolutionary war as well as his *Rights of Man* published in 1791 which not only bolstered their morale, but also demanded that the American people had no other choice but to rebel. In his protest writings Paine catalogs injustices which he claims the American people have suffered and should no longer endure; addresses a divided audience in not only the American people, but also the Crown; and finally suggests solutions to throw off England's yoke.

In July of 1776, the Declaration of Independence demanded that the American people's rights be upheld, that the injustices suffered must stop, and that the British military must leave the American continent. If their demands were not met, the only solution left to the new Americans would be to make a clean break from England and follow Paine's suggestion to decide the contest with arms. This action brought about the foundation of The United States of America as well as the founding of the American protest literary tradition. The Declaration of Independence reads,

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind and requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

In most examples of protest literature, the solution is not proposed until the end of the text. However, both Paine and the Declaration of Independence assert a meaningful solution and therefore full protest against which all protest works can be measured. In this case, the Declaration of Independence asserts at the start that separation as a result of the injustices which the protesting body has endured is necessary. The Declaration states that the British and American inhabitants should recognize that this separation must happen, and happen immediately.

Moreover, the Declaration does not suggest that the conquering nation has the right to do what it pleases, but that these rights of humanity have been not only "endowed

by their Creator,” but also that men and government should work together to establish and uphold these rights. Because the American people have had these rights taken away from them by the British government, their only course of action is the solution suggested previously. The Declaration states,

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government.

Clearly stated, if the American people want equality it is their right and responsibility to go out and do everything they can to take it.

In his opening remarks in the course “American Protest Literature: From Thomas Paine to Tupac,” McCarthy states that the Declaration of Independence asserts that the government was “created to secure unalienable rights, by a higher power,” and that the government gets its power from the people and that the people have to ‘buy into it.’” According to the Declaration when a government ignores them, citizens have the God-given right to dissolve the government. The Declaration of Independence protests England’s rule over America by “articulating a vision of dissent,” which “codifies” that dissent. McCarthy suggests that the Declaration is not only a declaration to England, but also a reminder of the fact that human beings were created by God and, therefore, are created equal. America established a protest literary tradition by writing itself into

existence through the Declaration of Independence as well as establishing the method through which unrepresented people gain a voice or recognition in hopes that their plights may be heard and a lasting legacy created.

Because of the fluid nature of protest literature, for the purposes of this dissertation, to be considered protest literature a work must combine what both Norman and Trodd put forth. Not only should protest address a divided audience and speak to injustices and broken promises of, in this case, the American Indian, but it should also be written by, for, and about American Indians to give them a voice in the conversation as well as present their solutions.

While each of these movements have specific texts which either led to a change or inspired society to seek one, the movement and the legacy that it creates that is most important for inclusion into this list is Native American Rights. Trodd positions American Indian literature as the most important way in which American Indians obtained those rights they had been promised through many treaties with the United States government. Like the literature that protests slavery, Trodd's Native American Rights section includes a poem by a white woman, Lydia Sigourney's "Indian Names." The other texts in this section include a speech given in 1810 by Tecumseh (Shawnee), William Apess's (Pequot) *Son of the Forest*, Charles Eastman's (Santee Sioux) *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, and Black Elk (Lakota Sioux) and John G. Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks*. While Trodd uses these texts to show how each specifically protests the treatment of native peoples by the United State government, the argument could be made, almost without exception, that all early American Indian literature does the same. Except for initial writings which preserved legends, customs, and traditions, the bulk of

nineteenth and early twentieth century American Indian literature protests the taking of land, the killing of Indians, and the introduction of Christianity in an attempt to expedite the process of integration and assimilation into American society. While these texts form the foundation of written American Indian literature, they also help to construct an American Indian protest literature tradition and, thereby, create a lasting legacy of Indian voices, pleading that the American people will open their ears, hearts, and minds to the plight of what Callahan would call “their more oppressed brothers” (Preface).

But in order for American Indian literature to truly open minds regarding what American Indians have endured and against which they continually struggle, the texts must either be viewed as coming from their perspective, from their voices (written by others), or written by American Indians themselves. Because they were the first inhabitants of this land, to have a story that either denies or limits American Indian inclusion would be a flawed history. While some may view American Indian literature as mere complaint, many are hesitant to include American Indian history and their literature as accurate documents³ that could help form what has been previously called American history.

Indian Protest and History

The view that history and literary texts combined can and should create an alternative version of history and that it is the products of both lies at the heart of the American Indian protest tradition. History has largely been written from the white, Anglo-Saxon perspective for a white, Anglo-Saxon audience, eliminating any secondary

³ Meaning that to some, the accuracy of Native texts will always be in doubt. I explore this more in my next chapter as it relates to the idea that Simon Pokagon’s *Queen of the Woods*, published after his death, was not written by him.

version. And, unfortunately, this history that tends to ignore the American Indian as potential citizens of America fails to do little more than gloss over injustices which this people has and continues to endure. American Indian scholar Arnold Krupat states that “It is the perspective of the red in a variety of expressive forms, of course, that has been ignored, marginalized, or, more recently, reduced to a merely statistical potency as one of the ‘multiethnic’ literatures of the United States” (84). Critic James H. Cox, in his *Muting White Noise: Native American and European American Novel Traditions*, suggests that in the formation of history, literary texts have indeed been consulted, but what this history has lacked is the addition of the American Indian perspective. Moreover, by weighing both historical and literary texts equally to arrive at a point where we see the American Indian perspective as just as important as the white view, a truer history of North America’s settlement emerges.

In *The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature*, Joy Porter and Kenneth Roemer suggest that “[l]iterature tells truths about the past that history cannot articulate” (40). They state that in the examination of American history the American Indian voice was largely unheard or ignored. Those histories that mentioned the American Indian focused mainly on “Indian policy or frontier conflict, or even tribal histories with narratives that ended before 1900” (39). In contrast to what has been and continues to be taught in American history, the American Indian experience voices an alternate understanding of the “facts” and a “different consciousness of the past” (39). Francis Prucha states that for “far too long United States history has been written exclusively by white historians” (3). Prucha points out that the “Indian” in history was largely a part of the landscape to be overcome. He draws attention to the often used

textbook phrase “the Indian barrier to white settlement, [and states that it] is indicative of this frame of mind as is the repeated concern during the course of American history with the ‘Indian problem’” (3).

Porter, in her chapter “Historical and Cultural Contexts,” states that in in the American Revolution, with the cooperation of some Indians, American settlers were able to wrest this land from the hands of the British and finally able to govern themselves without the hand of tyranny hanging over them. Although the American people gained autonomy from British rule, the Indians’ situation went from bad to worse. Porter states,

Most tribes involved [in the American Revolution] fought for the British as their best chance for protecting their freedom but the British eventually betrayed their Indian allies when forced to make peace with the thirteen colonies. Victorious Americans saw Indians as guilty and defeated and set about grabbing their land citing American right of conquest (50).

Because American Indians had been seen by the American people as the aggressors, their history of peace with the people, British or American was largely forgotten. Porter states that a new national mythology was created which “consigned Indians to ‘a savage’ past” (50).

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the United States government struggled with how to avoid the growing problems that existed in Indian-white relations. Although the American continent now belonged to the United States, which therefore made all the land and the inhabitants therein subject to the government, the American Indian was not and should never have been forced to subject themselves to the United

States government. The American Indians were treated as if they had been conquered and yet they had not specifically been at war with the American people.

Ronald Satz, in his *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* states that, roughly from 1820 to 1845, “the executive department claimed the exclusive right to treat⁴⁴ with Indians, and Indian affairs were managed by War Department personnel in Washington and in the field” (1). With increased complaints and demands for more land, government officials sought any means necessary to appease settlers, speculators, and frontiersmen. “Government officials used force, bribery, deception, and threats, among other things, to convince Indian leaders to sign land cession treaties” (1). Desiring to keep the new nation’s honor spotless in regard to its handling of this problematic situation, the government agreed to acknowledge tribal autonomy to ratify formal purchases of land.

The government at this time thought that this agreement would finally begin to answer the Indian Question. In *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*, Thomas King states that land appropriation and its failures was at the heart of American Indian protest. He suggests that the interpretation of the Indian question has been wrong all along. For many, the Indian question was “What do Indians want?” While King agrees that this is a great question, the one that really needs answering for past and present is “What do Whites want?”

Native history in North America has never really been about Native people. It’s about Whites and their needs and desires. What Native peoples wanted has never been a vital concern, has never been a political or social

⁴⁴ Or make treaties

priority. What do Whites want? The answer is quite simple, and it's been in plain sight all along. Land. Whites want land. Sure, Whites want Indians to disappear, and they want Indians to assimilate, and they want Indians to understand that everything that Whites have done was for their own good because Native People, left to their own devices, couldn't make good decisions for themselves (216).

If the American government truly cared about the American Indian and was determined to do what was best for the integration and assimilation of the people, one would think that the taking the land by any means necessary (including treaties) would not be the answer to this problem.

Although Indians were not a united group and consistently fought against one another, making the process of purchasing land easier for white Americans, making that land inhabitable and free from Indians was a constant struggle. For example, in an undefined tribal war begun in the 1770s, the Shawnee and other tribes fought expansion of American settlers into the Ohio territory. Although this conflict took almost twenty years to end and more work than some thought necessary, in 1795 over one thousand Indian delegates signed the Treaty of Greenville, ending the war and "ceding two-thirds of present day Ohio, part of Indiana, and the sites where the modern cities of Detroit, Toledo, and Chicago are currently situated" ("Native American Timeline"). In return, Indians were promised that a permanent boundary⁵ would be established between the

⁵ The boundary that was eventually established as the dividing line between American and Indian land was the Mississippi river so designated on March 25, 1825 in the Digest of Indian Treaties

settlers' lands and those lands assigned to the Indians to possess and govern themselves According to their own dictates.

While there may have been some who resisted the government taking a formal approach to its dealings with Indians, Satz states that officials were not inclined to do much to appease these concerns. "Since the Indians generally responded to the pressure of advancing white population by emigrating farther west, there was little reason . . . to question the soundness of federal policy" (1). Federal policy, in the form of treaties and congressional acts, was greatly influenced by the idea that Indians should be eradicated from America. What would come to be the overriding thought of many Americans and the idea that shaped interaction with American Indians was the idea of assimilation and integration, and when this would not work, cultural assassination. Porter and Roemer write that "Indian absence, through death or the cultural death of complete assimilation (the introduction of Christianity, allotment, the creation of reservations, as well as the destructions of the family units), was deemed necessary to the new republic" (49-50). The pivotal tool with which the process of integration was begun was missionary work.

Cultural Assimilation

Though Catholic and Protestant missionaries had, for some time, worked among Indians seeking to convert them from their "savage" religions to Christianity, nineteenth-century Americans thought that a renewed push for missionary work would best assimilate Indians. Missionaries—men and especially women—would bear the biggest responsibility for educating Indians, not only in spiritual matters, but also in agricultural pursuits. If Indians could learn to be farmers, it was hoped that they would value the land

as a personal possession and be more amenable to selling that portion of land they could not use. The answer to the “Indian Question” at the time was religion and education.

It is interesting to note that, although Jefferson, who was elected President of the United States of America in 1800, thought that at the time the Indians were a noble race⁶ and shared equality with whites, his policies would not do what he had originally intended. He hoped that given an alternative to death and displacement that Indians would flock to schools, churches, and the government in helping them to become truly civilized. Jefferson asserted that “if the circumstances of their life were appropriately changed, Indians would be transformed into someone who all American society could readily accept as equal. We shall probably find that they are formed in mind as well as in body, on the same module with [us]” (Prucha 52). Jefferson thought that if they were given the right opportunities for growth, the Indians could become more noble than savage. He urged the physical and cultural integration of Indians with whites. “In truth, the ultimate point of rest & happiness for them is to let our settlements and theirs meet and blend together, to intermix, and become one people” (Jefferson 522).

Jefferson saw in the Indians the capacity to become civilized, and yet admitted that the responsibility for this rested not on Indian shoulders, but on the shoulders of the whites. This process would take time, and if not handled carefully and correctly, it would lead to the ultimate destruction of the Indian race. While he viewed them as having the ability to become civilized, the state that they were currently in could not conceivably be called civilized. To Jefferson, civilization meant education and integration into the

⁶ Roy Harvey Pearce argued that the noble image of the Indian occurs only when they are no longer a threat, when they are dying out. Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*, 1953

current society. Unfortunately for many Indians, federal policy did not have a gentle hand in cultivating that civilization.

Black Hawk, a Sauk warrior who fought against Andrew Jackson in the Black Hawk War of 1832, effectively summed up the American Indian and his dealings with the United States government and its people. He says,

The white men are bad school-masters; they carry false looks, and deal in false actions; they smile in the face of the poor Indian to cheat him; they shake them by the hand to gain their confidence, to make them drunk, to deceive them, and ruin our wives. We told them to let us alone; but they followed on and beset our paths, and they coiled themselves among us like the snake. They poisoned us by their touch. We were not safe. We lived in danger. We were becoming like them, hypocrites and liars, adulterers, lazy drones, all talkers, and no workers. The white men do not scalp the head; but they do worse-they poison the heart (Zinn 131).

Clashes between Americans and Indians led to constant removals and a continuous tradition of broken treaties, which made Indians unable to trust the United States government. And while Indians voices never ceased to appeal their treatment at the hands of the government, their legacy was thought to be that of a vanishing people. However, as much as the government would have preferred that to be the case, Indians did not and will not disappear from this continent. If Indians cannot be seen, their voices will reach those who are blind to their sufferings and trials. It is this collective voice crying out to be heard that is an integral part American Indian protest literature.

The Indian Protest Tradition

While this dissertation will not argue the varying definitions of American Indian Literature, it must be noted that this, in and of itself, is a contested subject. However, the legacy to which this discussion leads will help further define what is considered American Indian protest literature. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff's *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Biographies* states that the most often used genre by early American Indian authors was non-fiction prose⁷. Ruoff asserts that, "in addition to writing autobiographies, Indian authors wrote sermons, protest literature, tribal histories, and travel accounts" (62). While many of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century American Indian writings were sermons, histories, or tribal accounts, not many could be identified as protest. Ruoff points to William Apess as one of the most forceful Indian protest writers of the early nineteenth century, but his writings do not argue to keep American Indian traditions and cultures alive. He points to Christianity and willing integration as the natural answer to Indian-white relations problems.

One of the first American Indian authors reaching a larger audience, and the first in laying the foundation for the creation of the American Indian protest tradition, William Apess was born in 1798 to parents of both American Indian (Pequot) and English ancestry who had addictions to alcohol and repeatedly abused him. Apess lived in the wilderness surrounding his grandparents' home until he was about five years old. Largely raised and educated by the Euro-American families to which he was indentured, Apess

⁷ The bulk of these early writings were aimed at teaching the public about the Indians' tribal customs, history, as well as religious beliefs so that the American people might better understand who the Indian is.

came to the knowledge of his Pequot tribe late in his life. His own addiction to alcohol and its ready availability in American society forced Apess to return home to his family and tribe in 1816, where he subsequently was converted and baptized into one of the local Methodist groups. In 1829, he became a minister and published his first book, *A Son of the Forest: The Experience of William Apess, A Native of the Forest, Comprising a Notice of the Pequod Tribe of Indians, Written by Himself*. Although Apess used his *Son of the Forest* to comment at least partially on the Indian Removal ideas that were circulating, it was also used to produce a narrative of his early life chronicling his journey through his own wilderness and emerging as a new creature who believed in Christ.⁸

Although he only hints at racial equality and argues for change in his *Son of the Forest*, Apess does protest whites and Indian relations in “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man.” After explaining that he desires to write on behalf of his “fellow creatures” who have either preceded or will follow him to the grave, Apess points out that God is the maker and preserver of both the white man and Indians and pleads for his brethren.

⁸In addition to his *Son of the Forest*, Apess is also known for his 1836 *Eulogy on King Philip* as well as the invention of the Mashpee Revolt. In his *Eulogy*, Apess sought to dispel the idea that Metacomet (King Philip) was a blood thirsty savage who led the Pequot against the English in 1675. The Pequot War, which started when the Pequot’s killed an English man, thinking he was Dutch, eventually led to the English surrounding the Pequot, massacring most of the tribe, and dispersing the survivors through slavery or indentured servitude. Apess, on the other hand saw, Metacomet as a hero to the Pequot, a patriot fighting for his people at the very expense of his own life. He spoke of the Pequot’s inability to receive any mercy or help from the English. This theme in Apess’s writing would later become more evident in his creation of the Mashpee Revolt. As part of his conversion process, Apess became a lay minister and travelled throughout the New England area preaching the word of Christ to whites and Indians alike. It was during these that Apess met with and discussed the current situation of the Mashpee Indians. They, like many other tribes before and since, thought that their agents cared more about lining their own pockets with money, than about the welfare of the tribe. Apess wrote about the indignations that the Mashpee suffered, resulting in an examination of the Mashpee and the determination that no laws had been broken, no people killed, and the reservation suffered no injustices.

Now I ask if degradation has not been heaped long enough upon the Indians? And if so, can there not be a compromise; is it right to hold and promote prejudices? If not, why not put them all away? I mean here amongst those who are civilized (156).

By directing his message to those whom he calls civilized, Apess calls them to action and at the same time shames them, almost calling them savages, who would not work towards such a compromise. Following this statement, Apess rehearses the plight of Indians for those of his audience who might not have any idea about the state of Indians other than stories and stereotypes. He talks of a people mired in poverty, with little to no education. He claims that although they might be street smart as to the Indian way of life, American Indians are greatly lacking the knowledge of how to subsist on their own in American society, yet Apess envisions a solution to this perplexing problem.

Now if these people are what they are held up in our view to be, I would take the liberty to ask why they are not brought forward and pains taken to educate them? To give them all a common education, and those of the brightest and first-rate talents put forward and held up to office.

This I have heard repeatedly, from the most respectable gentlemen and ladies--and having heard so much precept, I should now wish to see the example. And I would ask who has a better right to look for these things than the naturalist himself--the candid man would say none (156).

Although his "Looking-Glass" asked that both white and Indian take a look at themselves, Apess protested against the injustices suffered and asked that the collective

community make changes so that Indians might have the education that they needed to take care of their own property and to survive. And despite his including American Indians as a responsible group to ensure this change, Apess was one among many who helped create a legacy of American Indian protest. Not only does Apess use his texts to begin this legacy of discontent, but he also employs his writings in an attempt to revise American history to include the American Indian perspective. His *Eulogy on King Phillip* was written for the purpose of refuting the Indian-as-savage stereotype (i.e. cruelty without restraint, and the taking of female prisoners and brutally raping them), the view which he claims justified the mass genocide of the Pequot. In support of this claim, Apess points to Mary Rowlandson's own narrative

Mrs. Rowlandson, although speaking with bitterness sometimes of the Indians, yet in her journal she speaks not a word against him. Philip even hires her to work for him and pays her for her work, and then invites her to dine with him and to smoke with him. . . . Was it known that [the English] received any of their female captives into their houses and fed them? No, it cannot be found upon history. Were not the [English] females completely safe, and none of them were violated, as they acknowledge themselves? But was it so when the Indian women fell into the hands of the Pilgrims? (52-53)

In *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, Rowlandson narrates her three month captivity by the Algonquian Indians during King Philip's War (1675-8). While the text is said to have been written only by Rowlandson, it is believed that it was published through the

encouragement of her Puritan minister, Increase Mather. The first edition of this narrative was accompanied by an introduction written by Increase Mather, who many believe took an active role in the editing and publishing of Rowlandson's text. Paul Lauter suggests that the "text also supported the colonists' negative representations of American Indians as 'savages' who inhabited Satan's domain. Through such depictions the dominant culture could thus argue that the removal of the [Indians] was in the 'national' interest" (463). Apess uses Rowlandson not only to shed light on how Indians have been treated, but also to show that the misnamed savagery and barbarism as promoted by Mather and others did not define who Indians really were and are. Apess, most likely, had come to the conclusion that the purpose of the captivity text was written by to promote antagonism towards the Indian. Notwithstanding, Rowlandson's consistent evidence that her captors were as gentle as could be in this situation, the final version repeatedly insists upon the demonic character of the Indian.

Though this suggests that someone other than Rowlandson had a part in the writing and publication of the text, Rowlandson's authorship is rarely, if ever, questioned. However, when it comes to American Indian authors, anthologies as well as critics are quick to point out that it is unknown how many hands an Indian text has passed through and what changes have been made as a result of this hand-passing. While early eighteenth century American Indian writings may have needed a translator who might have changed some aspects of the writing, more often than not, English is the language in which American Indian authors wrote. In my second chapter, I discuss this difference and its possible implications of accommodation and its consequence of establishing a prime example of American Indian protest. Though he was one of the first American Indian

male authors to produce a novel, it is routinely questioned whether Simon Pokagon was the authentic author of *Ogimawke Mitigwaki: Queen of the Woods*. Perhaps one reason his authorship is questioned is that the text was published in 1899 after his death. While his text was nearly finished, his friends requested that the book be delayed so that an appendix might be added detailing some addresses he gave earlier in his career. In Porter and Roemer's *Companion to Native American Literature* is a timeline of history as well as the literary works that were produced during that history. Next to Pokagon's 1899 line are the words "authorship debated." In chapter two I argue that many American Indian authors experienced what Gary Sligh terms as some form of accommodation in publishing their texts. Though it may be true and somewhat problematic that Pokagon needed help in smoothing the rough edges of his story, I argue that this does not negate the American Indian protest as found in Pokagon's text. Furthermore, because his text specifically mentions the treaties that were broken that enabled many Pokagon and Potawatomie to obtain alcohol and details the struggles and even deaths that occur because of this, this chapter argues that Pokagon's narrative is a worthy piece of literature that helps to in establish the American Indian protest legacy.

While the authenticity of Pokagon's text might be problematic, in my third chapter I present an example of protest literature whose authorship and authenticity as protest is undoubted: Charles Alexander Eastman's *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. Yet the author sometimes finds himself in a quandary. Eastman – who was present and witnessed firsthand the events immediately following the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre and presents an authentic picture of the Sioux holocaust--is a man divided, torn between his loyalty to his grandmother's teachings and his father's new way

of life. Raised by his Sioux grandmother to hate and desire the death of all white men, then taken by his father at the age of fourteen to be raised in white society, and serving the United States government at the time that the government was killing his own people, Eastman forever questions where he belongs. His personal account of the atrocities which occurred at Wounded Knee contain no fairy tale. They contain truth about and protest against the treatment of his people at the hands of “Christians.” While I would not classify this as being the same form of American Indian protest as Pokagon’s, mainly because Eastman can see no real acceptable solution to the Indian Problem, I argue that his work is still nonetheless vital to the American Indian protest literary tradition and its subsequent legacy. It addresses multiple audiences, shows, the constant injustices that his people endured as well as provides a first-hand account of what can happen to American Indians who do decided to physically protest.

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I challenge the claim made by H. Smith and Co. that S. Alice Callahan’s *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* is indeed “the Indian’s side of the Indian question told by an Indian born and bred” (ix). While Smith would like to excuse any inconsistencies in the actual text because of where Callahan was born, raised, and educated, the way that he reads this text – as indicative of the American Indian protest genre – is unconvincing. Though Smith, Ruoff, and even Gary Sligh suggest that *Wynema* lives up to the claim that it is American Indian protest, this dissertation claims that *Wynema* is instead more assimilationistic than resistant. Although some might argue that what Callahan does may be what Gerald Vizenor calls “survivance,” in that her “stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy and victimry,” the point of this dissertation is to argue that her text is domestic protest and not traditional

American Indian protest (*vii*). By examining the novel and the degree to which it does not bring American Indian, and specifically, Muscogee experiences into the public arena and, therefore, to a divided audience, document instances of injustice, restate promises of full participation, or suggests a solution to these injustices, I argue that *Wynema* exists as a pro-allotment text promoting Indian assimilation instead of protesting integration. While it may be true that it is the first novel written by an American Indian woman, and one that many claim helps build the foundation for the American Indian protest tradition, I make the claim that the novel ironically stands out as one which does not answer the Indian question from an Indian's perspective. Callahan and her characters' almost immediate acceptance of Christianity and the white way of life does not protest any attempts by Methodist missionaries to facilitate the Muscogee integration into the neighboring white society. In this chapter I make the argument that Callahan's editors as well as critics have misread *Wynema* as traditional American Indian protest when it really is indicative of domestic protest. Though Callahan hints at injustices endured by American Indians, including the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre, the bulk of her narrative focuses on her Genevieve and her refuting the idea that the perfect woman is the one who stays at home and only concerns herself with husband and home.

In my final chapter I discuss to what extent a teacher of ethnic literature, specifically American Indian literature, must be American Indian to teach that literature effectively. In her *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks suggests that the best teachers of ethnic literature are those that are from that ethnic group and that these teachers hold a "privileged standpoint" of experience and of remembrance which makes them uniquely qualified. While hooks and others will readily admit that the best teachers of ethnic

literature are those that are members of those specific ethnicities, it does not mean that good, competent non-native teachers of American Indian literature do not exist. Birth and ancestry alone is not enough to make a teacher of any literature better qualified to teach it than other scholars. It is my claim that preparation, study, experience, and passion contribute as much to the ability to instruct, if not more, than merely possessing hooks' "privileged standpoint." I argue for increased instruction in American Indian protest literature and as such argue that S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* should not be taught as American Indian protest. I contend that, though her work is important in establishing the groundwork for other American Indian women authors, *Wynema* should not be taught as American Indian protest literature. While it is written by an American Indian it does not protest the American Indian treatment nor is it an Indian's answer to the "Indian Question."

Additionally, I look at the pedagogical applications of these three novels and their place(s) within American Indian literature. When they were first published, many American Indian texts were not well-received. As mentioned, while some stayed in the public eye, only recently have many of these narratives, including Callahan's *Wynema A Child of the Forest*, been "discovered" or rediscovered. What can be learned through an examination of American Indian literature and its adherence to either protest of assimilationistic ideas which would allow us not only to listen, but to hear the protests of *our* "more oppressed brothers," and make changes in our attitudes and actions towards our brothers, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliations? To speak of oppression without mentioning Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and his examination of the relationship between oppression and the process of humanization and

dehumanization would be folly. By examining any possible oppression experienced by the people represented in each text (grounds for protest) and the extent to which they were reduced to little more than wild animals in addition to their actual words of protest can we hear what they have to say and that maybe, just maybe, these messages will prick our hearts and force us to open our eyes and ears to their sufferings. Once we are able to hear their protests without the filtering of non-Indian editors and publishers, we can understand them better and see them as they see themselves.

When I first arrived in the Pocatello, Idaho, area, I was warned by many of its longtime residents to watch out for the Shoshone-Bannock people. I was told that they were a lazy, drunk, good for nothing people who lived off of the government and did nothing to improve their current situation. As I came to know some Shoshone-Bannock and interact with them, I knew that what I had previously heard was nothing more than a gross generalization about all Indians, not just Shoshone-Bannock. My purpose in approaching this project is to combat this stereotype which exists wherever American Indians are found. I realize that those outside of the classroom may never experience anything that would help them to change their views. However, my classroom is geared toward the identifying characteristics of Indians found in American literature, exploring the students' thoughts and ideas, and helping merge them with the vision and images of how American Indians view themselves in literature, in protest, and in the real world. By finding this identity and understanding its fluid nature, we may very well be able to find the Indian legacy.

Chapter Two

They Speak, but I Cannot Hear; They Write and I Will Listen

It is enough to say that we were confined to the reserve, and had to live on what fish we might be able to catch in the river. If this is the kind of civilization awaiting us on the reserves, God grant that we may never be compelled to go on one, as it is much preferable to live in the mountains and drag out an existence in our native manner.

—Sarah Winnemucca

They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one: they promised to take our land and they took it. It was not hard to see that the white people coveted every inch of land on which we lived. Greed. Humans wanted the last bit of ground which supported Indian feet. It was land - it has ever been land - for which the White man oppresses the Indian and to gain possession of which he commits any crime. Treaties that have been made are vain attempts to save a little of the fatherland, treaties holy to us by the smoke of the pipe - but nothing is holy to the white man. Little by little, with greed and cruelty unsurpassed by the animal, he has taken all. The loaf is gone and now the white man wants the crumbs.

—Luther Standing Bear

Brave deeds don't always get rewarded in this world.

—Sarah Winnemucca

In the *Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature* Joy Porter and Kenneth M. Roemer present literary, historical, and cultural timelines which begin in 1772 and end in the present day. For each author and title, the editors note what type of text (autobiography, collaborative autobiography, collection of translations of oral literature, drama, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and speech or sermon) the work is, with an asterisk next to the name if the author was considered an American Indian. The list of American Indians includes such authors as Jayne Johnson Schoolcraft, William Apess,

Black Hawk, George Copway, John Rollins Ridge, Sarah Winnemucca, S. Alice Callahan, Charles Alexander Eastman, and Simon Pokagon. Of all these authors, only Pokagon's entry possesses one other distinction. In parentheses next to his *Ogimawkwe Mitigwaki* or *Queen of the Woods* it states "authorship debated" (29). Unlike other American Indian authors who quite possibly allowed their publishers to edit and in some cases make wholesale changes to the text, Pokagon's *Queen of the Woods*, after undergoing a similar process of passing through the hands of white men (or, in this particular case, a white woman) in order to have his words published, is thought to have been written by someone other than Pokagon. Andrew Wiget, for example, in his *Handbook of Native American Literature* suggests that *Queen of the Woods* differs greatly in diction and subject matter from any of Pokagon's letters.

Because of this debated authorship, as well as Pokagon's portrayal of himself and his family in ways that, to many, do not represent "Indianness," *Queen of the Woods* is problematic. Phillip J. Deloria in the foreword of the current edition states that *Queen of the Woods*

is undeniably an odd piece of work. It can be read as a mawkish, sentimental romantic tragedy—or as a subtle recounting of the key ideological underpinnings of American conquest and colonialism. One reader might view the book as an effort to preserve Native Language and culture, while another might easily see in it evidence of the cultural inferiority complex that has so often accompanied attempts at forced assimilation. You might read Pokagon as a cagey trickster figure, as a problematic self-promoting opportunist, as a cultural mediator, as a

literary stylist, as a temperance stump speaker—or as something else entirely (vii).

Deloria continues to call the book slippery, in that it seems to “fluctuate and play around with words and language” (vii). This being the case Deloria argues that in the context of the current edition (containing newspaper clippings, poetry, historical footnotes, Pokagon articles and speeches, as well as a short primer on the Algonquin⁹ language) the writing is undeniably Pokagon’s. There may be areas of the text that seem to be written by someone other than Pokagon, especially the last few chapters that focus less on Pokagon’s life and more on the elimination of alcohol, but *Queen of the Woods* is important as an example of American Indian protest literature because it not only incorporates its protest within a fictional tale of Pokagon’s life but also because it contains aspects of his own personal fight to rid Indian land of the alcohol as well as reclaim land taken by the United States government. Regardless of authorship this text can still be considered Indian protest literature in and of itself.

Because Pokagon was not a native English speaker and at the time of this writing, rarer was the time that the American Indian could speak and be heard, it is his written words that help him, the Pokagon, and all Indian peoples to protest their mistreatment—even abuse—at the hands of those who should have been protecting them. This chapter examines the role of these early 19th Century American Indian writings, specifically Pokagon’s, and its importance in the creation of American Indian protest literature. This chapter furthers the argument that in order to be classified as protest literature a work

⁹ Pokagon’s use of the Algonquin language may be, itself, a form of protest. However there is little scholarship to fully support this idea.

must address an audience different from its author, document the injustices that they (American Indians) have collectively suffered, and present their individual and/or tribal solutions. As we shall see, others may have doubted Pokagon's authority and influence in addressing this matter, but his protest as it relates to land claims, relocation, and rampant alcoholism and the ease with which alcohol could be obtained on American Indian land, is the archetypal American Indian protest. Furthermore, the idea that this text is not written by Pokagon, and therefore should be ignored, is in some fashion a blatant attempt to negate an Indian voice pleading to its pale-faced brothers to open their hearts and eyes to the plight of not only the Pokagon, but all Indians.

Throughout his life and in his works, Pokagon was a man of many faces. To the whites at the 1893 Columbian Expedition in Chicago, he was an accommodating "Indian" who wanted nothing more than to see his band progress and continue to live in peace with American society, and with the help of whites, improve their standard of living. Among his fellow tribal members, he wanted to be seen as a chief and a leader who was doing all he could to help them receive their proper payments and their land and to keep their lives as normal as possible despite their interactions with white people. Pokagon wanted to be seen as the conquering hero, taking up his father's mantle, not what others thought of him, as the insignificant son of Chief Leopold Pokagon, who in the process of becoming a man, lost all of his father's possessions. While these faces may have been closely tied together when he was living, in his works he is remembered as one who swindled his own band out of their land, money, and rightful place in history. He is seen as a minor chief at the end of a line of great Potawatomi and Pokagon chiefs, as well as a symbol of American Indian accommodation where Indian authors must have the help

and editorializing of the white men and women in order to have their narratives and their protests heard and read (Low 20-24).

The Potawatomi and the Pokagon

In order to discuss Simon Pokagon's place in American Indian protest literature, a short history of his life must be given. However, to do so without also including his father, Leopold Pokagon¹⁰, would not adequately create the full picture of who Simon Pokagon was. Leopold Pokagon (1775?-1841) was a Potawatomi chief in the first half of the 19th century. He took over this role from his father-in-law Topinabee, a great warrior and war chief fighting with Tecumseh during the Tecumseh uprising. As a chief, Leopold was also a documented signer on all important treaties (Low 27-29).

When Topinabee passed away, Leopold became chief over the Potawatomi in the St. Joseph River Valley, Michigan. Leopold's importance can be seen through his negotiation of an amendment to the 1833 Treaty of Chicago that allowed his Pokagon band to remain¹¹ in Michigan, while almost all other Potawatomi Indians were sent west of the Mississippi River as part of the Indian Removal Act of 1830¹². Using payments that were given to the Pokagon as a result of the Treaty, Leopold purchased land in Silver Creek Township, near Dowagiac, Michigan (Low 29). Though Leopold worked with the United States government to help keep his people on their land and therefore keep the

¹⁰ In order to clear up any further confusion, I will, in this section only, hereafter refer to Simon and Leopold Pokagon by their first names. When the term Pokagon is used, it will refer to the Pokagon, a small band of Potawatomi who formed their own group apart from the Potawatomi.

¹¹ The ability to remain in their native lands was partially due to their conversion to a Christian belief system. Not only did the Pokagon convert, but they also established a church in their area as well as requested that a catholic priest come and live amongst them to teach the people.

¹² Although the Act was passed in 1830, it was implemented until 1832 when Andrew Jackson was elected as President of the United States of America.

Pokagon free from relocation, after his death on July 8, 1841, arguments over ownership of the land ultimately led to the relocation of the Pokagon to Brush Creek, Rush Lake, and other areas in Southwest Michigan. The Pokagon hoped that the government would at least honor their promises of annuities and other payments. These lost lands would later become a key point of Simon's protest.

Although many of the details found among oral histories of the Potawatomi surrounding the life of Leopold are known, Simon was virtually unknown until his appearance at the Columbian Expedition in Chicago in 1893. There are some records of his accompanying Pokagon leaders to Washington in land disputes, but nothing exists which can be shown to indicate where Simon came from or how he was educated. Most of what is "known" about his life comes from his own accounts. And although no one really disputes his claim that he is an American Indian from the Pokagon tribe, Porter and Roemer suggest, at the least, that Pokagon's claim that his life is exactly how he remembers it cannot be trusted.

From what can be supported through records, Simon was ten years old at the time of his father's death. Because he was so young and because he was not Leopold's only child, Simon was not proclaimed chief,¹³ though later in his life, he would be called such. Most likely because of his mother's conversion to Catholicism, young Simon was raised as a Catholic and, like many American Indian children, sent away at the age of twelve to the Notre Dame Academy, "where he claimed to have studied for four or five years. Simon also maintained that he attended Oberlin Collegiate Institute (Ohio) and

¹³ The duty and calling of a chief is not passed down from father to son in many American Indian bands, including the Pokagon/Potawatomi. Though Pokagon would place himself at the head of the band bearing his father's name, Simon Pokagon was never a main chief among the Pokagon.

Twinsburg Institute (Ohio) for another two years” (Peyer 240). It is interesting here to note Peyer’s language. The words “claimed” and “maintained” stand out and emphasize how most critics treat what is “known” about Simon. Though Peyer and many other sources echo the ideas first mentioned in Daniel McDonald’s 1899 *Removal of the Pottawatomie Indians from Northern Indiana, embracing also a brief statement of the Indian policy of the government, and other historical matter relating to the Indian question*, that Simon “has the distinction of being the best educated¹⁴ and most distinguished full-blooded Indian, probably, in America” no records confirm Pokagon’s place among his people or in late nineteenth century America (qtd. in Pokagon 80).

In addition to what is being “claimed” and “maintained,” about Pokagon, McDonald sums up what, at least in his eyes, Pokagon means to his tribe. He argues that, when the history of the Pokagon¹⁵ is written, he, Pokagon, will be “accorded the highest round on the ladder of fame among the great men of the once powerful tribe of the Pottawatomie Indians” (81). In 1899, the same year that *Queen of the Woods* was published, McDonald said that Simon had written and delivered many addresses of

real literary merit during the past quarter of a century, and when he passes away he will leave no successor in this line worthy of the name. He has managed the band of about 300, of which he has for many years has been the acknowledged head, with consummate skill and ability; and although the band, of which he is the most prominent member, has not made much headway in keeping pace with the rapid advance of civilization the past 50

¹⁴ At that time, Charles Alexander Eastman’s documented education more than surpasses Pokagon’s.

¹⁵ Meaning the tribe formed from the Potawatomie with Leopold Pokagon as original chief.

years, yet had it not been for Pokagon, —his education, enlightened views, and influence exerted in the right direction, —it is likely it would have retrograded, disintegrated, and would undoubtedly long since have been scattered to the four winds of heaven. While the old chief has his faults, “even as you and I” (80-81).

Unknowingly, McDonald sets Simon up for the harshest critique of his life and works—contrasting known historical facts and his actions representing the Pokagon, against the story he tells in *Queen of the Woods* and his life’s narrative which he provided to McDonald and others. Because it is known that Simon had help in the writing of most of his works, including *Queen of the Woods*, it is widely claimed that the background information regarding his life has been embellished to tell a better story. That McDonald most likely received his information from Simon’s mouth is not McDonald’s fault, but by examining the claims made within McDonald’s assertion, we can see that Simon’s narrative closely matches the “Brief Sketch of Pokagon’s Life” as taken from the original *Publisher’s Notes*, and that the present day scholar must exercise his or her own critical judgment when encountering Simon’s embellishments.

McDonald states that Simon led his band of almost 300 members and was the acknowledged head of it. Prior to his emergence at the Colombian Expedition in Chicago in 1893, there is only one brief mention of Simon. In 1864, he emerged as a public figure when he accompanied the Potawatomi delegation to Washington, where they eventually persuaded the Secretary of Interior to pay the back annuities owed to them. Andrew Wiget states in his *Handbook of Native American Literature* that, although he served for many years as the chair of the band’s Business Committee, Simon was never a principal

chief. It was in this capacity as chair that Simon, though he may have thought he was doing his tribe some measure of good, created more discord and mistrust between himself and his band. Wiget further states that in 1881 it was reported that Simon, “without the consent of the Pokagon band, sold for cash discounted land notes that were supposedly guaranteed by anticipated sale of settlements of Pottawattamie claims” (277). One year after accusing the United States government of usurping the Pokagon lands, Simon established a rival business committee, funded mainly by his family, which was organized to pursue his own settlement claims to the disputed Silver Creek land for which his father had been fighting when he died.

In 1895, the Potawatomi formally rejected his claims and petitioned the government to cease allowing him any special status or funds which he had received as a result of his presence at the Expedition. Though it may have slowed his efforts, this decree/request by the Potawatomi did not stop Simon from putting his own interests above those of the band. Contrary to McDonald’s statement about Simon being the acknowledged leader and head of the band, Pokagon strove to make his version of history the *only* history of the Pokagon. Simon proved that he thought at times that he could set aside his tribal needs in order to look after his personal ones.

Cheryl Walker, in *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and 19th Century Nationalisms* suggests that, though the people at the Exposition thought Simon was more assimilationist and accommodating, because of his speech, regarding what his people and therefore, children must do to become more integrated into society, Simon was not the “white man’s Indian he appeared to be” (202). “It is true that he rang the Liberty Bell and stated

We must give up the pursuits of our fathers. We *must* teach our children to give up the bow and arrow...and, in place of the gun, we must take the plow, and live as white men do. ...Our Children *must* learn that they owe no allegiance to any clan or power on earth except the United States. They must learn to love the Stars and Stripes, and, at all times to rejoice that they are American citizens (emphasis in original, Dipie 204).

Lest we think that here was an American Indian adopting a national ideology at the cost of his tribal identity, Walker is quick to point out that Pokagon preceded this speech with his “The Red Man’s Rebuke” which protests the usurpation of lands, homes, and spirit of which the Pokagon no longer possess (202). And Pokagon uses this speech to remind the people of the lands that he, personally, lost.

Peyer states that this speech served to generate “the publicity needed for the political realization of the Pokagon claims against the United States” because prior to his appearance his audience only had heard distant rumors, not a first-hand account. (241). Furthermore, Peyer suggests that it was Simon’s ingenuity in finding new ways and new arguments to demand a larger payment for the land that resulted in the construction of present-day Chicago. He contended that this land that had been taken and not ceded as had been claimed. “Pokagon made a fantastic assertion that almost all of Chicago's reclaimed lakefront was situated on submerged property never ceded by the Pottawatomi. This real estate chimera was finally taken before the federal district court in 1914 by a law firm supposedly acting on behalf of the business committee, where it was summarily dismissed” (241). Like the Pokagon who abandoned their attempts at reacquiring the

Silver Creek lands once chief Leopold died, Simon Pokagon after his latest attempt at receiving payment for this land, turned to writing as the medium to his protest.

“Authorship Debated?”

Many critics, including Wiget, Walker, Lundquist, Bernd C. Peyer, Ruoff, and Low, suggest that one reason *Queen of the Woods* has received little literary attention is that there is some doubt that Simon is the actual writer of the work. Though many quote word for word Wiget’s original statement in his *Handbook of Native American Literature* that “the novel is a romance that laments the Potawatomi’s loss of their Edenic past and warns about how alcohol can destroy Indians and white” (148), they differ as to the extent they believe the text was written by Simon Pokagon. Ruoff, in her *American Indian Literatures*, cites James A. Clifton, who has done extensive studies of the Potawatomi, who emphatically states that Pokagon “did not write this posthumously published work” (66). In *American Indian Nonfiction*, after enumerating the many works and publications reported to be penned by Pokagon, Bernd C. Peyer claims that it was not coincidence that led Pokagon to attend the Fair and distribute his birch-bark document. Pokagon’s appearance enabled him to launch into a “modest career as a public speaker and author” (242). To prove his point, Peyer states that “between 1892 and his death from pneumonia on January 28, 1899, about a dozen magazine articles, five birch-bark booklets, and two hymns appeared under his name” (242).

At this point Peyer contradicts Pokagon’s publisher, Mrs. C.H. (Sarah) Engle’s, claim that

it is estimated that during his lifetime Pokagon has interpreted into his mother tongue at least a thousand sermons as they were delivered; he was also organist at all church services during the same period. All Indians who have ever heard him speak in their native language, declare him to be a great orator (Pokagon 79).

It is interesting to note the doubt that Peyer has toward Pokagon and Engle's claim that Pokagon not only translated his sermons to the mother tongue, but that he also was the sole author of *Queen of the Woods*. Echoing Clifton's statement that the text was published posthumously in 1899, Peyer points to Simon's inability to write letters. He states that "judging from the unpolished composition of his letters (no manuscripts have been recovered so far), it is probable that his publications were heavily edited" (242). Furthermore, Wiget in his *Handbook of Native American Literature*, questions whether the first American Indian novel¹⁶ which is "devoted to Indian life" is truly written by an American Indian (278).

In the "Historical Overview" of her *Native American Literature: An Anthology* Lawana Trout suggests that the main reasons why American Indians choose to write and publish in English so as to be able to better address an audience that is not Indian and who could, hopefully, do something about the unfortunately people about which they read. Why do Indians not publish in their own languages? Trout states that

English was their instrument for protesting injustice and seeking justice.

Because English was the conqueror's language, it presented particular problems for native writers. Who was their audience? How could they use

¹⁶ Prior to the discovery of S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*.

English as a weapon in [cultural] word wars? How could they defend Indian traditions and discuss critical issues in the “enemy’s language” (xix)?

Though Wiget suggests that the book may have been ghostwritten by Mrs. C.H. Engle, he does not discount the protest which is found within the text. Others claim that Pokagon may have merely met with Engle and dictated his life story to her. What emerges from this telling, however, are his thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about who he is, as a Pokagon, and about what the United States government had promised, how they broke those promises, and the end result for his people.

Though *Queen of the Woods* is the first in *The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature* to have the appellation of “authorship debated” attached to it, it is not the first text and certainly not the last which has needed some help in order to be published. Of the many books which have passed through other hands in order for their stories to be told, three are vital to this discussion because of the way they treat American Indians in their texts as well as the reasons for their publishing. The first of these is Mary Rowlandson’s captivity narrative.

In her *The Captivity: The True Story of the Captivity of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Among the Indians and God’s Faithfulness to Her in Her Time of Trial*, written between the time of her ransom (1676) and the death (1678) of her husband, Joseph, a Puritan minister, Rowlandson “asserted that the purpose in writing about her experiences was simply the edification of her children and friends” (Harris 463). Though her story may have been directed at her family, the influential Puritan minister and author, Increase Mather, sponsored the writing of the narrative. It is also believed that he wrote the

preface, as well arranged for the publication. “What cannot be confirmed, however, is whether or not [Mather] edited Mary’s narrative before it was printed. Yet it seems naïve to assume that... her senior spiritual advisor...would not have had some input, which might well have included editorial additions and revisions” (Derounian-Stodola 5).

Gary Sligh, in his *A Study of Native American Novelists: Sophia Alice Callahan, Mourning Dove, and Ella Cara Deloria*, suggests that a question every writer, and in this case every American Indian writer, faces is “Will my work ever be read” (110)? Because of their uncertainty over the publishing of their texts, many American Indians experience some sense of what Sligh calls “accommodation”—allowing another writer or editor to make changes to the original text in order for it to be more adapted to the targeted audience. Speaking specifically of these Indian women authors Sligh states, “it is perhaps no great irony to realize sometimes those women who are most accused of accommodating their work to Western standards are those most recognized by and popular with the general reading public of their day....In any case, accommodation is another issue faced by women writers in every generation” (Sligh 110).

As evidence for this claim, Sligh states that Mourning Dove (Okanogan) “saw herself as a link between her own people and the larger white public,” and perhaps either assuming or knowing that her work would never be published and, therefore, the voice of her people would never be heard, she felt compelled to do whatever it took to get her work published, even if it meant accommodating to her white audience.

Her *Coyote Stories*, the least authentically Indian of all her writings, achieved a great measure of success and was even reprinted several times.

Her novel, *Cogewea*, was published and circulated whereas Sophia Alice Callahan's *Wynema* lay fallow even though published, and Ella Cara Deloria's *Waterlily* received no notice at all until it was finally published nearly fifty years after its completion. Whatever we may say in condemning Mourning Dove's work, it did make it into the hands of readers and added to a growing sense of the presence of native Americans in the United States literature. (110-111).

Sligh's point is not to say that the entirety of the work was authored by another¹⁷ and that Mourning Dove's name was merely added to the finished product. Rather, it is to suggest that Mourning Dove must have made allowances in the feelings and attitudes of the characters in her stories to accommodate her audience. Yet even in the face of any changes or accommodations, the idea that she did not write the text never truly arises.

While we may never know the truth of the matter, it is interesting to look at how Pokagon's message was transmitted. Pokagon shows up at the Fair as a meek, submissive American Indian needing the help of his audience to spread his message. As part of that message, it becomes clear that he also needed help writing it. It is entirely possible that he wanted to evoke a feeling of sympathy in his audience which would enable them to readily accept what he was saying. If Pokagon were to attend the Fair and come out as an angry, vocal, literate Indian who did not need the help of a white woman to present his protest, it is highly doubtful that his message would have been accepted and his protest heard. If he were to appear threatening rather than as a submissive child seeking help from a parent, it is more than likely that his presence would not have been tolerated. By

¹⁷ Lucullus McWhorter assisted Mourning Dove in the literary sense, helping her stories to flow and not to take over the ideas represented by Mourning Dove.

playing on the sympathies and empathies of his audience, Pokagon was able to enjoy the publicity longer than he might otherwise have. What did he want? He desired that people read his text and learn of the injustices that he (and distantly his people) suffered as the result of broken promises.

However, given the opportunity for his audience to see him as someone needing help from them, he couldn't have stood forth and proclaimed them all guilty of allowing the taking of land, introducing alcohol in Indian land, as well as a plethora of other injustices. The angry Indian, they wouldn't listen to. However, the Indian who could tell stories about a land and a people of whom they had no knowledge and mix this with mythical creatures and events is the one that they would gladly learn from. For this reason, it is possible that Pokagon expressed his protest via his own story of returning home from "civilization" and once again embracing the "wild" life. Pokagon knew that by narrating his tale as fable-like stories that his audience would not only read them, but continue to read and thereby learn of the plight of his people. In his introduction to his discussion of Indian literary and intellectual traditions, Craig Womack (Creek) includes Simon Pokagon in a list of Native authors and states that

these are some of our ancestral voices, the pioneers, those who came before us whose writings paved the way for what Native authors can do today. Nineteenth-century Indian resistance did not merely take the form of plains warriors on horseback; Indian people authored books that often argued for Indian rights and criticized land theft. In addition to publishing books, many of these authors engaged in other rhetorical acts such as national speaking tours lobbying for Native rights. Their life stories, as

well as their literary ideas, provide a useful study of the evolution of Native thought that has led up to contemporary notions of sovereignty and literature (3).

Not only does Womack claim that these authors and their works have not been studied enough, but he suggests that in the eyes of some, their stories have yet to be told and heard. In a personal correspondence received by Womack, Abenaki poet Cheryl Savageau states that when American Indians begin to tell their stories [in English], a political movement by the mainstream attempts to suggest that there is “no truth...If everybody’s story is all of a sudden equally true, then there is no guilt, no accountability, no need to change anything, no need for reparation, no arguments for sovereign nation status, and their positions of power are maintained” (3-4).

Pokagon’s writing not only seeks to protest, but also to change this idea. Though it may not be easy to discern truth and accountability in his life, through the examination of his *Queen of the Woods* the truth will be read as well as heard. His hope is that this truth, which lies in the minds and hearts of the American Indian, who know what has been promised by the United States government, will influence his readers to act on American Indians’ behalf. Though Pokagon does argue in “The Red Man’s Rebuke” that the Pokagon and other tribes should not have been moved off their lands because of treaties, *Queen of the Woods* focuses less on the idea that the American Indian should be able to own his own home and hunting grounds, and more on the fact that the introduction of alcohol into American Indian camps and villages directly violated treaties with the Pokagon, and ultimately destroyed the American Indian both individually and as a people.

The Slithering of Ginebig (That Awful Serpent)

It is important to note that throughout his text Pokagon mixed Algonquin and English words. While he does expound the reason for this, it is my claim that both languages are used to emphasize the authenticity of the writing as well as provide an opportunity to express his American Indian protest to a divided audience. In the article titled “The Algonquin Language” which appears just before the beginning of the story, Pokagon explains his reasons for using Algonquin when he knows that most of his audience will be white and speak only English. He states,

“I realize that many of [*Queen of the Woods*’s] readers will inquire why so many Indian words are used. All such will please bear in mind that the manuscript was first written in the Algonquin language, the only language spoken by me until fourteen years of age, and in translating it into English, many parts seems to lose their force and euphony, insomuch that I deeply regret that *Queen of the Woods* can not be read by the white people in my own language. It is indeed mortifying for me to consider that outside of the proper names of lakes, streams, and places, our language is being almost entirely ignored by the incoming race, while other languages of foreign birth are entering largely into the English dialect; and our children, who are being educated in the white man’s schools, are forsaking and forgetting their mother tongue.” (83)

Not only does he desire that his audience learn from the injustices that his people, as well as all American Indians, have endured but he also wants them to learn little about his

language. By learning the language, perhaps, their hearts will be softened to accept his claims and help his people.

Queen of the Woods opens with a character telling his life story. Told in the first person, Simon narrates his return from Twinsburg, Ohio, where he attended school for many years. Though he lived with the Pokagon people and spoke only their language until the age of twelve, the character—who identifies himself as Simon—after having been educated, now desires to return to the wilderness where he grew up.

Shortly after Simon returns to the Pokagon society, he meets and marries a mysterious young maiden named Lonidaw. Time passes and Lonidaw and Simon have two children, a son named Olondaw and a daughter named Hazeleye. Though from this point forward the story does describe their life together, Pokagon's purpose is to show how disruptive to this little family the evils of alcohol can be. Pokagon narrates four distinctive events in the tale that protest the introduction of alcohol into his characters' lives. The first is the story of Kobunda, Lonidaw's mother.

Kobunda and her people knew and were friendly with the Pokagon; she even knew and was best friends with Simon's mother, Kalawna. When they meet after a long time of not seeing one another due to the Indian removals, Kobunda relates her story of how her people had come to leave the area that they once inhabited. Though they were friendly with and knew the Pokagon band, they were not allowed to stay on their lands when the order came to move west. Kobunda states that she wished that Leopold had argued for all the Potawatomi and not just the Pokagon staying on their lands. Like the Cherokee who suffered hunger, thirst, homelessness, other hardships, and even death

along the Trail of Tears, in September 1838, the Potawatomi received their own marching orders¹⁸. Military soldiers “dressed in blue” descended upon the church and gathered up all the male Indians they could find (116).

One little white boy, who was a friend to Kobunda’s family, ran to tell her that this had been done and to prepare them for what might come. Though many may have had more immediate thoughts about home and children, Kobunda’s first thought was about her husband, Saginaw, who had recently left for town. And although she asked the boy and many others where her husband might be and what had happened to him, no one either could or would tell her.

As Kobunda narrates her story, she tells of hunger, thirst, but more than this her desire was to know where her husband was.

Late in wintertime my husband returned, and found me and our little one. He had traveled on foot and alone across the great plains from far beyond the ‘father of waters’ and was so broken down in health and spirits that he seemed all unlike himself. He sought to gain new life by drinking “firewater” more and more; but alas, in a few years it consumed him, and he faded and fell, as fall the leaves in autumn time (116-7).

Though she does not discuss it in great detail at this time, preferring to narrate the rest of her story, the fact that Saginaw’s hopelessness was increased by his love for and addiction to “firewater” created an indelible scar on Kobunda. Not long after her narration closes, Lonidaw confides to Simon that her mother’s, Kobunda’s, first thought

¹⁸ This march/move would later be known as the Trail of Death.

about him was that “nesageze ketemeshke mautchi oshkeemawaw (no doubt he is a drinking, lazy, bad young man)” (118). The ending of Kobunda’s narrative marks a distinct shift in the subject matter of *Queen of the Woods*. Though the novel contains a romantic story-line which will inevitably pair Simon with Lonidaw, the evils of “fire-water” or Indian Whisky come to dominate not only Kobunda’s thoughts, but also the lives of Simon and his soon-to-be wife.

It is interesting that Pokagon wanted his audience to know exactly what this drink would do to his people and not rely solely on the stereotypical term “fire-water.” He claims to have found a note which if ever read, by the Supreme Court, would easily convict the those who broke treaties and brought Indian Whisky into Indian Territory.

The footnote on page 130 reads

Indian Whisky: The most profitable and the most ruinous trade Mackinaw ever had was in whisky. A well-known recipe among the traders was: “Take two gallons of common whisky, or unrectified spirits, to thirty gallons of water, Add red pepper enough to make it fiery, and tobacco enough to make intoxicating.” Its cost was not more than five cents a gallon. Thousands of barrels were sold there every year; the price of them generally was fifty cents a quart by the bottle. It is estimated that over half the fish caught and first sold there for thirty years was paid for by the above compound, and that more than half of the annuities the Indians received from the United States was expended to purchase it. The most wealthy and respectable traders on the island were not ashamed to deal in it (130).

Not only does Pokagon want his audience to know why it this vile stuff is called fire-water, but he also expresses his dismay that treaties were broken which resulted in the harming of his people. It was disheartening for him to know that not only was this concoction used to make money from its sale, but also to enable the United States government to steal land from the American Indians.

Like most American Indian protest novels, *Queen of the Woods* also spends some time discussing the treatment of the American Indians by the government in removing them from the land. Kobunda's tale of forceful relocation is reemphasized by a local trader, who has been friends with both families for years. He tells of riding with two chiefs who went and held talks in Washington, only to be told that their land had been purchased and they now must leave. Despite the fact that this land argument exists, Pokagon shifts his tale to the discussion of the dreaded "ashkontay nebesh" (firewater) and how it affects Indians, in general, as well as how it results in the "shaynibowin" (shame and deaths) of three of his closest loved ones (128). Pokagon's Simon relates,

The old man shook my arm saying, "Kebawin?" (Are you asleep?) "Yes," I replied, "until you shook me." He sighed, and then said, "Young chief, I can not understand how one of all our race can sleep when he recalls how ashkontay nebesh (firewater), that alluring jangendijiged (enemy) brought among us by the whites, is destroying kwiwizens and oshkinawe (our boys and young men), as well as akiwesi (our old men), and laying waste quanotchwin (the fairest) of ki aukee (our land) (129).

To illustrate his point, the old man tells Simon of Kazell, “odawnissan (the daughter) of Chief Osheabe. Her parents died when she was twelve years old, leaving her to be raised in a Catholic school near South Bend. From her father’s estate she received twelve thousand dollars and many men sought her hand in marriage, for her money, if not for her beauty.

At the age of fourteen she fell in love with a French Indian who was “a fine-looking fellow,” much older than she (130). Unfortunately for her,

in less than five years he squandered all Ojonia (her money), drinking firewater. He abused her most shamefully. It broke her young, confining odeima (heart); the sunshine in nishkinma (her face) went out, her merry bapiwin (laugh) [died], her oshkinjigomag (eyes), and her onowamag (cheeks) grew pale, and long raven winisissimag(hair), reaching to aukee (the ground), fell off, her tchitchag (soul) in abitatibikad (the midnight) of kashkendam (sorrow wept) (130).

The only kind act that this drunken husband did for his wife was drowned himself. The old man expresses his concern that this drink may despoil every Indian Maiden in some form or fashion. He states “It does pain my heart, when I consider that there is not one chance in one hundred for Loda¹⁹, or any of our girls, to marry a young man of their tribe or people, who will not get drunk and abuse them! Do not think of it” (130)! He ends with a warning to Simon. He has seen how the drink has taken hold upon American Indians and to what lengths they would go to buy this poison, selling anything and

¹⁹ Lonidaw

everything so that they might never be sober again. Simon promises the old man that he will always hate the stuff.

The third and fourth examples which Pokagon uses to protest alcoholism in *Queen of the Woods* are presented through the tragic events that ultimately lead to the deaths of Simon's children, Olondaw and Hazeleye, and, most especially, his beloved wife, Lonidaw. Time passes in the narrative and the readers soon discover that after they had been married two years, Lonidaw gave birth to Olondaw, a son. Three years later Lonidaw gave birth to their second child, Hazeleye, their little girl, hazel-eyed like her brother. As the years passed the children grew in strength and wisdom and were inseparable until a priest in royal robes came to the Pokagon wigwam and perhaps, baiting the children, requested that they show him their archery skill. At about thirty feet or more they hit the mark fifty times and missed only once (163). Though he did not carry any firewater with him, nor have the smell of whisky about him, the priest's presence at the Pokagon wigwam marked the beginning of the Pokagon's first ordeal because of the addictive power of whisky.

After this he came often to see us, and requested that we would give consent to send Olondaw, at his expense, away to the white man's school, that he might become learned, great, and good, and thereby be of great service to our race. At length I gave my consent, but Lonidaw shuddered at the thought; in fact, she grieved over it most²⁰ bitterly. "For" said she, "when but a child my girlish curiosity often led me to take panadgag (young birds), nearly grown, from their nests, and when I placed them

²⁰ Pokagon's emphasis.

back with caution, tender care, they never failed as soon as my hand was lifted from wawisswan (the nest) to spring therefrom, and fall fluttering to the ground, and in the night time chill and die” (162-3).

Despite this semi-cryptic response, a few years later, when Olondaw was twelve years old, Lonidaw “reluctantly gave her consent that he might go away to school, but not until she exacted a solemn promise from the priest that he should be carefully cared for, and strongly guarded against the intoxicating cup, that deadly enemy of our race” (163). That same night that her consent was given, Lonidaw had a dream. She saw herself near the familiar wigwam of her childhood days. She recognized bushes and trees where she had played as well as some “opitchig” (robins) in their nests. Like her earlier experience, Lonidaw gathered the young birds out of their nests and examined their beauty. As they felt her touch upon them, “they chirped a wild alarm” and likewise fell to the ground. The parents of the bird, not previously noticing Lonidaw's presence, now rushed back to the nest seeking their offspring. Distracted by the parents, Lonidaw turned and saw a young bird moving slowly toward a giant “ginebig” (snake) with open mouth, that was drawing the young bird by some unseen charm into ‘pekar niowib’ (the jaws of death). Fearing for the life of the bird, Lonidaw grabbed a “mitagos (a club) and began to beat at the ground, hoping to drive the snake off. In horror, she saw that the bird was no longer a robin that the snake now held in its jaws, but instead was “the living skeleton of her son, struggling to escape.” The boy cried, “Negawashe (My mother! Oh, my mother!) do save ne kwiwisens (your boy).” She awoke, screaming and told “ninabawtan” (her dream), stating that it was a warning not to send her boy to the white man's school. Yet Olondaw still left with the priest (163).

Although Simon visited Olondaw once each year while he was at school, Simon's presence alone could not stop Olondaw from acting upon the influence of his peers. While he may have received an adequate education, which the priest may have called a service to his race, the day he returned to his family was nothing short of tragedy. Simon states that with great joy he received his son, even the dog, Zowan, was excited to see him. The boy quickly shook hands with his father before running into the house to hug and kiss his mother. As mother and son embraced each other, Simon was overjoyed at the sight of his family being once again together. Lonidaw's excitement, however, turns to horror as she realizes something that Simon misses.

“Negriz! Negriz (My son! my son!) waw nind aian apine? Waw nind aian apine? (What have you done? What have you done?)” I gazed upon our darling boy, while from his lips came this response: “Nigaw waw kiwab? (my mother, what do you see?) io! Waw kiwab (Oh! What do you see?).” She gazed into his face and then at me, weeping aloud, she said “Nin banadenden! Nin banadenden! (he is lost! he is lost!).

Why was it Lonidaw who first recognized what her son had done and not Simon? Could it be perhaps that Simon's time spent in civilization obtaining his education had dulled his senses making it more difficult to pick up on the signs? More than likely, it was Lonidaw's personal experiences with the smell: on “ont odon (his mouth) I smell otawagameg (the dragon's) breath!”, symptoms, and results of alcoholism from her childhood. Standing in silence for a while, Lonidaw exclaimed, “O, dear! Dear! How I do wish we had obeyed the warning dream sent by Kije Manito (the Great Spirit). I know

that monstrous ginebig (snake) I saw tibik (the night) before he left for school, holding fast his living skeleton, will surely swallow him alive (164).

As he sought to comfort his grieving wife, Simon stated that he was sure that Olondaw would never touch the drink again. She looked up at Simon and replied that that was what her own father had said. She recalled how her father “continued to fall down and worship awessi (the beast) until he cursed kiwash and abinoji (his wife and child), cursed himself, and cursed Kije Manito (his God), and died” (164). Though it must have been painful for her to relive this experience, she returned inside and questioned her son as to who gave him this poison to which he replies no one did. Olondaw tells of his second week at the school when some of his classmates asked him to go along to do some bottle hunting. They went into back alleys, dark places, finding whiskey bottles that had been thrown away by the drinking men. They would fill these bottles with water and then drink it and then sell the bottles. The boys, his classmates, complimented him and said he could find more bottles in the space of an hour than a white child could in three hours. They called him the “little red-skin hunter” (165). And so by smelling and drinking the water he began to like the taste of whiskey and after a time he wanted it so bad he could think of nothing else. Some boys would buy whiskey for him because as an Indian he could not (under treaty) buy it for himself. He ends his explanation with the thought that it is mean to throw away bottles of firewater for Indian boys to learn to get drunk on. He places the blame for his addiction not on himself, but those who should have known better than leaving the bottles out where young uneducated boys could have access to them.

Prior to his going to the school, Lonidaw and Simon were promised by a Catholic priest that their son would be watched over and protected from committing the very acts that Olondaw has committed. Where was this priest in the second week of his schooling? What happened to his promises that he would look after the boy and make sure that after his schooling was finished he could return to his people and be a great service to them? Though not much is said about the lack of responsibility that this priest showed toward his Indian charge, to some extent Simon seems to have accepted that something like this might have happened prior to giving his own consent for the boy to go to the school. Being an assimilated Indian and educated in a white man's school, Simon should have known what dangers his son would face. The fact that he was so willing to allow the boy to leave the safety of the wigwam and enter civilization in opposition to his wife's wishes, shows that either he knew that the outcome was inevitable or that he hoped the schools had changed since his time there. Pokagon ends the tale, and, therefore, the life of his son, Olondaw, by saying that he does not wish to bleed his own heart or sadden the readers. "Suffice it to say, as darkness succeeds the meteor's sudden glare, so his young life went out and left us in the midnight of despair" (167).

One would think that this kind of anguish in the Pokagon family might have been short-lived because of the love between Simon and Lonidaw and the presence of their daughter Hazeleye. Simon hopes this is the case. However, he knows that if anything should happen to his daughter, his family would fall apart. He states "Hazeleye...the very image of her mother, was our only hope, and our hearts were bound up in hers, we consoled ourselves with the assurance that she was so isolated from the alluring serpent born of the white man that she was safe from all harm that might come from such a

source” (167). Unlike her brother, Hazeleye did not leave her family and go to school. She stayed home and helped her parents come to grips with the loss of her brother. However, just because she stayed away from civilization and the “source” of Olondaw’s downfall, does not mean that “ginebig” (snake) could not slither into the wilderness and bite her.

One day when Simon was out on “giosse” (a hunt), Hazeleye was fishing on the lake. Two drunken “gigoike win” (fishermen) were recklessly rowing their boat when they crashed into “nintchiman” (her bark canoe),

which was broken and capsized, throwing her out into sagaigan. Lonidaw, standing on the shore, saw the crash and heard “obebawag” (her scream). She wildly cried, “Mawandgia! Mawandgia! Dodem mawandgia nindjanis! (Save! Save! Do save my child!)” But, paralyzed by that deadly drug, those drunken men, though white, could not see the living diamond struggling in the lake for life, but centered all their powers on that false diamond of the alluring wine, of which they drank with idiotic “bapiwin” (laughter), while yet the lake was bubbling with her dying breath, and never raised onindjima (a hand) to save the child. Lonidaw, in frenzy, plunged into the flood, and swam desperately as none but a mother could, to save a drowning child (167-8).

Though she tried with all her heart, she could not reach her only daughter, a helpless, drowning child. The dog, Zowan, returning to the wigwam ahead of Simon, heard the commotion and raced to the lake. As he stood on the shores he howled a mournful howl as if telling Lonidaw, “your child can not be saved” (168). The dog plunges into the water

and swims in an attempt to help Lonidaw who is now herself drowning. Thinking that she is grasping the hair of her daughter, she clings desperately to the back of Zowan as the dog swims her to the shore. When she is out of the water, Zowan races towards Simon, wags his tail and gives a mournful, whimpering cry, followed by the saddest howl Simon had ever heard. The dog turned and ran toward Lonidaw with Simon following behind. Seeing the unconscious Lonidaw and with Hazeleye missing, Simon lifts her limp form and carries it to the wigwam. Lonidaw awakens, and amidst cries and sobs, she lifelessly tells Simon of his daughter's death. Somehow this maiden, this Queen of the Woods, knows that as a result of her daughter's and of her own near drowning that she will shortly die. She extracts a promise from Simon that he must always fight as long as he lives

against “tchi niboma” (the destroyer) of our race. Against the heartless tyrant, whose murderous hands are stained with the blood of my dear father, while I was but a child. Against that tyrant, who, by his acts of cruelty, crushed out my dear mother's life and left me an orphan bride.²¹ . Against a tyrant, who, shackling, led astray sasikawin (our first-born) and murdered him while yet a youth. Against the tyrant fiend, who, not satisfied when he had destroyed ogwissan (our only son), sought us out in our humble, woodland home, and while we thought no danger nigh, with ruthless hands, cast our dear Hazeleye, who knew no wrong, into the chilling waters of the lake, where she sleeps unseen, except by Him who gave her birth. Against that tyrant, who, by such acts of cruelty, shocked

²¹ This last statement is a bit confusing, seeing as how Lonidaw's mother was in fact present at the marriage of Lonidaw and Pokagon.

the tender life-cords of my being, and forced me to this couch of death. Will you thus promise?" I answered "Lonidaw, the Great Spirit being my helper, I will." She whispered faint and low, "Nind inemdam awnamya ki" (I will pray for thee) I heard one deep "kwanamowin" (sigh). Slower and slower she breathed, until she ceased. "Kesus" (the sun) had set. I pressed my hand close to her side until I felt the last pulsation of "ninodaw" (her heart). Then, oh, then, I knew that she was dead (169).

Again, if this particular paragraph had been issued as part of some speech denouncing the acts of violence which the American people had knowingly committed against American Indians, the effectiveness would have been short lived. And most likely it would not have had that much of an impact in Pokagon's goal of instructing the reader. The fact that it is coming from one who is in the throes of death makes this statement much more powerful than had it been delivered by Simon alone.

As men and women come into the world at times unrecognized for their great accomplishments, so too do they leave this world. Some, though great in life, receive few accolades at the time of their death. Simon states that native hunters of the wild who had visited and eaten at Lonidaw's home came with fragrant flowers and helped bury her. However, the best tribute that she would receive would not come from one of the great warriors, but from a little maiden who knew Lonidaw well. Unbidden she began to sing "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep / from which none ever wake to weep; / a calm and undisturbed repose, / unbroken by the last of foes" (172). Simon remarks with wonder that before the final words died out, the song was repeated across the lake and then was sung from shore to shore until the tribute died out altogether.

As he sat, with tears of gratitude flowing down his face, he turned his thoughts toward the promise he had made Lonidaw. He states “all this trouble now weighing down upon my soul, has fallen upon me by reason of that curse, dealt out to our race by the hands of white men” (172). As he sits and ponders the presence of firewater among his people and its introduction to them by the white man, Simon, the assimilated, Christianized man reaches out to the Great Spirit begging it to help him fulfill Lonidaw’s desire, as well as help his people shake off the shackles of the “demon of the alluring cup” (175).

At this point, it seems that in Simon’s eyes, his faith in the Christian God has failed him. Returning to the Great Spirit and feeling the need to tell this supernatural being about his life and its hardships, Simon rehearses how the curse took his son, daughter, and wife. After detailing what this has done to him personally, Simon wonders how his people will ever be able to overcome their addictions to “firewater” and become a loving people once again. As he sits, he realizes that it is not just firewater that has afflicted his people, but the monster that uses it to its greatest advantage over the Indian.

While wondering there, I gazed. I beheld marching among the mighty throng the most vicious-looking creature my eyes ever beheld: no brush of “mautchi manito” (the devil) *could paint his wicked* “kinjig” (face); no language of “Litchiiskuto” (hell) could describe it. About his form was wrapped “wabeyon” (a blanket) with “anongog” (the stars) and stripes thereon, among which was outlined an American “migisi” eagle, with wings half spread, while across “nikatigwan” (his forehead) deeply impressed, I read “United States and City Seals.” Under “nin kitchink”

(his right arm), half concealed, he held a bundle of poisonous ginebigog” (serpents) which writhed, convulsed, and hissing, snapped “wibigog” (their teeth), and escaping in great numbers, they ran like “nikibiwin” (a flood) in all directions; still the numbers held grew none the less. In “kitchinig” (his right hand) he held a scorpion whip, which he wielded with such skilled force, that it sounded more like the report of a gun than the snap of a lash. Thus clothed with civic and national emblems, the despot marched forth “kimigan” (on his trail), defiantly treading, with feet of steel, upon beating human hearts that were yet struggling in “miskwi” (their own blood). “Ninodaw” (My heart) almost ceased to beat as I saw the defiant despot marching towards beautiful homes, drawing his mantle closer about him so as to conceal the snakes and scorpions hidden there, as if “kawin agatchiwan” (no shame) “nin inenowin” (his conscience) stung, with brazen face he boldly entered the homes of sunshine and smiles (176-77).

As he watches the monster, Simon notices that he can see every path that the thing has made in bringing “that alluring cup” to the Indian. He also realizes that although he promised Lonidaw that he would fight against the introduction of the vile drink to other Indians, any attempt by him would be too little, too late. Because of the power of that monster in the cup, and the gusto with which Simon’s people seek after it, Simon, in his heart, knows that unless the monster stops its own actions, nothing Simon does will lessen its influence over his people.

At the end of the novel, Simon²² compares the actions of the United States government in establishing life-saving stations along the coastline, to what is severely lacking in the government's care of the American Indians. He states,

All along the seacoast of "nin aki" (this land of ours), and along the shores of "tchiigitchigami" (the great inland lakes) have been erected by the United States nearly three hundred life-saving stations, from whose watch-towers a lookout is kept day and night to rescue ships and those on board. These stations are manned by thousands of stalwart men and experienced seamen, equipped with all the latest improvements of the life-saving service at the expense of millions of dollars annually. During the last fiscal year the general superintendent of this branch of service, in great pride, reports "that six hundred and thirteen shipwrecked lives were saved" (185-6).

In his description, Simon is careful to note the amount of money, men, and "experienced seamen" who diligently man these stations to rescue any who might need rescue. Though he does not expressly critique it, he wonders how often these men would be called into action. And while he calls this "branch of service...a noble one," Simon draws a connection to the lack of diligence that the United States has exercised in employing

²² In this section there is a subtle, yet distinct change in the voice of the narrator. Though I argue that Engle was merely an editor who helped Pokagon organize a clear narrative in which to tell his life story as well as protest the introduction of alcohol into Indian Territory, it is my opinion in chapters 11 and 12 that Engle is now writing without the aid of Pokagon narrating the story. Throughout the rest of the text, Pokagon uses the first person perspective to narrate the story. However, after the first paragraph in the eleventh chapter there is a sudden shift to third person which, instead of narrating, tells the reader exactly what "Pokagon" does or believes. "Pokagon believes with all his heart..." and "My dear friends, Pokagon is fully convinced..." (180).

Though I do not argue that in these chapters Engle's writing negates the idea that Pokagon wrote this novel with editing help, this is something which bears further research and exploration.

these “life-saving” actions to help the native men, women, and children who need rescue from the various shipwrecks which they, as American Indians, must endure at the hands of the white man.

Though Simon briefly touches on the usurpation of Indian land and the subsequent hardships Indians experience being forcefully removed, the tragedies of which Simon speaks throughout his *Queen of the Woods* are the “shipwrecks” of his own people, as they continue to drown in their futile attempts to rescue themselves from what he calls “the curse,” the introduction of and consumption of alcohol among his people. His protest, as represented in *Queen of the Woods*, is not against the taking of their lands. It is the willingness of the United States to introduce and use alcohol (especially whisky), to constrict the movements of the American Indian, to entice them into a sense of passivity, and to ignore, with reckless abandon, their cries for help.

In “ninodaw” (his heart) [Simon] feels compelled to cry aloud to the present lawgivers of “ningaw aukee” (his fathers’ land), Do extend your life-saving service to “michi kitch igawme” (the great ocean) of struggling “nishiwanadis” (humanity). Throw out “bimadisewin biminakwan?” (the life-line) of total abstinence, and save the perishing! For nearly sixty years I have associated with “waubeaunene” (the white race) as well as my own, and by close observation during all that time, I am fully convinced that the only safe “akobimiwan” (fortress) of “ininijimowin” (refuge) against the ravages of “tchimawtchi” (the curse) is total abstinence (185-6).

He pleads for this rescue of not only his dead family, but all Indians who are “Trying now to make the harbor, [but] In the darkness may be lost” (brightly beams).

It is important to note that Pokagon's protest is not something so radical that the United States Government would be appalled at what he is asking. Pokagon only wants the government to keep its treaties which state that alcohol in all its forms must be kept out of Indian territories. Though treaties such as Bird's Fort Treaty in 1843 and the Treaty of Tehuacana Creek in 1844 were pretty much one-sided in favor of white settlers, frontiersmen, and military over the right of the Indian, most prohibited the sale of "ardent spirits or intoxicating liquors" on Indian lands (Bird's Fort, Article VII); "no whiskey, or other intoxicating liquor, shall be sold to the Indians or furnished to them upon any pretext, either within their own limits or in any other place whatsoever" (Tehuacana Creek, article 23).²³

Unfortunately, these good intentions did not stop white shop owners from establishing what could at best be called trading posts on the borders of Indian territory. The "good men" who were promised in these treaties to watch over and protect the Indians could not prevent Indians from buying liquor from these unscrupulous traders. Venting his frustrations on the subject to "superiors in 1824, Sauk and Fox Agent Thomas Forsyth explained",

Almost every settler's house is a whisky shop, and...when spoken to on the subject, the whiskey seller will say, well prove it and the Justice will fine me...The information of whiskey selling to Indians I procure from the Indians themselves, therefore no proof can be had. It appears to me that

²³ It is not my intent to overburden this section with an extensive list of treaties wherein the specific promises of what the Indian gives up in order to have alcohol prohibited from his land. For further reading see William E. Unrau's *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892*.

nearly all the settlers from the mouth of the [Spoon] river up to this place sell whiskey to Indians (qtd. in Unrau 11).

Some might suggest that it is the responsibility of the American Indians themselves to regulate and control their own appetites with regards to alcohol²⁴, but it cannot be denied that promises were made to the Indians, especially in the case of the Five Civilized Tribes (Indian Removal Act of 1830), that if they were to give up their land and peacefully move, their new lands would be free from alcohol. Little Turtle of the Miami begged President Thomas Jefferson for support in “[stopping] the flow of alcohol that was devastating his people” (17). He stated,

Father: the introduction of this poison has been prohibited in our camps but not in our towns, where many of our hunters, for this poison, dispose of not only their furs, &c. but frequently of their guns and blankets, and return to their families destitute. Your children are not wanting in industry; but it is this fatal poison which keeps them por [sic]. Father: Your children have not that command over themselves, which you have, therefore, before anything can be done to advantage, this evil must be remedied.

Father: When our white brothers came to this land, our forefathers were numerous and happy, but, since their intercourse with white people, and owing to the introduction of this fatal poison, we have become less numerous and happy (qtd. in Unrau 17).

²⁴ For further information see chapters 1-3 in William E. Unrau's *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892*

The importance of Pokagon's protest is not to argue for the removal of whites from Indian lands. His solution is simple. He wants the many promises to be kept and if not for his family, then certainly for all Indians everywhere to be safe from this vile poison.

To the Great Spirit, Simon cries to have these scenes of misery and woe hidden from his sight. He says that he can endure no more and continue to live. Simon believes that the world no longer needs those lighthouses on the nation's shores to look for lost travelers and rescue them.

He is now fully satisfied the mighty Kraken is *not* in the sea, *but on* the land, and the dreaded monster regards not age, race, or condition, but tramples down alike both chief and king; the white man in his palace, and the red man in his hut; alike the gray-haired sire, and the little son of tender years (178).

Many critics get so caught up in analyzing Pokagon's use of his native language throughout his text²⁵ that they fail to pay attention to what is being said. More often than not they are trying to determine the accuracy with which the words are used and how Mrs. Engle could have possibly known this language sufficiently to embed them into the text. If she did in fact insert these words in an attempt to create the perfect scene of the Pokagon life, she used these words in connection with the peculiar events in Pokagon's life, toward the creation of a narrative of the Pokagon people. One of the possible reasons Pokagon's *Queen of the Woods* is not so critically analyzed, might be the fact that he asks his readers to focus on what he says and not what he actually does. Though critics often look at his personal life and how he either swindled or failed his people, they miss

²⁵ See Pokagon's own "The Algonquin Language" in the 2011 *Queen of the Woods* edition.

Pokagon's story of protest against the introduction of whisky into the Indian lands, its use, and consequences. While it is true that Simon Pokagon did not always seek what is best for his people, it cannot be argued that he is wrong about the effects of alcohol and how it has affected the Pokagon, as well as all American Indians.

His solution is simple. He desires for that vicious monster, the great American Kraken, to acknowledge its treaties and do what it has been unwilling to do in the past—keep the vile ginebig (snake) out of Indian lands so that all American Indians can live in safety and peace.

Chapter Three

Using “Their story” to Create History

We were told that they wished merely to pass through our country . . . to seek for gold in the far west . . . Yet before the ashes of the council are cold, the Great Father is building his forts among us. . . . His presence here is . . . an insult to the spirits of our ancestors. Are we then to give up their sacred graves to be plowed for corn?

--Red Cloud, Chief of the Oglala Sioux, 1866

One does not sell the land people walk on.

--Crazy Horse Oglala Sioux, Sept. 23, 1875

I am a red man. If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans, in my heart he put other and different desires. Each man is good in his sight. It is not necessary for Eagles to be Crows. We are poor . . . but we are free. No white man controls our footsteps. If we must die . . . we die defending our rights.

--Sitting Bull (Tatanka Yotanka), Chief of the Oglala Sioux

When Ohiyesa of the Santee Sioux²⁶ was born, on February 19, 1858, his mother Wakhánthą̀kawiŋ (meaning Goddess), reported to be the handsomest woman of all Spirit Lake and the Leaf Dwellers, knew she was dying. Realizing that her own mother was ill-equipped to take care of the boy and also knowing that her husband, Wakanhdi Ota (Many Lightnings), had not been seen or heard from in some time, Wakhánthą̀kawiŋ called to her mother-in-law and placed Ohiyesa in her care. She stated, “I give you this boy for your own. I cannot trust my own mother with him; she will neglect him and he will surely die” (*Indian Boyhood* 5). This one action put Ohiyesa²⁷ on the path that eventually led to his becoming the “Mysterious Medicine,” the

²⁶ Although this is the Americanized form of their real name, the Eastern Sioux, Ohiyesa/Eastman states that he is of the Santee Sioux. Unless there is a source that references the Sioux specifically, I will use the term Sioux

²⁷ I will refer to Eastman by his Sioux name Ohiyesa up until the time that this name is changed to Charles

role which his mother felt that he would eventually assume. But the medicine he had to give would not only serve to help his own people—his grandmother knew that it would bring change and, she hoped, healing to a nation. And like Simon Pokagon who protested the introduction of alcohol, the taking of Indian lands, and the government's inability or willingness to curtail alcoholism, Ohiyesa, who later became Charles Alexander Eastman, through his education, his career, and his writings protests the results of the many broken treaties, the current (late 19th Century) Wounded Knee Massacre narrative, the failed idea of integration and/or assimilation, and the inability of the United States government to offer a viable solution to the Indian Problem. Not only does Eastman protest the way in which the Massacre at Wounded Knee was handled, but he also speaks to the problems of assimilation/integration for the American Indian.

Eastman's *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: Chapter in the Autobiography of an Indian* details firsthand the events leading up to and including the 1890 Massacre at Wounded Knee; it provides a clear picture of the massacre from the Indian side and attempts to "wrest control" of the narration from the popular newspaper depictions and put it back in the hands of the Sioux (Bernardin 219). Unlike Pokagon, who wants his audience learn of the plight of the Pokagon people, Eastman desired that his audience not only know of the Sioux and their suffering at Wounded Knee, but that they hear it from a Sioux. Eastman's text, therefore, not only takes control of the history of Wounded Knee but it protests the treatment of the Sioux, unabashedly testifies to the injustices suffered by the people at Pine Ridge, and offers what might be best termed a solution for the future of the integrated and assimilated Indian.

Like Simon Pokagon, Eastman embraces the opportunity to become integrated and assimilated into white American society. However, he differs from Pokagon in that his protest is not fully verbalized through his text. His own actions leading up to Wounded Knee, and throughout the remainder of his life speak to the quandary in which he finds himself. I argue in this chapter that though Eastman addresses the wrongs the Sioux and other Indians suffer and brings them to light, documents the injustice of broken promises time and again, and even offers a solution of sorts, he knows that his texts will serve only to educate his audience about what the Sioux have endured (and maybe this education is protest enough). In midst of all this protest, his text suggests that even though he had been educated, Christianized, and civilized, Eastman is a conflicted man.

Orphaned, But Not Forgotten

Shortly after Ohiyesa was born and his mother passed away, his paternal uncle White-Foot returned home from the 1862 Sioux Uprising to report that his father Wak-anhdi Ota, or Many Lightnings, had been taken prisoner and killed by the U.S. government. Orphaned at such a young age, Ohiyesa wanted to fulfill his mother's dreams for him as well as avenge his father's death. As such, he was taught by both his grandmother and uncle to be both a Sioux warrior and a medicine man²⁸.

Though his uncle repeatedly claimed that Ohiyesa's father was dead, Ohiyesa's grandmother always told him that his father was not deceased, just lost. This changed when it was confirmed that Many Lightnings had been captured in December of 1862, imprisoned, and shortly thereafter executed. When news of his father's hanging reached

²⁸ At the request of his grandmother, who had sworn to Ohiyesa's mother that Ohiyesa would become the mysterious medicine.

Ohiyesa, his new goal in life was no longer to be a healer among his people; he desired only to kill the white men responsible and since he did not know who they were, he said he would kill any white man he saw (*Indian Boyhood* 142). To accomplish this, he enlisted the help of his uncle, who was more than willing to educate Ohiyesa.

It is interesting to note the contradicting attitudes towards his uncle and grandmother's acceptance of the news of Ohiyesa's father's capture and death as well as their differing approaches to his education from this point forward. Subsequent teaching that they each instilled into Ohiyesa's young life. White Foot readily accepts the news that his brother has been killed at the hands of the white man and, consequently, begins to train Ohiyesa in the traditional ways of a Sioux warrior. Ohiyesa's grandmother, however, continued to have hope that her son was still alive. Yet when faced with the news that her son is, in fact, dead, the grandmother does not change course. She still is intent on keeping her promise that she made to the boy's mother. Perhaps she knew that if she were to give over to White-Foot's way of thinking, Ohiyesa would become what he would have become had the mother given Ohiyesa to his maternal grandmother.

Whatever the case may be, White-Foot was pleased at that the news of Ohiyesa's father's death instilled a greater desire in Ohiyesa towards the hunting and killing of white. Leaving the reservation, Ohiyesa trained in the ways of a warrior with renewed zeal. When he was about fifteen years old, White Foot pronounced that Ohiyesa must prove his manhood. Ohiyesa was periodically sent by himself for weeks at a time to survive in the woods. On one such occasion when he returned, Ohiyesa saw a horse drawn wagon at his uncle's lodge. Fearing that there had been some trouble while he was away, Ohiyesa stayed in the woods observing the lodge. After a time, White-Foot

emerged and informed Ohiyesa that there was a man named Jacob Eastman inside who wanted to talk with him. Though fearing the unknown situation, Ohiyesa obeyed his uncle and moved toward the lodge where he saw his grandmother rejoicing. Just before entering, his uncle told him the man inside was his father. Ending his *Indian Boyhood* with this event, Eastman sums up his father's experience:

My father, accompanied by an Indian guide, after many days' searching had found us at last. He had been imprisoned at Davenport, Iowa, with those who took part in the massacre or in the battle following, and he was taught in prison and converted by pioneer missionaries, Drs. Williamson and Riggs. He was under sentence of death, but was among the number against whom no direct evidence was found, and who were finally pardoned by President Lincoln. When he was released, and returned to the new reservation upon the Missouri river, he soon became convinced that life on a government reservation meant physical and moral degradation. Therefore he [now going by the Christian name of Jacob Eastman] determined, with several others, to try the white man's ways of gaining a livelihood. He accordingly left the agency, renounced all government assistance, and took land under the United States Homestead law, on the Big Sioux River (286).

After his home had been established, Jacob Eastman sought to find his son. However, while he was imprisoned, the tribe had moved and he could not easily find him. It is interesting at this point that Ohiyesa does not speculate as to the commitment of his father in following the government's dictates. Had Jacob not renounced his rights as a

Sioux (which would mean his place on the reservation and rights to any tribal payments); it is highly probable that he would have never been released and, therefore, would have never been able to rediscover his boy. One would think that Jacob would say whatever had to be said in order to obtain his release, but it is surprising that, contrary to the wishes of his brother White-Foot, Jacob leaves the Sioux and attempts to assimilate into white society.

While in *Indian Boyhood* Eastman's memory of this event seems clear even thirty years after it took place, it is even more remarkable that Eastman²⁹ is able to recall in such exquisite detail this event at the beginning of his *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, fourteen years after *Indian Boyhood*'s. He recalls,

one fine September morning as I returned from the daily hunt, there seemed to be any unusual stir and excitement as I approached our camp. My faithful grandmother was on the watch and met me to break the news. "Your father has come -- he whom we thought dead at the hands of the white men," she said. It was a day of miracle in the deep Canadian wilderness, before the Canadian Pacific had been even dreamed of, while the Indian and the buffalo still held sway over the vast plains of Manitoba east of the Rocky Mountains. It was, perhaps, because he was my honored father that I lent my bewildered ear to his eloquent exposition of the so called civilized life, or the way of the white man. I could not doubt my own father, so mysteriously come back to us, as it were, from the spirit

²⁹ Because both Charles and his father Jacob share the same surname, from this point forward I will refer to Charles as Eastman or Ohiyesa where appropriate and his father by the name of Jacob.

land; yet there was a voice within saying to me, "A false life! A treacherous life!" ” (*From the Deep Woods* 6-7)

Because of the training that he had had and his obedience in all things to his grandmother and uncle, he did not question his father, even though the ways of the white man did not, at that time, make sense. When the time came for Ohiyesa to obey his father and move to the east to don the white man's clothes, cut his long hair, take upon himself a new name, and move from the woods to civilization, he did as his father had asked. His father stated early in Eastman's re-education "I have hunted every day...for the support of my family. I sometimes chase the deer all day. One must work, and work hard, whether chasing deer or planting corn. After all, the corn-planting is the surer provision" (16). Jacob further taught Eastman about God and Jesus Christ and read to him from the Bible. This first step in his "civilizing" education not only physically moved Ohiyesa out of the woods, but mentally prepared him for the life he would now lead. Leaving his family in Ontario was one of the hardest things Ohiyesa had had to do. But life, as an American Indian, was--and still can be--difficult.

Shortly after Ohiyesa arrived at his new home, his father changed Ohiyesa's name to Charles Alexander Eastman. Jacob also urged Charles to learn the white Americans' ways as best he could. Jacob spoke to his son prior to enrolling him in school, stating, "[w]e have now entered upon this life and there is no going back. Besides, one would be like a hobbled pony without learning to live like those among whom we must live" (Calloway 391-92). Life began to slowly change for Eastman when he entered the local school with white as well as other American Indian children, but it was when he moved to Santee Normal Training School in Nebraska that Eastman's true

struggle began. Before leaving him, his father, hoping to make an impression on Charles of the great opportunity before him, said:

"You must not fear to work with your hands...but if you are able to think strongly and well, that will be a quiver full of arrows for you, my son. All of the white man's children must go to school, but those who study best and longest need not work with their hands after that, for they can work with their minds (27).

"I find," said my father to me, "that the white man has a well-grounded religion, and teaches his children the same virtues that our people taught to theirs. The Great Mystery has shown to the red and white man alike the good and evil, from which to choose. I think the way of the white man is better than ours, because he is able to preserve on paper the things he does not want to forget. He records everything the sayings of his wise men, the laws enacted by his counselors" (28).

"The way of knowledge," he continued, "is like our old way in hunting. You begin with a mere trail a footprint. If you follow that faithfully, it may lead you to a clearer trail a track a road. Later on there will be many tracks, crossing and diverging one from the other. Then you must be careful, for success lies in the choice of the right road. You must be doubly careful, for traps will be laid for you, of which the most dangerous is the spirit-water, that causes a man to forget his self-respect" (28).

Though Eastman did not fear working with his hands, his efforts proved fruitless. Of his own experiences at the school he stated,

I hardly think I was ever tired in my life until those first days at boarding school. All things seemed to come and pass with a wearisome regularity, like walking railway ties—the step was too short for me. At times I felt something of the fascination of the new life, and again there would arise in me a dogged resistance, and a voice seemed to be saying, “It is cowardly to depart from the old things” (*Deep Woods* 46-7).

He firmly intended to obey his father just like he had obeyed his uncle and grandmother; yet farming was not in his future. And when his father realized this, Eastman was sent away to a different boarding school, one where he began to develop his mysterious medicine.

At the Santee Normal Training School in Santee, Nebraska, “the mission...like that of the government boarding schools that were to follow, was to assimilate Natives into white culture, particularly in the wake of the Sioux uprising considering the sense of unease that it engendered in the white settlements” (Lopenzina 739). At Santee, Eastman was not given an industrial education like other American Indians received at government schools. He received a white man’s education and was taught to read and write in English as well as his Sioux language, a fact that he later recognized may have contributed to his ability to assimilate to the degree which he could. He states, “our younger element has now been so thoroughly drilled in the motives and methods of the white man, at the same time losing the old mother and family training through being placed in boarding school from six years of age onward, that they really have become an entirely different race”

(164). Though he succeeded at Santee and later at both Beloit College in Wisconsin and Knox College in Illinois, Eastman found his defining calling when he graduated from Dartmouth College in 1887 and later earned his M.D. degree at Boston University in 1889.

“I’m Afraid of Americans”: Treaties, Promises, and Lies

While it is interesting and commendable that Eastman went from living the “savage” life, as many non-Indians at the time put it, to becoming integrated as much as possible into American society, it is also significant for the way Eastman crafts his tale. Unlike Pokagon and S. Alice Callahan, who may have drawn their characters as pieces of their own lives, Eastman’s characters are real people whom he had known and with whom he had interacted. Eastman’s first publication, *Indian Boyhood*, details his life from birth to the age of fifteen when his father returns seemingly from the dead and takes him back to civilization. *Indian Boyhood* describes the life of a Sioux boy, detailing the customs, traditions, and struggles of the Sioux in such a way that anyone not familiar with the Sioux might come to some understanding of them, and, therefore, know that these people are not savages in the wilderness but human beings who deserve to be treated as such. Eastman makes it clear that he knew and experienced the Sioux life. He knows that his audience might not know everything there is to know about the Sioux, so he provides the necessary background so the reader can come to a full understanding of him and his people. That being said, one cannot assume that his work does not have it faults.

Robert Allen Warrior, in *Tribal Secrets*, calls Eastman's writings “highly sentimental accounts of his childhood in which he portrays natives as needy for, worthy of, and ready for inclusion into mainstream civilization” (8). While he commends Eastman for his contributions to the American Indian cause, he warns his readers “not to let this blind us to perturbing implications of the work.” Drew Lopenzina contradicts Warrior’s statement about not “blind[ing] us” and clarifies that Eastman's writing had done more for the American Indian than any other writer of his time. To be sure, Eastman was one of the few American Indians at the turn of the 20th century to have authored a book length autobiography. Lopenzina reports that Eastman

belonged to the first official pan-Indian organization, served for time as its president, and became a nationally recognized figure in support of native causes. While he also worked for Anglo organizations such as the YMCA, the Boy Scouts of America, and the Carlisle school, his work always had strong Native American associations. Service of one kind or another was always central to his motivations (728).

Eastman states that “from childhood I was consciously trying to be a man; that was, after all the basics they [his maternal grandmother and his uncle] taught; but after this I was trying to be a warrior and hunter, and not care for money or possessions, but to be in the broadest sense a public servant” (*From the Deep Woods* 2).

Both Warrior and Lopenzina are correct in their criticism of *Indian Boyhood*. Eastman knew that his audience would be unfamiliar with the ways of the Sioux and, therefore, purposefully crafts his boyhood tale with examples which can easily be

imagined and enjoyed. It is in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: A Chapter in the Autobiography of an Indian*, published in 1916, that Eastman's protests regarding broken treaties, the problem of true integration, and his first-hand account of the 1892 Wounded Knee Massacre are presented without any kind of sentimentality. In *From the Deep Woods*, the truth comes out. And while he seeks assimilation, Eastman eventually realizes that true integration cannot happen.

While Eastman was "becoming an American," the U.S. Government continued what was started with the violation of the 1868 Treaty of Laramie, which gave American Indians rights and control over parts of present day Montana and Wyoming, as well as both North and South Dakota, including the Black Hills. In addition to these rights, the government was to provide "clothing, agency buildings, and other essentials necessary to promote self-sustaining habits" (Fritz 64). Unfortunately, for the Sioux, gold was discovered in the Black Hills, prompting non-natives to overrun the land seeking wealth. In an attempt once again to move the Sioux and obtain the land without fighting, Congress passed the Dawes Act of 1887,³⁰ which was aimed at breaking up tribal lands and affiliations by allotting plots of land, in trust, to individuals and which dictated the forced conversion of community-held tribal lands into small parcels for individual tribal member ownership.

In connection with the allotment of their lands, the Sioux began to see white men and women enter their lands not only to mine the gold, but also to "civilize" and "Americanize" them. These invaders viewed the customs and religious observances of

³⁰ Also called the General Allotment Act or the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887. Eastman was approximately twenty-nine years old and had recently graduated from Dartmouth

the Sioux as heathenism. Following a ban by the U.S. government of all religious practices of the Sioux, especially the Ghost Dance (which was thought to bring ancestors back from the dead), missionaries sought to convert the Sioux to the “true,” Christian god and educate potential new American citizens. It is unfortunate, however misguided it may have been, that these missionaries could not have used their own religious tenet of the resurrection of the dead to build a bridge between the Sioux and the United States government and the rising conflict. The Ghost Dance, in its infancy, was a religious dance which acted as a way of remembrance for their dead ancestors and their customs. A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff implies that it was converted and changed as it was passed along until the Ghost Dance became the defining mantra of the Paiute prophet, Wovoka. If his followers not only danced but also had faith in the dance, Wovoka prophesied “the Plains would again support millions of buffalo and that whites would disappear” (Callahan *xli*).

In addition to ignoring any possible religious connections between the Ghost Dance and the Christian faith, government officials misdiagnosed what was happening as the Sioux resisted any efforts to force them to overhaul customs and way of life. Had the attempts at educating American Indians been a little less invasive and more nurturing and caring, the tensions between education and religion might have postponed the inevitable conflict. Though originally begun in 1883, the “Friends of Indians” renewed their efforts after the passing of the Dawes Act of 1887 and focused on containing and “remold[ing] American Indians into mainstream citizens and to begin this process by re-educating the youngest generation at special Indian schools.” (Burns). As part of this re-education,

American Indian children, like Pokagon and Eastman, were sent away from their families and reservations to schools (i.e. the Carlisle Indian Industrial School) in the east.

Although missionaries, agents, and other government officials promised a bright future for those who went away to be educated, not all were easily convinced as to their methods. Sitting Bull, one of the last, great Sioux chiefs, recognized the benefit his children would receive as part of this re-education process. However, he did not like the fact that it was necessary. In a conversation with a missionary, Sitting Bull stated that

the farther my people keep away from the whites, the better I shall be satisfied. The white people are wicked and I don't want my woman to become as the white women I have seen have lived. I want you to teach my people to read and write but they must not become white people in their ways; it is too bad a life, I could not let them do it. I would rather die an Indian than live a white man. (Utley 269)

What Sitting Bull did not and could not understand is that a person cannot be educated without adopting at least some of the manners of his or her educator. But he did recognize that his people, the Sioux, were slowly changing from the "wild Indians" of long ago, to new creatures, who, although Indian by birth and looks, acted as the whites did. The missionaries and school teachers who mingled with the Sioux attempted to convert them to Christianity and to save them from further suffering at the hands of the United States government.

Treating the American Indians in a way similar to how America as a country was treated by England became second nature to the federal government. Forgetting the trials

and tribulations which the American people endured, Senator Pendleton of Ohio declared of the Indians:

They must either change their mode of life or they must die. We may regret it, we may wish it were otherwise, our sentiments of humanity may be shocked by the alternative, but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that that is the alternative, and that these Indians must either change their modes of life or they will be terminated...In order that they may change their modes of life, we must change our policy...We must stimulate within them to the very largest degree, the idea of home, of family, and of property. These are the very anchorages of civilization; the commencement of the dawning of these ideas in the mind is the commencement of the civilization of any race, and these Indians are no exception. (McNickle 11).

There is no tolerance for any difference in thought or action in the minds of these officials. In order to be a unified United States of America, Pendleton claims that we must all look, feel, think, and act alike. It is evident that Pendleton and others like him consider anyone different from themselves "savages." It does not occur to him that American Indians might actually have families, homes, and their own civilization. Either that or he knows that he must dehumanize them into savages so that the American people will agree to the Dawes Allotment Act and the process of allotment. The passing of this Act, and the subsequent actions of the government, not only led American Indians to believe that there was no hope of mercy from the new Masters, but it also showed whites

sympathetic to the Indian cause that savagery and hatred³¹ can and do exist in any “civilization.”

It was during this time in history that Eastman completed his education and now sought to go back and help his people (one key goal to the education and assimilation efforts). In 1890, when the now Dr. Charles A. Eastman, graduated from Boston University he went to work for his former professor and mentor Dr. Frank Wood. Wood, in attempting to aide Eastman in securing a position on an Indian reservation, said to Jefferson Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, “Eastman is today the finest object-lesson of what Christianity and education will do for the Indian that can be found in this country” (Wilson 33). Wood obviously felt that, with the recent passage of the Dawes Act, Eastman would be vital in convincing other American Indians to adopt white man’s ways and to assimilate into American society.

At this point in his narrative, Eastman is still positive about working for/and with the United States to aid the assimilation of Indians. He, personally, was an assimilated Indian, who had successively been educated, Christianized, and no longer had the desire to hold onto his Indian customs, traditions, and anger against the government. Eastman was truly the best example for assimilation and it made sense to both Wood and Eastman that he should apply his trade to the best of his ability, namely as a doctor among the Sioux, his own people.

Though Morgan did not respond immediately, he promised Eastman that he would be able to go and be a good “Indian Doctor” on an Indian Reservation somewhere.

³¹ Traits normally only ascribed to American Indians at this time.

It is interesting to note here that Morgan does not say “doctor” as if the degree which Eastman had recently earned qualified him to be a doctor anywhere and to anybody. He qualifies Eastman’s ability by calling him an “Indian Doctor” something which Eastman would soon learn was not a compliment to him or his people. Eastman, hoping to convince Morgan of the need for an Indian doctor specifically among the Sioux, wrote him a letter that reads: “The government physician can be the most useful civilizer among the force of government officers placed in any Indian Reservation if he could understand the language and the habits of the people” (Wilson 34). Eastman believed that in order for the physician to gain the trust and confidence of the Indians, and in this case, the Sioux, he “must feel at home with them, and must put forward no claim of superiority, but rather sympathy and kindness in action and feelings” (35). When Eastman found out that he was being sent to the Fort Berthold Agency in North Dakota, where the Gros Ventres, an enemy of the Sioux resided, he was frustrated, but hopeful. Both Eastman and Wood argued to Morgan that Eastman would be a better fit for a Sioux-speaking reservation, as he already spoke the language and he could more easily develop a relationship of trust among his fellow Sioux. Though Eastman was willing to go wherever he could help, he “desire[d] to work where he [could] do his work most efficiently” (38).

The combined efforts of Wood and Eastman eventually convinced Morgan enough that on November 1, 1890, Eastman was assigned to his post on the Pine Ridge reservation, located in the southwest corner of South Dakota. Wood and Eastman were thrilled by the appointment and knew that Eastman would be able to serve the Sioux people in more ways than administering what the Sioux might call “mysterious

medicine.” Unfortunately for Eastman and the Sioux at Pine Ridge, they could not foresee how much Eastman’s medicine would be needed.

Though everyone was, at first, excited about the new “white doctor” who was a Sioux Indian, this enthusiasm soon developed into a fear of change. The hole in the door of the doctor’s office through which the prior doctor had dispensed an assortment of pills and other “medicine”³² was boarded up. No longer could the Sioux self-diagnose their problems and receive what they thought they should be given. Eastman required that each patient come into his office where he thoroughly examined them while also questioning them in their own language.³³

Despite the fact that he had created an air of hopeful change on the reservation, there were those who also saw this time as one of uncertainty. Although it was not Eastman’s fault that his arrival happened to coincide with the emergence of a new religion, Eastman soon was planted in the middle of a conflict between the United States government, reservation Indians, and those who still resisted American occupation. A friendly Sioux policeman named Sword, approached him one day and said,

Kola (my friend), the people are very glad that you have come. You have begun well; we Indians are all your friends. But I fear that we are going to have trouble. I must tell you that a new religion has been proclaimed by some Indians in the Rocky Mountain region, and some time ago, Sitting Bull sent several of his men to investigate. We hear that they have come back, saying that they saw the prophet, or Messiah, who told them that he

³² Anything from cod liver oil to alcohol was dispensed through this hole.

³³ In the past the Sioux could get away with this self-diagnosis because they previously spoke through an interpreter who helped them get what they desired

is God's Son whom He has sent into the world a second time. He told them that He had waited nearly two thousand years for the white man to carry out His teachings, but instead they had destroyed helpless small nations to satisfy their own selfish greed. Therefore He had come again, this time as a Savior to the red people. If they would follow His instructions exactly, in a little while He would cause the earth to shake and destroy all the cities of the white man, when famine and pestilence would come to finish the work. The Indians must live entirely by themselves in their teepees so that the earthquake would not harm them. They must fast and pray and keep up a holy or spirit dance that He taught them. He also ordered them to give up the white man's clothing and make shirts and dresses in the old style (*From The Deep Woods* 82-3).

Sword further explained that Slow Bull and Kicking Bear from a neighboring reservation had been teaching this new dance among the people of Pine Ridge and explaining to them how the dancing along with having faith in the new prophet's teachings was vital to the Sioux salvation. If the Sioux would keep this prophet's commandments, it would lead to freedom and the expulsion of all the whites from Indian lands. Worried about what this new religion might lead to, Eastman stated "It has been rapidly gaining converts in many of the camps. This is what the council to-day was about. The agent says that the Great Father at Washington wishes it stopped. I fear the people will not stop. I fear trouble" (*From The Deep Woods* 84). It is worth mentioning that Eastman makes no mention of what, if any, religious beliefs he holds. Clearly through his education and interactions with his converted father, Eastman was exposed to

Christianity. It could also be assumed that he could remember the religious customs of his childhood, yet when this new religion appears Eastman remains aloof from all “sides” of the debate. And although he hoped that this public unrest would not come, in his heart, Eastman knew that tensions were just beginning to boil.

He narrates

A religious craze such as that of 1890-91 was a thing foreign to the Indian philosophy. I recalled that a hundred years before, on the overthrow of the Algonquin nations, a somewhat similar faith was evolved by the astute Delaware prophet, brother to Tecumseh. It meant that the last hope of race entity had departed, and my people were groping blindly after spiritual relief in their bewilderment and misery (92).

It is interesting to note that Eastman calls this Ghost Dance “the last hope of race entity.” Up to this point it had not occurred to Eastman that the Sioux were anything different from his memories among them as a youth. While serving the people of Pine Ridge he received on-the-job training as a physician and he also learned more about “his” people. He writes, “I scarcely knew at the time, but gradually learned afterward, that the Sioux had many grievances and causes for profound discontent, which lay back of . . . the ghost dance craze” (98). Lopenzina suggests that although Eastman experienced life almost as a white student in white society, nothing could have prepared him for the things he learned as a physician out of “civilization.” “The abuses he was to encounter in the west--the poverty and contractual betrayals endured over and over by the Indians of the reservation”--fully stunned him (744).

Though he faced some initial uncertainty when he first arrived because of his Sioux heritage and his polite, caring manner as a physician, Eastman was an immediate success and Pine Ridge received a better physician than they previously had. Lopenzina points out that Eastman “has a natural empathy and a feel for the needs of those on the reservation, and wastes no time in dismantling the more impersonal and institutionalized fixtures of the previous doctor’s regime” (744). Of Eastman, Captain Sword, the head of the Indian police, states, “No government doctor has ever gone freely among them [the Sioux] before” (Eastman 88). But as a government employee, Eastman recognized that the more he learned of the political situation of the Sioux at Pine Ridge, the more it was necessary to define his position and allegiance. Torn between supporting the United States and his people, Eastman grew increasingly cautious of placing his support in one group over the other. The more the Ghost Dance spread among the Sioux, the more Eastman sought opportunities not only to calm his fellow Indians, but also to make a distinction for himself and the government between those who lived on the reservation and followed the rules and those “wild” savages who did not. To American Horse, a Sioux chief who convinced other chiefs to accept terms of treaties and calm his people, Eastman stated, “Let us continue to reason with the wilder element, even though the hotheads may threaten our lives. If the worst happens, however, it is our solemn duty to serve the United States Government. Let no man ever say that we were disloyal” (96). Having been educated in “America,” it is possible that Eastman knew what would eventually happen if the Sioux continued with this “Messiah craze.”

It is also worth noting the degree to which Eastman supported the government and its policies towards the Sioux at Pine Ridge, notwithstanding his shock at the idea that the

government broke so many treaties and promises with them. One might think that being Sioux by birth, he might favor them just a little. However, this is not the case. Eastman had been working towards assimilation and becoming fully integrated so much that he sided with the government for which he worked, rather than with the traditions of his forefathers. Although the “peaceful”³⁴ allotment process of forced signings of new treaties, forced removal to Indian schools, and the banning of religious practices struggled to convince all Indians of the need to accept the new terms of land ownership and the necessity of converting to Christianity and becoming civilized, one incident would send all Indians alike, especially the Sioux at Pine Ridge, rushing to the Christian churches, reservations, and Indian schools. That event was the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee Creek.

With Sitting Bull and his people crowded onto the Standing Rock Reservation³⁵, the government thought that it would not be difficult to force the Sioux to finally sign over their lands. In an act of rebellion against the government, the Sioux had begun participating in the Ghost Dance, something which greatly alarmed the Indian agents and the military. Fearing that this meant that the Sioux would take up arms against the white settlers, the Indian agent overreacted to reports of gathering Indians and asked for an increased military presence on the reservation. Presuming also that taking Sitting Bull into custody would calm the growing unrest, Indian policemen were sent to “arrest” Sitting Bull. When he was brought outside, one of Sitting Bull’s Ghost Dancers fired a shot at the policemen, which action set off a small gun battle. Caught in the crossfire,

³⁴ In many cases there was no real evidence of peace from the American Indian point of view

³⁵ Sitting Bull had been at Standing Rock for just over seven years, having been lied to by the United States government. “Starvation, illness, misery, and attrition” forced Sitting Bull, the last of the free Sioux chiefs to surrender. Though he was promised that he would be pardoned, he was arrested in 1883 and kept captive at Standing Rock until his death in 1890 (Utley 10).

Sitting Bull was shot in the chest and died. “Only the arrival of a Cavalry detachment saved the Indian police from annihilation” (Utley 44).

While some newspapers at the time quickly summed up his life and then stated that it was fitting that Sitting Bull die because “he had probably done as much ‘injun devilment’ in his time as any savage since Tecumseh,” an editorial appeared in the *World-Herald* begging for someone to accept the blame for what had transpired (Reilly 119).

Somebody is responsible for the death of Sitting Bull and the other Indians killed at the same time. The killing was only part of the unwarranted severity and oppression that the United States is now inflicting upon the Indians. Somebody is responsible. Not those merely, who did the killing. Nor those merely who misjudged the danger and called for more troops. Nor even those who annually cheat, rob, and despoil the miserable red men through Indian rings. Not one of these alone, but altogether, forming as they do, our so-called “system” are responsible for the unhappy death of Sitting Bull. There seems to be no end to the blunders, crimes, and atrocities into which the government is led in the treatment of the Indians. It is time for a change (Reilly 119).

Fearing more violence, Big Foot, another Sioux chief and took his band and left Standing Rock and started out for Pine Ridge. Unfortunately for them and for American Indians in general, the U.S. War Department had issued orders for Big Foot’s arrest and sought to prevent him from reaching the reservation. On 28 December 1890 the cavalry

overtook and forced them, after disarming them, to camp for the night. Ruoff, briefly summarizes the events in her introduction to *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*. She states that the following day, 29 December 1890, the Indians were searched for any remaining guns and were told to relinquish their weapons. “As the soldiers tried to grab a gun held by Black Coyote, whom the Lakota eyewitnesses described as deaf or ‘crazy,’ a shot was fired” (Reilly 121). Soldiers then immediately fired back, some even using Hotchkiss cannons, upon the mostly unarmed Indians. When they tried to flee, the soldiers pursued them to Wounded Knee Creek, killing men, women, and children. After the Massacre ended Big Foot and more than half of his people were dead or seriously wounded. Despite the fact that there are many accounts of what “really” happened here, Indians were not killed, but massacred, some even hunted down and killed as they fled.

The *Omaha Bee*, which represented the white Republican agenda of the time, “reported” the massacre in an article entitled “Ghastly Work of Treacherous Reds” and “Capt. [George] Wallace Tomahawked to Death”; The *Bee* described a search among a dozen Indians for weapons by soldiers when suddenly, like a flash, the Indians pulled guns out from underneath blankets and fired upon those soldiers who had just recently searched them for weapons. The paper almost implies that the soldiers were unarmed as well, given that it makes no mention of the fact that the military were still under arms. The *Bee* seemed more intent on painting a picture of army heroism in the face of Indian savagery and great danger, which danger they themselves created. “Those Indians who had no guns rushed on the soldiers with tomahawk in one hand and scalping knife in the other” (Reilly 122). And though *The Bee* barely mentions the attempts of the Indians to fight back, not once does the paper express any type of remorse for those who were

slaughtered. Despite the fact that the bulk of Big Foot's band was composed of women and children with a small assortment of elderly men, *The Bee* reporter highlights the time consuming task of hunting all Indians down and systematically killing all who fled.

Although *The Bee* stated that the men who committed these acts were heroes "in deeds of daring," *The Aspen Daily Chronicle* reported that at the sight of their fallen comrades, soldiers did not wait for any command before unleashing hell upon the heads of all Indians present.

They [the Sioux] fell on all sides like the grain in the course of a scythe.

The Gatling and Hotchkiss guns were trained and began a heavy firing that lasted half an hour with frequent heavy volleys of musketry and cannon. It was a war of extermination now with the troops. It was difficult to restrain them. Tactics were almost abandoned. For several minutes the engagement went on until not a live Indian was in sight (123).

Despite the fact that the firing continued until all of the Indians had been killed, the military readied themselves for battle, fearing retaliation from other Sioux—a retaliation that never came.

Even though the *Aspen Daily* contains none of the hatred and anger which is present in *The Bee's* version, it still lacks almost anything resembling worry about what had happened to the Indian people. It is not until Eastman witnesses firsthand and much later narrated his version of the resulting anguish which could and should have been averted had the reservation agent not overreacted and begged for a greater military presence on the reservation.

Safely back at Pine Ridge, Eastman and other Sioux heard the resounding booms of the Gatling and the Hotchkiss. Shortly after this, silence descended, Eastman was busy in his office, treating both wounded military and mutilated Sioux. Though there were claims that only a few American Indians had died, Eastman knew better. He decided that he should be the one to look after the Sioux because, while there were military doctors present, the wounded Sioux would not allow or trust that any military doctor would help them. Because of his position as an assimilated Indian, yet someone who was Sioux and could speak their language, Eastman was assigned by the government agent to go and rescue anyone he could. Unfortunately for him, as well as anyone who might have survived the massacre, a blizzard hit the area and lasted for three days. When the storm blew over, Eastman led a group of one hundred volunteers to the site of the attack. He records his personal eyewitness account of the scene of death and gross injustice

Fully three miles from the scene of the massacre we found the body of a woman completely covered with a blanket of snow, and from this point on we found them scattered along as they had been relentlessly hunted down and slaughtered while fleeing for their lives. Some of our people discovered relatives or friends among the dead, and there was much wailing and mourning. When we reached the spot where the Indian camp had stood, among the fragments of burned tents and other belongings we saw the frozen bodies lying close together or piled one upon another. I counted eighty bodies of men who had been in the council who were almost as helpless as the women and babes when the deadly fire began, for nearly all their guns had been taken from them. A reckless and desperate

young Indian fired the first shot when the search for weapons was well under way, and immediately the troops opened fire from all sides, killing not only unarmed men, women, and children, but their own comrades who stood opposite them, for the camp was entirely surrounded (111-12).

Eastman stood, unable to comprehend the violence among the burned teepees, broken lives, “frozen bodies of old men women and children.” He wrote of this time that it was “a severe ordeal for one who had so lately put all his faith in the Christian love and lofty ideals of the white man” (114).

What is problematic in his account, however, is Eastman’s trust that the information that he received regarding who had started the massacre was correct. Eastman was told by the military that it was a young Indian who fired the first shot. One would think that given their position towards those whom they had just recently massacred, blame would of course be placed on the victims. Although Eastman does not doubt the veracity of the account, he does express his dismay at trying to comprehend how these Christian men blatantly murdered other good, honest men. Eastman describes the scene,

It took all of my nerve to keep my composure in the face of this spectacle, and of the excitement and grief of my Indian companions, nearly every one of whom was crying aloud or singing his death song. The white men became very nervous, but I set them to examining and uncovering every body to see if one were living. Although they had been lying untended in the snow and cold for two days and nights, a number had survived....One man who was severely wounded begged me to fill his pipe. When we

brought him into the chapel he was welcomed by his wife and daughters with cries of joy, but he died a day or two later (113-4).

Although Eastman had adopted the ideals and religion of the white man, the dominant race, it was a massive ordeal to see his people slaughtered and abused, all the while knowing that he could do little to ease their suffering. He could use his skill and knowledge to heal their physical wounds, but he could not rectify the situation and heal their spirits, for he knew that this was the beginning of the end for his people and their way of life.

It is worth mentioning here that Eastman does not voice anger or call for retribution on the government for their actions. His depiction in *Deep Woods* is concerned with setting the facts straight and reclaiming ownership of the account from the American newspapers that misrepresented the events as they occurred. One would think that a doctor, a Sioux by birth, might express something a little stronger than dismay that something of this nature occurred. It is likely that Eastman desired to do just this, but it is probable that had he done this, he would have lost his job as a government employed doctor. Had he vehemently voiced his opposition to the policy and reactions of the U.S. government, it is conceivable that Eastman would have lost his greatest opportunity to affect change among “his” people.

Theft, Pillage, and Other Misdeeds

Had this massacre been the only injustice that the Sioux suffered at this time, it would have still been enough for one such as Eastman to question his loyalties. However, after the massacre an order was given that all Indians living on Pine Ridge outside the

borders of the main camp, come to Pine Ridge, obey the order to disarm, and submit to reservation regulations. Possibly viewing the recent massacre as the consequences of resisting, thousands of Sioux left their homes, cattle, and farms and submitted themselves at Pine Ridge. When they returned, these Sioux found their cattle gone, their homes pillaged, and their farms destroyed. Eastman states, "In all troubles between the two races, history tells us that the innocent and faithful Indians have been sufferers, and this case was no exception" (116). The government claimed that this was the work of hostile Indians and therefore did not do anything, but Eastman claims that this was "a golden opportunity for white horse and cattle thieves. And ranch owners claimed large losses also" (117). The government finally sent out an investigator only after hearing that white ranchers had also experienced this theft.

Eastman reports that following the events of Wounded Knee, politicians, who refused to believe that the Sioux would not rise up and keep fighting against the government, continued their work of starving, abusing, and cheating the Pine Ridge Sioux. He states

I have tried to make it clear that there was no "Indian outbreak" in 1890-91, and that such trouble as we had may justly be charged to the dishonest politicians, who through unfit appointees first robbed the Indians, then bullied them, and finally in a panic called for troops to suppress them (117).

Despite seeing firsthand the actions of the United States military and the results of opposing them, Eastman somehow still had faith and trust in them that the government

would do what is best and right for the Sioux. Perhaps it was his love and respect for his father who had told him to obey in all ways. Perhaps it was his attempts at becoming fully integrated into this society and to fully assimilate as an American citizen. He states

certain Indians and whites... [whispered] into my reluctant ears the tale of wrongs, real or fancied, committed by responsible officials on the reservation, or by their connivance. To me these stories were unbelievable, from the point of view of common decency. I held that a government such as ours would never condone or permit any such practices, while administering large trust funds and standing in the relation of guardian to a race made helpless by lack of education and of legal safeguards. At that time, I had not dreamed what American politics really is, and I had the most exalted admiration for our noted public men. Accordingly, I dismissed these reports as mere gossip or inventions of mischief makers (118).

But notwithstanding this oftentimes misplaced trust, Eastman could not avoid seeing, hearing, and soon believing many of the tales he was told.

When it came time for the 1891 payment of their rightful treaty money, many Pine Ridge Sioux signed their "X," collected the money, and went outside. Eastman, as well as a few others, noticed that the amount that was supposed to be paid and the actual payment differed by as much as fifteen percent. When this was brought to the attention of the disbursing agent, he replied that the Sioux had either dropped or somehow lost the money and that they had signified that they had received full pay. He attempted to recruit

Eastman into validating that the proper amount had been paid. Eastman refused. This moment is one of the first times that Eastman stands up to an agent of the government and instead, argues the cause of the Sioux. He states, “I was convinced that a gross fraud had been committed, and in my inexperience I believed that it had only to be corrected. I determined to do all in my power to secure justice for those poor, helpless, people...I added my protest to that of others” (130-31). A different agent was sent to investigate the matter, but when he reported to Washington that the Sioux had been dishonestly robbed of over \$10,000, the Secretary of Interior did not accept this ruling and sent a second investigator. Eastman called this investigation a “farce;” the theft was “white-washed” and no money was given (131).

Although Eastman engaged himself in other “Indian fights”³⁶ with the United States government, what truly helped define his life was the Massacre at Wounded Knee and the problem which he faced in trying to mediate between his newly adopted Christianized American life and his past as a Santee Sioux warrior. He knew that if ever there was a person suited to help the integration of the Sioux people into American society, he was it. However, the actions of the government in relation to Wounded Knee and the subsequent years of theft of the promised annuity payment created a conflict within Eastman that he never overcame. He saw the benefits, like Sitting Bull, of educating the Sioux and other Indian tribes in order to help them progress and negotiate the process of allotment, integration, and full assimilation. He knew that this was the

³⁶ Though he did not care for the way the Sioux were treated prior to and because of Wounded Knee, as well as the following years treaty payment scandal, Eastman continued to work on the Pine Ridge reservation and other reservations as a government physician. In attempts to further educate the Sioux as well as introduce Americans to Sioux culture, Eastman continued to work through his personal problems with the government. He was instrumental in establishing the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), as well as the Boy Scouts of America and Campfire Girls.

future of the American Indian, yet he also recognized that the goal was unattainable. Through his ever-changing identities as far as who he was and what he did in American society Eastman finally saw that although the Indian might be educated, Christianized, give up his lands for allotment, and willingly give in to assimilation, even marrying a white woman³⁷, the American Indian, especially himself, could never become fully assimilated. The events of Wounded Knee and the dishonesty surrounding treaty payments helped Eastman to recognize that he, at least in his own mind, failed. If he, the most assimilated Indian, could not accomplish this full integration, no other American Indian could. Though Eastman was a Sioux doctor who had married a white woman, worked among the Sioux as their physician and helped, to some degree, ease their miscommunication with the settlers and the United States government, he still felt as if he had not done enough to ease their struggles. The only thing left for Hakadah/Ohiyesa/Charles/ Dr. Eastman was to get off the fence, leave civilization, and go back into the woods.

In *From the Deep Woods*, Eastman's final words do not paint such a rosy, wonderful, bright future for the Sioux. He knows better. He knows that despite all of the promises of inclusion, he will still be an Indian, on the outside looking in. He ends his writing with little hope, and faith that his people, the Sioux will ever be accepted for who they are or who they can never become. He laments,

From the time I first accepted the Christ ideal it has grown upon me
steadily, but I also see more and more plainly our modern divergence from

³⁷ Shortly after Wounded Knee, Eastman married Elaine Goodale, a white woman who had been on the Pine Ridge reservation helping to educate the Sioux children as well as helping out Dr. Eastman as needed. Because she was familiar on the reservation and spoke fluent Sioux, she played a vital role in helping Eastman to care for the wounded in the wake of Wounded Knee.

that ideal. I confess I have wondered much that Christianity is not practiced by the very people who vouch for that wonderful conception of exemplary living. It appears that they are anxious to pass on their religion to all races of men, but keep very little of it themselves. I have not yet seen the meek inherit the earth, or the peacemakers receive high honor.

Why do we find so much evil and wickedness practiced by the nations composed of professedly “Christian” individuals? The pages of history are full of licensed murder and the plundering of weaker and developed peoples, and obviously the world to-day has not outgrown this system. Behind the material and intellectual splendor our civilization, primitive savagery and cruelty and lust hold sway, undiminished, as it seems, unheeded. When I let go of my simple instinctive nature religion, I hoped to gain something far loftier as well as more satisfying to the reason. Alas! It is also more confusing and contradictory. The theory, is clearly secondary, if not entirely neglected in actual practice. When I reduce civilization to its lowest terms, it becomes a system based upon trade. The dollar is the measure of value, and *might* still spells *right*; otherwise, why war?

Yet even deep in jungles God’s own sunlight penetrates, and I stand before my own people still as an advocate of civilization. Why? First, because there is no chance for our former simple life anymore; and second, because I realize that the white man’s religion is not responsible for his mistakes. There is every evidence that God has given him all the

light necessary by which to live in peace and good-will with his brother; and we know that many brilliant civilizations have collapsed in physical and moral decadence. It is for us to avoid their fate if we can.

I am an Indian; and while I have learned much from civilization, for which I am grateful, I have never lost my Indian sense of right and justice. I am for development and progress along social and spiritual lines, rather than those of commerce, nationalism, or material efficiency. Nevertheless, so long as I live, I am an American (193-95).

If Eastman recognized that his contributions in easing the allotment and/or assimilation process for the Sioux would ultimately fail, why did he bother publishing texts which do nothing more than educate a people on the travails of another? Unlike Simon Pokagon, Eastman desired that his audience see him as an independent, educated, and Christianized American Indian, who protested the injustices endured by his people. Not only does he narrate the Indian perspective of the Wounded Knee Massacre, the theft of annuity payments, as well as the theft of home, farm, cattle, and even life, he does so knowing that his protest might not make a difference to his present day audience. Yet, he still desired that his audience, whoever they might be, will one day in response to his protest, do as Callahan asks: open [their] eyes and heart to the world of our afflictions, and thus speedily issue into existence and era of good feeling and just dealing toward us and our more oppressed brothers (vii).

Chapter Four

Re-Reading Callahan's *Wynema*: When American Indian Protest is Really Domestic Protest

*My country! 'tis to thee,/ Sweet land of Liberty,/ My pleas I bring,/ Land
where OUR fathers died,/ Whose offspring are denied,/ The Franchise
given wide,/ Hark, while I sing.*

---Zitkala-Sá (174).

*Honest opinions which come from careful thought and deep study are
worthy of respected consideration even though they be opinions of an
Indian, and whosoever reads these pages will be convinced that this
protest against the present Indian policy of our government is sincere,
earnest, and timely*

---Wynema "Publisher's Preface".

*It is my land, my home, my father's land, to which I now ask to be allowed
to return. I want to spend my last days there, and be buried among those
grounds. If this could be I might die in peace, feeling that my people,
placed in their native homes, would increase in numbers, rather than
diminish it as at present, and that our name would not become extinct*

---Geronimo to President Grant after his 1877 surrender.

The 1995 Mel Gibson film *Braveheart* begins with a challenge to the dominant majority's (British) view of history. One character, who we later learn is the Scottish prince Robert the Bruce, begins a narrative which gives background information on the context and time of the scenes which will follow. He speaks of how historians from England will view his version of the events as false, but he accounts for this denial by saying that "history is written by those who've hanged heroes." This phrasing suggests a general disregard for the point of view held by the conquered. Similarly, American Indians see a different American history from the dominant American one. When the American Indian voices his version of "How the West Was Won," the majority may hear the story, but often regard it as legend or myth rather than an equally valid account. As a

result of this disregard, the Red Man has, slowly but surely, recognized that no matter what or how he explains his history, the “White Man” will never hear him.

Such has been the case for both Simon Pokagon’s *Queen of the Woods* and Charles Alexander Eastman’s *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. While their works are important to their specific tribal history as well as American and American Indian history, their voices rarely make it into the textbooks which we call American History. Instead of focusing on the problems the Pokagon band of the Potawatomi and the Sioux have faced and any possible solutions to these issues, critics and audiences alike are more concerned with the characterization and authority of the authors themselves and consequently their messages are ignored, forgotten, and even lost.

Additionally, Indian voices, especially women’s voices, as represented in essays, reports, and narratives which expressed anger and anguish, and even threatened violence because of the treatment of the American Indians as a result of the Dawes Act of 1887 and allotment, have rarely been heard. Even scarcer are the American Indian woman’s voices which cry out from the wigwam or tepee, or the plains pleading for her people’s lands to remain theirs and for her traditions and way of life to stay as they had been for decades. Knowing that direct speech and even physical protest have done nothing to change their situations, American Indian women have included literature in their repertoire in hopes of reaching a broader audience who just might listen and act on their behalf. Maintaining that S. Alice Callahan’s *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* is indicative of the American Indian protest genre, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff admits that the writing is a bit rough in some places. Though the 1891 publisher, H. Smith & Co., “have no apologies to offer for what literary critics may term the crudeness or the incompleteness

of the work” (ix), Ruoff is quick to point to Callahan’s background, education, and life experiences as possible “apologies” for her writing. Notwithstanding this “crudeness,” Ruoff agrees with the claim that Callahan’s narrative protests the treatment of American Indians coerced into assimilation, land disbursement, and Christianization.

Before the reader even begins to read *Wynema* she³⁸ is notified that the author³⁹, publisher(s), and editor of the book all desire that the text be seen as American Indian protest. Each speaks to Callahan’s desire that eyes, minds, and hearts be opened, so that change will occur to allow the Indian to tell her story and present her side of the Indian question. Through the eyes of “others,” Callahan calls to her tribal “brothers” in the hope that her novel will open the eyes of the oppressors and prick their hearts into realizing what has occurred in the past so that it will not happen again (Dedication).

While Smith and Ruoff see Callahan’s life as an excuse for any infelicities in the text, the way that they read this text – as indicative of the traditional American Indian protest genre – is not supported by *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* as this chapter argues. Though Smith, Ruoff, and even Gary Sligh suggest that *Wynema* is traditional American Indian protest, this chapter argues that it is, instead, more assimilationist than resistant as Callahan’s protest pertains to the American Indian. By examining the novel and the degree to which it brings Indian experiences into the public arena and, therefore, to a divided audience, documenting instances of not only Sioux but especially Muscogee

³⁸ I use the pronoun “she” because, as I explore later in this chapter, Callahan’s main audience is female.

³⁹ I make this assumption based on the fact that it appears that Callahan did not make any statements to protest the inclusion of her novel in the protest genre. Gary Sligh suggests that in order to get some of their works published, many American Indian authors, especially women, “are most accused of accommodating their work to western standards” so that they might be “recognized by and popular with the general reading public of their day” (110). Sligh notes that while it did not make as great an impact as did Mourning Dove’s *Cogewea*, Callahan’s *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* was in fact published, whereas others were not.

injustice, restating promises given to these people of full participation, and suggesting a solution for the Muscogee injustices⁴⁰ it will be shown that this text falls short of protesting Muscogee experiences. While it may be true that it is the first novel written by an American Indian woman, and one that many claim helps build the foundation for the American Indian protest tradition, the novel ironically stands out as one which does not actually protest the erasure of American Indian customs, traditions, and current way of life. Callahan uses her text not only to show the willingness of Indians to accept education and Christianity, but also to present her narrative in a sermon-like manner in order to promote this Christianity among her readers. Callahan and her Indian characters' almost immediate acceptance of Christianity and the white way of life does not protest any attempts by Methodist missionaries to facilitate the Muscogee integration into the neighboring white society. I argue that while *Wynema* does exhibit some features of traditional American Indian protest, it is likely to be misread if treated only as such. Instead of a text of which has been claimed to protest the treatment of American Indians and the processes for their assimilation into American society, *Wynema* exists instead as a domestic protest novel, emphasizing the education, conversion and domestication, which she believes will prove successful in answering the Indian Question. I make the argument that Callahan's editors as well as critics have misread *Wynema* as traditional American Indian protest when it really is indicative of domestic protest, in that it protests the idea that women are to remain in the home and be submissive to their husbands, in every thought, word, and deed. But domestic protest is more than just objecting to women's traditional roles. It also argues the idea that women and their domesticity become the moral compass by which to judge actions of all society.

⁴⁰ These are, again, the characteristics of American Indian protest literature

Problems with *Wynema* as Indian Protest Literature

Commenting on Callahan's pioneering work as the first American Indian woman to write about the plight of American Indians through fiction, scholars, including A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, Molly Mullin, Catherine Taylor, Peter Beidler, Carolyn Dunn, Gary Sligh, and Siobhan Seiner have agreed that this novel is indeed indicative of American Indian protest, though none of them fully define what that protest genre involves. As I propose in my first chapter and borrowing from Brian Norman's definition, American Indian protest literature must bring the experiences of Indians who indeed lack full social status into the public arena by directly addressing a divided audience, must document representative instances of Indian injustice, and must cite state promises of full participation for all. American Indian protest literature must also be written by American Indians for American Indians which give[s] voice to a collective⁴¹ consciousness and "[suggests] a solution to many of the Indian society's ills" (Trodd xii). Many of these critics, as well as publishers Smith and Co., desired that Callahan's audience see her as an American Indian, simply protesting her case for American Indians to be treated more as fellow human beings and less like conquered people.

S. Alice Callahan: The Woman, the Teacher, and the Writer

If we are to accept Ruoff's claim that Callahan's life experiences are the reasons for the roughness in the text as well as that it was Callahan's intention, not merely those of her editors, to protest the plight of the Indians, it is necessary, at this point, to detail who Callahan was. While little is known about her youth and life in general, it is agreed

⁴¹ As much as possible among the American Indians, since to attempt to group all American Indians into one entity would be folly.

that she was born in 1868⁴² in Sulphur Springs, Texas. She was the fifth child and second daughter of Samuel Benson Callahan and Sarah Elizabeth Thornberg and lived in Sulphur Springs a little over seventeen years until her family moved to Okmulgee to be reunited with her father. Prior to this move, Callahan's mother had taken her family and, in consequence of the struggles they faced during the Civil War, moved away from Indian Territory and relocated to Sulphur Springs. Although little is known about her specific education, it is widely believed that her father's interest in Indian education influenced Callahan and her siblings to obtain their own educations. Likewise Samuel Callahan's position as superintendent of the Wealaka Boarding School from 1892 to 1894 likely influenced Callahan's decision to choose teaching as her profession. Ruoff states

By 1886 she apparently was teaching in Okmulgee, Indian Territory; the *Indian Journal* reported on 20 May that the school there was in a 'flourishing condition' under her management. She attended the Wesleyan Female Institute in Staunton, Virginia, for ten months, returning on 14 June 1888. This gracious institute...specialized in liberal arts education (xvi).

In the course of giving a lengthy explanation of the makeup of the school and the Departments of Education at this time, Ruoff emphasizes that Callahan not only attended school, but that she was also an exceptional student. Announcing her return to the Indian school, the *Indian Journal*, on 21 June 1888, proclaimed that both Callahan and fellow student, Lotti Edwards, had "won honors of rare merit in that institute as a reward of

⁴² Both Ruoff and the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* do not give a specific date as to when Alice was born, a search on Ancestry.org as well as other internet sites list her birthday as 1 January 1868.

persevering effort and close application, for which they deserved congratulations of parents and friends” (xvi).

Ruoff summarizes Callahan’s education and teaching career quite succinctly, building up Callahan’s credibility for her (Ruoff’s) as well as Callahan’s audiences.

In February 1891 Callahan became a teacher at Muskogee’s⁴³ Harrell International Institute...[and in that same year] Callahan became an editor of *Our Brother in Red*, a Methodist journal associated with Harrell...In spring 1891, Callahan completed *Wynema*, [and] on 6 June, *Our Brother Red* announced the publication of the novel. ‘[Callahan] is an intelligent Christian lady and we look forward with pleasure to a time when our other duties will permit us to read the book. It is certainly cheap at 25 cents per copy’” (xvi-xvii).

Because of the sparsity of information regarding who Callahan was prior to her becoming a teacher and later an author, Ruoff, points out that this one comment from the journal for which Callahan worked was one of the only notices her book received. And although Ruoff doesn’t say it directly, she implies that the only reason Callahan’s work was mentioned here was that she was one of its editors.

In 1892-93, Callahan taught at Wealaka School, where her father was superintendent. And although she enjoyed teaching, both she and her father thought that it was time for her to complete her education. Wanting to finish where she started, in 1893 Callahan returned to Wesleyan. However, when a teacher at Harrell became ill, Callahan quit school and returned to teaching and found joy in instructing which she did

⁴³ My only guess as to why the spelling changed from Muscogee to Muskogee was to differentiate the name of the school from the name of the people.

not experience her first time. Just when it seemed that Callahan had found her niche in life, in late December 1893, she expressed fears to her father that

she felt as if she were going to die. An acute attack of pleurisy on 26 December 1893 cut short her teaching career and her plans to finish her education. After considerable suffering, she died on 7 January 1894, at the age of twenty-six. In a loving tribute published [four days later], *Our Brother in Red* praised her “literary turn of mind” and her abilities as a teacher, which had never been “excelled in this territory” (xix).

One can only wonder what Callahan might have done had she lived, taught, and wrote longer. She let her life, education, and teaching speak for her. It is unfortunate that she could not have her writing do the same.

Though the novel discusses the life of a little Muscogee girl and her interaction with white missionaries, its plot is directed towards converting her to Christianity and by her example, arguing that the rest of her tribe should follow suit. Because it does not accomplish what Trodd and Norman suggest traditional protest literature must do--it addresses only a white audience, fails in its weak attempt to cite broken state promises made to the Muscogee, and lacks any viable solution--*Wynema* cannot be considered traditional Indian protest. Its willful abandonment of Muscogee culture, language, religion, and ultimately identity mark this text as assimilationist and promotes the idea of allotment and integration into American society.

***Wynema's* White Audience**

In the original preface to the text, Smith and Co. state that their justification for printing *Wynema* is that “[i]t is the Indians’ side to the Indian question told by an Indian born and bred” (ix). They point to Callahan’s dedication of the book as proof:

[t]o the Indian tribes of North America who have felt the wrongs and oppression of their pale-faced brothers, I lovingly dedicate this work, praying that it may serve to open the eyes and heart of the world to our afflictions, and thus speedily issue into existence an era of good feeling and just dealing toward us and our more oppressed brothers.

Given this dedication to the Indian tribes, one would think that Callahan would directly address the Indians in the Introduction instead of addressing a mostly white and mostly female audience. Through her language and vocabulary, ethnography-like narratives, and omission of most of the Muscogee voices, Callahan focuses her tale toward a white audience in the hope that *Wynema* “may serve to open the eyes and heart” of the white world to the (until now) foreign Muscogee one.

Callahan’s *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* focuses on the life of a Muscogee Creek girl named Wynema Harjo and tracks her education and assimilation into American society with the help of white missionaries. The tale begins “in an obscure place, miles from the nearest trading post” where the Muscogee people dwelt in teepees and a spent their time in the hunting, fishing, and living peacefully in the forest (1). Though she is not yet named, the heroine, a “little savage” and her parents’ only child, is the epitome of an Indian. She can hold a rifle, knows how to use it and has occasionally, at the allowance of her parents, fired a shot or two.

Once this brief introduction to the Muscogee village has been given Callahan shifts the reader's attention to the nearby "larger town [which had] a mission-school superintended by Gerald Keithly, a missionary sent by the Methodist assembly to promote civilization and Christianity among these lowly people" (2). Wynema loves to sit nearby any instruction, listen to the English language spoken, and hope that someday she too can have the same education the white children receive. Little does she know that though she is counted among one of the "lowly people" her father, Chloe Harjo, is chief among them and discusses with Keithly the possibility of having someone come among the Muscogee to teach Wynema and the other children. When it is clear that this is not just a father trying to appease his daughter's whim and that Harjo is intent on having a schoolteacher come to his village, Keithly accedes to his wishes.

Keithly sends a message to various congregations asking for someone to come and live with Wynema's family and teach the Indian children English, as well as the Christian gospel. Genevieve Weir, Callahan's second white main character and, in reality, the focus of the text, answers the call.

So the cry rang out in the great Methodist assembly; 'A woman to teach among the Indians in the territory. Who will go?' and it was answered by one from the sunny Southland—a young lady, intelligent and pretty, endowed with the graces of heart and head...but God had endowed her with great moral courage and endurance, and she felt the call too strenuously, to allow any obstacle to obstruct her path (4).

Though her mother thought she was physically incapable of travelling and of living among the Indians, Genevieve knew that she should not deny the pull to go. "God has

called me and I dare not refuse to do his bidding. He will take care of me among the Indians as he cares for me here...Never fear, mother, dear, our Father takes care of his obedient, believing children, and will not allow any harm to befall them” (5). Though she does not say it outright, Callahan states her Christianized view of the conditions of being saved and integrated.

After describing a land where peaceful Indians live, as well as the neighboring town of white settlers, Callahan shifts her language and vocabulary to that of her white American audience. It is clear from the words she uses that she is not addressing her fellow Indians. In her beginning description of the village she calls the men who are out hunting, “bucks” (1). Her references to the Indians are more what her “pale-faced oppressors” might use than how the Indians would describe themselves. By calling them “bucks,” “little savages,” “dark savages,” “dusky pupils” as well as using the clichéd name for Indian burial lands, “the happy-hunting grounds,” Callahan casts her Indians as inferior to her white American audience. Callahan goes so far as to give the audience an opportunity to see how Genevieve’s friends back home react to her presence among her “dark savages.” Callahan, as the narrator, gives her observation of Genevieve’s accomplishments.

To many persons the difficulty of teaching our language to any foreigner seems almost insurmountable; and teaching the Indians seems especially difficult.... How did she make them understand her, and how could she understand them? How could she teach them when they could not understand a word she said? Was she afraid to live among those dark savages (8)?

Despite the fact that she says she loves them just as God created them, Genevieve finds it remarkable that these “untaught savages” have bright minds, and still continues to call her pupils “dark savages,” a title that does not speak of love. It is unthinkable that Callahan uses these terms in referring to her fellow brothers and sisters. By having this language come from the perspective of a white character, Callahan draws attention to how her audience would most likely refer to Indians. Because this language is clearly directed at one audience only, Callahan distances her work from the claim of her editors’ by not addressing a divided audience which, Norman states, is required to characterize a work as protest.

Though Gary Sligh, in his *Study of Native American Women Novelists: Sophia Alice Callahan, Mourning Dove, and Ella Cara Deloria*, firmly believes that Callahan’s text is American Indian protest, he points to Callahan’s tendency to raise her white audience and at the same time, through language, denigrate American Indians. Sligh suggests that this sort of language, which is found throughout Callahan’s text, almost convinces him that she was not an advocate for the Indians. Furthermore, he states that “the descriptive words sounded demeaning and purposely provocative... [and] sounded like it was written by someone who hated Indians” (34).

Furthermore, Craig Womack (Muscogee) in *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* promotes the idea that Callahan's audience can never be Indian, and therefore, must be an audience of white American readers. Womack focuses on the beginning lines of the novel's opening scenes where he calls attention to Callahan's use of “buck” and “savage” and her implication that the Muscogee Creek live in teepees. “What interests me here is not merely that Callahan's depiction is grossly inaccurate, not that she

gets it wrong. I am struck by *how* [Womack's emphasis] wrong she gets it, and by the fact that she has to be purposefully, not accidentally, misrepresenting culture" (115).

Womack states that not only has Callahan failed in her attempts to represent Muscogee life, but that the character Wynema suffers "a complete erasure of her thoughts and opinions which are subsumed by the white characters who speak on her behalf" (108).

While Womack sees this as problematic, he implies that perhaps for Callahan this might be a normal way of life. He states further that Callahan's characterization "has to be intentional misrepresentation. What do you make of this author, then, who is purposefully writing to satisfy white stereotypes? (115-6).

Melissa Ryan, in her "The Indian Problem as a Woman's Question: S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*," states that the novel begins by "reinforcing the assumptions of the dominant culture. The opening lines of the text offer a traditional picture of what has been called "Indianness," inviting readers to settle into what promises to be a familiar romance of primitive life" (26). Ryan suggests that Callahan is lax in her depictions of American Indians by using already preconceived notions of what an Indian is; Callahan offers little in the way of physical description which would enable the reader to visualize the Muscogee as anything different from James Fenimore Cooper's Indians. Ryan states that by using the subtitle *A Child of the Forest*, Callahan attempts to gain entrance into an earlier nineteenth century literary tradition, rather than focus on depicting the Muscogee Indians and their surroundings as accurately as possible, something for which she has been criticized. But maybe Callahan did not care. If Callahan was truly focused on entering an ongoing literary conversation, then it would not matter to what extent her Muscogee match American Indians in earlier literature. It

would only matter that her depictions matched current (1890s) Muscogee in their traditions, culture, and struggles with the encroaching American society, and where they see themselves in relation to this growing conflict.

The First of Three Sections

Although she states that the plot of the *Wynema* focuses “on the acculturation and romances of two heroines,” Ruoff argues, in her preface to the 1997 edition, that the book is really split into three different sections (xx). The first section handles Genevieve’s introduction to the Muscogee and follows her adjustments to living in the wild. In this section, it is evident that Callahan’s text is directed toward a white audience. Though they do not support her editors’ claims of American Indian protest, in the second section Callahan indirectly cites broken promises, mentioning, by way of her white, male character, Keithly, some Muscogee injustices, and speaks of women’s domestic duties and Indian education. The third and final section shifts locations and discusses the Sioux nation and its hostilities with the American government leading up to, and including, the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre. Even though some critics are quick to point out that Callahan’s novel is directed toward a white audience in its use of sentimental fiction, as well as being told from a mostly white perspective, these same critics generally agree that these three partially completed storylines represent Callahan’s protest of the United States government’s policy toward American Indians. While there is plenty here that mark this as a definite American Indian text, how can this same text which is purportedly American Indian protest not address a diverse audience, meaning all American Indians, whites, and other ethnicities currently residing in America? Womack suggests that

Callahan falters in opening all eyes towards these injustices when by speaking only to this white audience that she effectively silences her American Indians characters.

In addition to addressing a divided audience, American Indian protest literature should cite any broken promises, and document them as well as suggest an acceptable and viable solution to the problem *for Indians*.⁴⁴ However under close examination, Callahan's discussion and detail lack the full depth which would allow her white audience to grasp any governmental policies promising social belonging, nor do they document with journalistic fervor these "injustices" committed toward the Indian. And Callahan's solution to the problem does not really approach Smith's conclusion that *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* is an Indian's answer to the Indian question.

Callahan's Stereotypical Ethnography

To base a decision of the categorization of a text merely on the idea that because the author is American Indian, the text must be American Indian protest may, in some circumstances, work. But in the case of *Wynema* the blanket statement that, since it is written by an American Indian woman it must have instances of injustice and oppression and therefore protest, is weak at best. In order for *Wynema* to be characterized as American Indian protest literature, Callahan must focus *Wynema's* plot less in the promotion of Christianity, education, dating and marriage of her mostly white characters, and instead focus on the "wrongs and oppression" that she claims that the "Indian Tribes of North America" have endured and continue to experience today. And while not all Indians overtly resisted the conversion to Christianity and many recognized a possible need to be educated in the white man's ways, the way in which Indian voices and

⁴⁴ My emphasis.

perspectives are eliminated from Callahan's text is problematic. Callahan's 1891 and 1997 editors--Smith and Co. and Ruoff, respectively--as well as critics Siobhan Senier and Sligh, may claim that *Wynema* represents a plea for change, but they all point to Callahan's tendency to target a white middle class audience while ignoring any Indian point of view. *Wynema*, though written by a "Muscogee Creek," is not American Indian protest because it is directed toward a white audience, does not document instances of Muscogee injustice, or cite promises which the Muscogee may have been given, nor does it suggest any type of critical solution to a negative situation faced by the Muscogee.

This attitude, sometimes appearing superior to the Indians' customs and words, is embedded into the narrative over the next five chapters. These chapters do not really move the narrative along as much as give the reader an insight into what Callahan's imagined Muscogee believe and do. In these, Callahan employs ethnography—the method of studying a group of people in their own environment. The ethnographer, typically an outsider who seeks to gain insider status, reports on any event, artifact, or belief system of the group as well as obtains information from any informants who will help the audience understand the group. Although the key to ethnography is minimizing the effect of the ethnographer's presence on that group, the problem with ethnography is that the "truths [discovered] are partial" (Hughes 86). Assuming that the ethnographer can overcome his or her personal biases, there exists "the possibility that an ethnographer may be told these [partial truths] deliberately" (Naaeke et.al 1). The task for the ethnographer is to discover, through a series of seemingly unconnected events and interviews, the real meaning of a particular culture (1).

In these chapters, Callahan's ethnography has two audiences, Genevieve and the generalized white American society. While not a perfect ethnography, meaning that Callahan, as the narrator, is directly teaching Genevieve the customs and traditions of the Muscogee from an insider's perspective, Callahan allows Genevieve to experience the Muscogee culture and specifically the Cloe led Harjo band on her own. Later, with the aid of Keithly's insider knowledge, Callahan takes the reader by the hand and introduce her white audience to the customs so that she too may experience these from a foreign (Genevieve's) perspective. Genevieve is introduced to food (artifacts), dances (events), and a medicine man (belief system), and is taught about these, first by an informant who is a member of the group and then later by an outsider who has obtained that elusive insider status. These experiences are "filtered through [Genevieve], a genteel non-Native schoolteacher, a filtering that generally makes indigenous customs seem repugnant or, to borrow a word the book uses with rather alarming frequency, 'weird'" (Senier 423). Such actions clearly make any chance of Genevieve's truly integrating into the Muscogee society remote at best.

This ethnography begins in chapter three, where Genevieve confronts Wynema as she is greedily stuffing some sort of food into her mouth. As she looks around, Genevieve sees other Muscogee women eagerly partaking of the same food. Her curiosity piqued, Genevieve asks what it is. Wynema replies, "Oh, Mihia! It is blue dumpling. I luf it. Do you luf it?" Genevieve replies that she has not had the opportunity yet, but before she will eat any, she must know how the food is made and what ingredients are used (Callahan 10). Though the chapter is short, Wynema begins to teach Genevieve about some of the foods that the Muscogee eat and invites Genevieve to participate. After learning that the

dumpling is made from corn meal and burnt bean shells which are then boiled, Genevieve, not liking the looks of it, hesitantly tastes a little bit of the dumpling. Immediately, she expresses her dislike of the food and explains that if she were to eat more of it, she would have to “practice” (11). Shortly thereafter supper is announced and another dish is placed before Genevieve, at which she also expresses some disgust in its production as well as taste. In this case, Genevieve positions herself firmly on the outside by thinking to herself that if the food were eaten fresh, it would be fine. But in her description of each course, Genevieve clearly shows her distaste for anything that is foreign to her, especially something that has been allowed to sour and “smells more like a swill-barrel than anything else” (11). It is interesting to note that Wynema notices Genevieve’s weak attempts to eat something that is prized among the Muscogee. She recognizes that Genevieve does not eat the “delicacies” of the Muscogee, which separates her from them.

Genevieve’s reticence to participate in the Muscogee traditions and beliefs is an example Sligh provides to suggest that Indian customs fail to meet Genevieve’s standards, but also to reveal the mistrust that she has for the Muscogee in general. This can be seen in the paragraphs following the dumpling scene. Though there is no transition in time, the narrative continues with Wynema attempting to wake Genevieve up. While the audience is left to wonder whether Genevieve’s sickness is the result of some piece of dumpling that she did eat or something else entirely, a medicine man has been called to the Harjo home. Callahan offers a single description of the Muscogee man, whom Genevieve finds particularly interesting and stereotypically similar to Cooper’s Indians. She

watched him curiously for good reason, for a more queer dressed person or a more curious performance, it would have been hard to find. With his leggings, his loose, fringed, many-colored hunting-shirt, his beaded moccasins, his long, colored blanket sweeping the ground, and his head-dress with the fringe touching his eyebrows, he was both picturesque, and weird (12-13).

Genevieve watches as the man takes a cane and blows into a bowl of water he has mixed with herbs, while muttering some “incantation” that she could barely hear. The process was repeated until he thought that the “medicine” was ready and offered it to her. Though she pretends to take it, Genevieve waits until the man leaves and then uses some remedy of her own, which eventually makes her better. The chapter concludes with the condescending observation that “The ‘medicine man’ was never called to wait upon Miss Weir again” (13).

While it is clear at this point in the narrative that Genevieve does not fully understand the Muscogee customs and their importance, Callahan believes this information is necessary to her white audience’s understanding of her people. At this point, she switches to the viewpoint of Keithly because he has been in the village longer than Genevieve and can, perhaps, explain the Muscogee customs to an outsider from the perspective of an outsider who has gained limited access to the Muscogee beliefs and customs. Womack suggests that in using Keithly as the narrator, Callahan opens the Muscogee town not only to Genevieve, who is an outsider, but also to Callahan’s white intended audience. Womack’s claim that Callahan completely silences the Muscogee voice is supported by Keithly’s narration and explanation to Genevieve. Ruoff argues that

Callahan uses Keithly as the narrator because Wynema is both too young to address adults and unable to speak so that Genevieve might fully understand (xxvi).

Furthermore, Senier in her “Allotment Protest and Tribal Discourse: Reading *Wynema*’s Successes and Shortcomings” suggests that the ethnographic explanation must come from Keithly because at this point Genevieve is an outsider, someone who is not yet been fully accepted by the Muscogee people (423). Given that Keithly is also an outsider and is considered the best source for information about the traditions and customs, Genevieve’s concept about who the Muscogee are, must remain clearly flawed. Notwithstanding this possibly flawed concept of the Muscogee people, Keithly almost takes Genevieve by the hand and leads her through various events in the Muscogee seasons which might help her to better understand the people and at the same time make it easier for her to teach the children of the village. To end his description of this process, and seeing Genevieve’s discomfort at the ideas presented, Keithly states, “if you dwell among the Romans, you must abide by their laws and follow their customs whenever practicable” (18). To which Genevieve quickly adds, “and whenever right” (18).

Though the purpose of Callahan’s ethnographic narrative is to educate her white audience as well as Genevieve regarding the Muscogee way, it also allows the Muscogee to see Keithly and Genevieve together and thereby become more accustomed to her presence among them. It is important here to remember that her purpose in coming was not merely to learn about the Indian but to teach them, using Christian texts and beliefs and especially to teach Harjo’s daughter the white man’s ways. Harjo, like many other Indian fathers, could see the benefit that education would bring.

When Genevieve arrives at the village school, the first thing she realizes is that she is the only non-Indian in the area. Perhaps expecting other missionaries to be in the village, or at least Mr. Gerald Keithly, who requested her presence, Genevieve is at a loss as to how to begin. Though not accustomed to taking the lead, Genevieve figures that the best way for her not only to teach her students English, but also to instruct them about the Christian God, is to have them repeat a prayer. She hopes that the repetition of this prayer, coupled with her readings from the Bible, will enable her students to grasp God as they grasp the language. After many weeks, the children begin to learn enough to communicate with their teacher. Among them, Wynema Harjo seems to progress and learn the fastest. This might be the result of Genevieve living with Wynema and her family, but nevertheless, Wynema and Genevieve develop a friendly teacher-student relationship. Wynema emerges as the leader among the students and is the one who helps Genevieve grow accustomed to the area.

Broken Promises, Anyone?

Like the ethnography in which Callahan uses her white character, Genevieve, to introduce the audience to the Muscogee and their village, the second section of the novel is presented through Keithly interpreting for the Muscogee as well as the audience, what has become of the annuity payment. Chapter eight, entitled “What Became of It?” opens with Keithly and Genevieve visiting the Harjos. With no transition from what went on before, Chloe Harjo asks Keithly about the annuity payment which should already have arrived for the Muscogee people, all the while knowing that there was something about it in the local newspaper. Not being able to fully understand what was being reported, he first asked Wynema and then Keithly to explain it. Without the “Ethnohistorical

Background” that Ruoff provides in the Editor’s Introduction, the 1997 reader is lost as to what this chapter is even about. Ruoff states that in 1866, United States government convinced the Muscogee to sign the Treaty of Cession and Indemnity, which required that they cede a large portion of their land. In 1878, it was discovered that the Muscogee “had unwittingly” ceded more than what was required, but that since this land was to “be set aside for use by other Indians and freed slaves,” the government agreed to purchase it for thirty cents an acre (*xxxvii*). Payment for this land was not made until six years later and that payment was only half of the agreed amount. Through underhanded deals, the Muscogee received only a portion of their money. In 1888, the contract was renegotiated to \$1.25 because it was discovered that the land was not being used by Indians and freed men, but instead was open white settlement. The total purchase price for the land amounted to \$2,280,000, of which the tribe was given only \$280,000, with the remainder being retained by the government to accrue interest (*xxxviii*). Had this information been in Callahan’s text, it might have been clear that, to some degree, this was an actual broken promise and that the holding back of these needed funds from the Muscogee might help satisfy the second characteristic of American Indian protest: the journalistic presentation of injustices committed.

However, Ruoff goes on to say that the money paid out by the government never made it to the Muscogee people. The Indian delegates “revived an unauthorized contract with [Samuel] Crawford” who had acted as their attorney in a prior case (*xxxviii*). With Crawford’s help, other whites were paid out of the sum earmarked for the Muscogee, with the delegates and Crawford receiving a portion of the money as well. The Muscogee received only \$10,000 (*xxxviii*). It is important to note here that the “robbery,” as it is

called, did not come at the hands of the United States government, but instead was the fault of the Indians who acted as the Muscogee agents for this payment. Though the government may have known that the people to whom they gave the tribute money were dishonest, there was little difference in their eyes; an Indian was an Indian. Had Callahan not merely assumed that her present audience and any future audience would possess this information, the events described in chapter eight might have made more sense and, therefore, be more explicitly Indian protest. Unfortunately, the reader is given nothing except when Harjo asks of Keithly, “Where is the money these poor Indians should have had on their head-right long ago...My people here are in destitute circumstances, some of them wanting the necessities of life, and have been anxiously looking forward to this payment” (30). Harjo goes on to explain that he had been told that the delegates who were sent to deal with the tribute payment problem had “acted treacherously, and that we would get no money” (31). Harjo, in this case, is not demanding of Keithly to know where the money went, because Keithly has nothing to do with the government and its policies towards the Indians. Instead, Harjo asks that Keithly try to explain it to him because he does not understand the writing in any of the papers that were sent back with the delegates, nor can he decipher what happened based on local newspaper reports.

Despite Harjo speaking to an undefined group at the beginning of this chapter and demanding of Keithly that he explain the situation to him, once again, the claim that *Wynema* is American Indian protest is weakened by the absence of Indian voices. Keithly tells Genevieve and presumably Harjo that he attended a meeting where Muscogee were discussing what should be done to the delegates when they returned without the promised

tribute money. At this meeting, an old man tells what happened long ago when another delegate did not do what he was asked by his tribe. Instead of representing the Indians truthfully, this man sold their land out from under them. The old man stated that when the delegate returned, those who had assembled took him and with a loud cry of “thus perisheth the Indian all traitors. You have made us homeless; we will make you lifeless; you sold our lands and filled your pockets with defiled gold; we will make you poorer than when an infant you lay upon your mother’s breast. Thus perish all traitors! and he was shot through and through until there was no flesh to mark a bullet” (32). The people then made his home into a large bonfire. The old man pauses in his story and silently suggests a similar fate should be pronounced upon the Muscogee delegates.

When the Muscogee delegates return, and with hate and anger pouring out from the assembled people, a council is held with only the delegates, the chief and the “members of the Houses who were all implicated” in the incident present (33). No one outside of that group knew what was said other than the fact that all seemed satisfied at the outcome. Callahan notes that thus a great robbery passed into oblivion. And while the final statement that “the Indians learned a lesson therefrom, and they were not the only learners” (33) might be directed at some form of protest Callahan at no point attributes these actions to the United States government. Had she done so and blamed the government for its willingness to give monies to people who would most likely steal the money, Smith would be accurate in stating emphatically that the book protests the Indian policies enacted by the government and therefore, constitutes American Indian protest. Instead, “Callahan stays at arm’s length from any [type] of proposal” (Sligh 32).

Shortly after this incident occurs, Genevieve announces to Keithly and Wynema that she has made plans to visit her family in the Southland⁴⁵. Not only this, but she also invites Wynema to accompany her and meet her family, since Wynema has become one of Genevieve's fondest friends. It is during family discussions regarding what the local newspapers have to say about allotment as well as a heated argument between Genevieve and Maurice Mauran, Genevieve's betrothed, that Wynema finally emerges as a character who can express her own thoughts and come to her own conclusions. And although Wynema does finally speak, it is Genevieve who must defend the current Muscogee cultural traditions to Wynema. Wynema sees Genevieve reading a newspaper which reported on the issue of allotment, especially of land on which the Muscogee lived. While Genevieve is seriously worried about the land, Wynema scoffs at the thought of allotment and integration. Genevieve states "Now the matter assumes a serious aspect, for even the part-blood Indians are in favor of allotment; and if the Indians do not stand firmly against it, I fear that they will yet be homeless" (50).

Arguing that *Wynema's* successes and shortcomings in allotment discussions should not take precedence over the message *Wynema* conveys, Senier claims that because of Genevieve's statements the novel is protest which "openly denounce[s] the United States for not fulfilling its obligations and for provoking hostilities," and "is radical [in its] opposition to the U.S. policy of dividing tribal lands in severalty." Yet she wrongly answers the question that Callahan poses in chapter thirteen: *Shall We Allot?* Senier implies a definite answer exists and that answer is "a resounding no" (420). Throughout the narrative, however, there is little evidence that Wynema is the ideal

⁴⁵ There is really never any indication throughout the text where this Southland is located.

spokeswoman for this issue. Furthermore, the text suggests that not only should the answer be in the affirmative but also that Wynema will show her fellow “oppressed brothers” the correct path which will eventually lead to peaceful allotment.

Claiming that Callahan, as a Muscogee, “must have been surrounded by fervent debate over allotment and assimilation, including a vibrant resistance that lasted long after the publication of her book and indeed until after her death in 1894” (Warrior 23), Senier states that “these chapters display a rare willingness to name allotment for the land-grabbing ruse that it was” (6). However, the fact that the bulk of the argument against allotment comes through Genevieve, a white character, strengthens Womack’s claim that the Muscogee voices have been erased and lessens the impact these chapters may have had in supporting an anti-allotment and, therefore, a protest stance.

Showing her teacher, friend, and soon-to-be sister-in-law what the process of education and integration has done for her, Wynema initially expresses doubt that the article means the allotment of Indian country. When Callahan, through Genevieve, enlightens the “little savage girl” that that is exactly what the article means and that United States senators and citizens “have been trying to devise ways and means by which to divide the Indians’ country,” Wynema acts as if she was never a Muscogee Indian. It is almost as if the old Wynema—the Muscogee Indian, “little savage girl,” *child of the forest*—has passed away and has reemerged, with a new quasi-whiteness about her. In *Shall We Allot?* Wynema trades places and perspectives with the old Genevieve, arguing for allotment to help the savages.

But I don’t see how dividing our lands can materially damage us. We should have our own homes, and contrary to ruining our fortunes I think it

would mend them... There are so many idle, shiftless Indians who do nothing but hunt and fish; then there are others who are industrious and enterprising; so long as our land remains a whole, in common, these lazy Indians will never make a move toward cultivating it; and the industrious Indians and “squaw men” will inclose as much as they can for their own use. Thus the land will be unequally divided, the lazy Indians getting nothing because they will not exert themselves to do so; while, if the land were allotted, do you not think that these idle Indians, knowing the land to be their own, would have pride enough to cultivate their land and build up their homes? It seems so to me (50-51).

When Wynema finishes her diatribe against her own people, Genevieve is astonished. It is clear that in the process of being educated in the ways of the white man, Wynema has forgotten everything from the blue dumpling and the busk⁴⁶ to the identity which makes her uniquely a Muscogee Indian. Wynema no longer thinks of herself as an Indian in terms of living in lodges, hunting, and fishing like her ancestors. She calls her fellow Muscogee lazy and “squaw men” because they might not wish to take up every aspect of white society and make it their own. She argues for individuality whereas the tribes stand for community.

Genevieve realizes, as does the reader, that Wynema, the Child of the Forest, is dead. Wynema has truly adopted the beliefs and attitudes of the white man toward her own “pale-faced oppressed brothers.” Instead of being part of the afflicted, her identity has changed to that of the oppressor. She does not refer to their dwellings as tepees or

⁴⁶ A celebratory dance that is held at the time of harvesting green corn.

lodges, but as homes. Hunting and fishing are no longer an honest and viable means of providing for oneself, but are the marks of laziness. In this instant she abandons everything that her father and forefathers have held dear and most likely had given their lives for. She forsakes the cultural beliefs which Genevieve and Keithly have now come to understand as being vital to the identity of the Muscogee Indian. She deserts her people, becoming something no one counted on: a sympathizer with the American government who will do her best to convince “her people” that the right use of the land is to give in to allotment, and to give in willingly. Wynema’s life later provides one example for how one becomes assimilated. Wynema learns all she can about the “white” society, she speaks only English, marries into the Weir family and brings forth children with Robin. While there are other avenues to becoming fully integrated, she chooses this route.

While some may balk at this idea of Wynema forsaking her heritage for that of the conquering race, the truth is in the text. In the face of all the allotment and assimilation discussion, Wynema cannot see any evidence that would allow her people to avoid either willing or forced integration. At this, Wynema concedes defeat. Her words to Genevieve show that she recognizes that in order to survive the inevitable, the American Indian must go now and go peacefully. This stance, while based on her opinion of the situation and the viewpoints of those around her, became a foregone conclusion as a result of the passing of the Dawes Act in 1887, and the enforcement of it with the Curtis Act in 1894.

Although thus far Callahan has failed to show why her text should be considered American Indian protest, it is at this point that she misses a last opportunity to suggest via

her narrative a solution for the perceived problems which the Muscogee face. Had Callahan offered up even a hint of an acceptable answer to the Indian Question (other than to give up and forsake the Muscogee way, adopting American habits and cultures), her text would not be viewed by Womack, Sligh, and me as an assimilationistic text that encourages willing integration into the dominant society. At the end of the narrative it is apparent that Wynema ceases to act as an Indian. Though she is Muscogee by birth, her attitude toward and especially her zeal for learning the white man's speech, customs, and religion changes her from a character in the text, to a tool which Callahan uses to promote further Americanization, education, and Christianity among the Indians.

By focusing on her ideal white audience, failing to provide authentic examples of broken promises as documented injustices committed by the United States government, and failing to provide a viable solution for the problem in answering the Indian Question, Callahan may be the first American Indian woman to write and publish a novel, but her *Wynema* does not protest in the way that both her 1891 and 1997 editors claim. And although it does provide some insight into the issue of 1890 allotment, it does not stand up and support the Muscogee Indian way of life, nor does it argue that something further should be done. Instead, perhaps, Callahan is arguing a different way of appropriately being Indian in that time—a way that assimilates to a certain domestic tradition rather than a rejection of assimilation (à la traditional American Indian protest).

Indian, But Not Muscogee, Fictional Protest

In the third section⁴⁷ of her book, Callahan pauses in her sentimental tale of pastor Gerald Keithly and school teacher Genevieve Weir's courtship, marriage, and family life among the local Muscogee Indian tribe to focus on a romanticized and confusing version of the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890. Chapter eighteen, "Turmoil with the Indians," begins with Keithly, Genevieve, and Mrs. Weir (Genevieve's mother) discussing how the Indians had been "mistreated by our race" (72). Unfortunately, for the sake of the story, they are not talking about the Muscogee Creek who not only live nearby, but who their now sister-in-law, Wynema⁴⁸, represents. They discuss a recent newspaper article which focuses on the dispossession of land and the withholding of food and other payments owed to the Indians in Sisseton, South Dakota. For some reason, Callahan's characters are either unable or unwilling to reveal to the audience that they speak of the Sioux. Callahan waits to save that "revelation" for the introduction of a new character, Carl Peterson, a missionary of sorts, who enters and claims that

[m]y people, the Sioux, are about to go on the war-path. I see that they are being driven to it by the treatment of the United States Government and their own agents, who have leagued together to starve and slaughter this defenseless people. (74).

To emphasize his point, Peterson introduces and therefore Callahan introduces a Sioux chief named Wildfire, who calls it a crime the way the situation was handled and for which the American people will pay dearly. Peterson tells his friends that he will soon go among the Sioux in an attempt to provide some heavenly assistance or comfort to them,

⁴⁷ Editor A LaVonne Brown Ruoff makes this claim in the prologue to S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*.

⁴⁸ Wynema is not only a Muscogee that helps Genevieve learn about and acculturate into the Muscogee, but she also marries Robin, Genevieve's younger brother..

for what they are about to experience at the hands of soldiers at Wounded Knee Creek. It is interesting to note that this is the first introduction of Carl Petersen into the text. There is no indication given as to how he came to be in the area of the Muscogee or what his purpose there might be. Peterson is said to be a friend of the Sioux and desires to return to be with them. This character might be a little more believable as a Sioux friend or if he had some connection to the Muscogee if these two tribes were neighbors or shared some tribal border. Unfortunately, at this time there are more than three tribes which separate the Sioux from the Muscogee. And while the character of Peterson is not vital to the Muscogee narrative, he is important because it is to him that the Sioux express their displeasure with the events surrounding and leading up to the Wounded Knee Massacre, especially at a time where the Sioux would have been so distrustful of any white man.

In chapter 19, with all of the Weir family together they sit discussing the recent events which brings Peterson to them on his way to Pine Ridge. Wynema says that she and her husband, Robin, would have liked to go along, but they feel that they would only be a hindrance to Peterson's mission. In this section, for the first time, Wynema speaks to the injustices that American Indians have experienced; however, she speaks not of her own people, but the arrest and subsequent shooting of Sitting Bull.

it was reported to the Indian police that Sitting Bull proposed starting out to the Bad Lands; so they started out at once, followed by a troop of cavalry under Capt. Foucher, and infantry under Col. Drum. to arrest him and bring him back. When the police reached Sitting Bull's camp they found him making preparations for departure. So they immediately arrested him and started back. His followers tried to retake him, and in the

effort, he, his son, and six of his men were killed, as well as five of the police. Poor fellows! They are starved almost to death, and in the attempt to crawl off to themselves are caught and slaughtered like cattle. It is a shame (77)!

In reply, Wynema's mother-in-law (Genevieve's mother) replies that her people will pay for this crime. Now, had this evolved into a greater discussion of what should be done for the Sioux and how this little family might actually be able to change the current situation, *Wynema* might read more convincingly as protest literature. However, once this brief topic has been introduced the family shifts to a discussion of how the school and the education of the Muscogee are doing. Apparently, in addition to Genevieve, Wynema and Robin are also engaged in teaching the children and proudly announce that they have over 200 pupils and would have more except they have run out of room. Nothing more is said in this chapter concerning the Sioux or their plight.

In chapter 20 Callahan introduces her audience to another new character named Wildfire, who, in the midst of unconquerable odds, voices the mistreatment of American Indians—specifically, of the Sioux—to Peterson. Although it is through Peterson that Callahan connects her story to the real events of the Wounded Knee Massacre, Wildfire and, therefore, Callahan, are guilty of committing the same crime that the newspapers of Nebraska and the Dakotas do. She creates fictional tales, gossip, and rumors about a real event which ultimately leads to the atrocities experienced at Wounded Knee Creek. This is not to say that Callahan is guilty of distorting the massacre, only that her narrative, loosely based on the news sources of the time, does not give the Sioux any justice. Wildfire's tale, by itself, cannot help the reader to fully understand what has occurred that

would lead a people to commit such atrocities or that would give Indians a hope for a passable future with the white man. Wildfire becomes significant only as a mouthpiece to expound Callahan's thinking regarding the Wounded Knee Massacre after it had happened. After hearing Peterson implore Wildfire to give himself up and go into the reservation peacefully, Wildfire defiantly exclaims

But...what assurance have we that these agents will treat us better than the others? We were once a large and powerful nation, ruling over a vast portion of this country of yours. By white man's cruelty and treachery we have been driven farther and farther away, until we now occupy the government reservation, in a climate so cold and exposed to such hardships that our numbers have diminished until we are but a handful—a mere speck of what we were. In the old days we were free; we hunted and fished as we pleased, while our squaws tilled the soil. Now we are driven to a small spot, chosen by the pale-faces, where we are watched over and controlled by agents who can starve us to death at their will (80-81).

Knowing, perhaps, that his words will not make a difference, Peterson tells Wildfire that that is not a policy to live by. Wildfire shows his willingness to take this to the end by replying, "Then let it be a policy to die by...If we cannot be free, let us die. While it is refreshing to have a Sioux character, who is willing to die for his people and their cause, it is disappointing that it is only the Sioux here at the end of the novel who are willing to speak up. Had Callahan used her Sioux as well as her Muscogee characters to protest the erasure of each tribe's culture, then this narrative would undoubtedly be an American Indian protest novel.

Protesting of a Different Kind

However, just because Callahan fails to present any strong, representative examples of Muscogee protest does not mean that *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* is not a remarkable and an important text in establishing the views and attitudes of the 19th century American Indian woman. Admitting that Callahan's text may not be the ideal source for American Indian resistance, Lawana Trout underscores the value of "one of the oppressed, [pleading] her cause at a tribunal where judge and jury are chosen from among her oppressors" (Callahan ix). Trout states that while *Wynema* may not fully approach American Indian protest, "the protest of the supposed domesticated woman, especially that of the domesticated Indian woman is an important and vital viewpoint in what we call American History" (Trout, Interview). Trout suggests that from the beginning of the novel, excluding the narration about Wounded Knee, Callahan's text exhibits a subtle resistant attitude towards what was then and oftentimes continues to be the stereotypical American Indian; the one that *Wynema* suggests might be the case if education, Christianity, and in some ways domesticity were not adopted. *Wynema*'s resistance likely comes from Callahan's personal life as a young woman and the role in which she was specifically fated to serve.

While Pokagon and Eastman's protest is more traditional, overt protest arguing for the deliverance of the Indian people from endured wrongs (appropriation of land, introduction of alcohol, as well as massacre to ensure compliance), S. Alice Callahan suggests through both *Wynema* and *Genevieve* that the solution for the Muscogee at this time may be exactly what *Genevieve* has been offering all along. By presenting the audience with the possibility of what a white woman can do among the Indians, the

benefit which they received at Genevieve's hands, and especially without the aid of a white male consistently guiding and aiding her, Callahan offers this different model of protest apart from Pokagon and Eastman. In this case, her 19th century protest is more of an embrace of women's roles in society and also in the home as a source of moral authority. In this sense, Callahan's acceptance of allotment is a protest against the Indian situation (their "laziness," poverty, vulnerability, supposed savagery, drunkenness, and overall inability to act for themselves). Through education, religion, love, family, and children, the moral authority of the home and of women leading this cause just might be the answer which Wynema and therefore Callahan seeks, to correct the problems the Muscogee faced.

One might think that at this time in history, the position of leadership should come via the men, who had direct decision-making authority. However, Kathryn Kish Sklar suggests in *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* that it is the responsibility and role of the 1830-40s woman to build a great temple in which all of humanity may dwell. Callahan's Genevieve is this ideal woman to teach and lead not only the Muscogee but also her own family in the Southland to this dwelling.

As both Genevieve and Wynema's education continues, Genevieve announces her plans to return home to visit with her family. The chapter begins with "Wynema, I am going home this vacation, and want you to go with me; would you like to go?" (34). Wynema looks to the one that she still called Mihia, and replied "'Oh, wouldn't I? Oh, Mihia. To go with you among your people, to see your dear mother, your [family] that would be a joy'" (35)! It is clear however, that Wynema has misunderstood the meaning of a vacation. Wynema is fearful that by her moving home with Genevieve, her parents

would miss seeing her again. Genevieve calms these fears and states “Only consent to go and all can be arranged for us to have a pleasant trip. My little girl has grown so dear to me that I dislike to part with her even for a short while” (35). And although this chapter describes more fully the town in which they currently live, it is important to highlight the metamorphosis of the girl Wynema. Genevieve has just called Wynema her little girl and up to this point there has been no textual discussion that one might call adult conversation.

However, only two short chapters later Wynema is not that same little girl. As she interacts with Winnie and Robin, siblings of Genevieve, it is evident that Wynema has come to understand and embrace Genevieve’s ideas about the role of women in “American” society. She understands that a woman can and should be able to speak her mind about whatever topic and whenever she desires. She also does not necessarily need a man by her side to make her complete.

It becomes increasingly evident in the discussion with Winnie and Robin that not only does Wynema feel strongly about the Women’s Rights movement, but she feels that in order for equality to come to all Indian women, it must come first to white women who can show the Indians how the process can be affected. In reply to Robin’s teasing, Wynema states, “it is true that the women of my country have no voice in the councils; we do not speak in any public gathering, not even in our own churches; but we are waiting for our more civilized white sisters to gain their liberty, and thus set an example which we shall not be slow to follow” (45). It is interesting to note that not only does Wynema undergo some light-hearted interrogation regarding her beliefs in women’s rights, but Genevieve also endures serious reprimands for her own commitment to them.

However, her interrogator is not as devoted to her development in this thinking as Robin is to Wynema's. But like Wynema, and through their interactions together, Genevieve also experiences growth and change which will ultimately show that her decision to leave her home and go into the wilderness to teach the Muscogee, was the correct choice.

In the beginning of the novel, Callahan offers up a picture of an "intelligent and pretty young lady" who was raised in the Southland by her "loving mother. She was "endowed with the graces of heart and head and surrounded by the luxuries of a Southern home" (4). Trout suggests that such a woman could not conceivably be expected to live, teach, and even thrive in the wilderness where Indians existed. But Trout also claims that this was the perfect character to show the mostly male dominated society that not only could she survive and teach, but that here was a woman that did not need a man to validate her existence as a footnote to humanity. Although Keithly was fond of her and she, later, would come to love him in return, for the bulk of the narrative, Genevieve was left to herself. Being alone among the Creek, she was able to become not only a physically strong woman but also a determined woman who grew to know who she was without any male attachments and one who could accomplish anything on her own. Genevieve's change from the "tenderly reared" and "physically unfit to bear the hardships of a life among the Indians" may very well have been an "endowment of great moral courage" from God, but Genevieve played no small part in her own development (Callahan 4). This transformation is best seen when she returns to the Southland to visit her family and see her fiancé.

When Genevieve first comes home and sees her betrothed, Maurice Mauran,⁴⁹ she quickly notices changes in him but assumes that they are for the better. Whether or not her conception of him had been altered during her time in the wilderness, her stance regarding the Muscogee people had changed. Genevieve noticed and was also troubled by his “indifferent and slighting manner of speaking about religion and secular matters, temperance and her much-loved Indians” (47). If this change was any shock to her system, the ensuing discussions of women’s suffrage most likely caught her completely off guard. Mauran, showing his utter disgust at the idea of women being anything other than a willing and silent domestic partner, accuses Genevieve of focusing too much of her attention on these things after she “warmly [defends] it” (47). Not only that, but in his rush to explain his position, Mauran speaks condescendingly to her, treating her as if she is some weak thing he must care for. Based on what Genevieve states and how Maurice reacts, the reader identifies the role that he thinks women should play in civilization as it relates to their husbands and their distaste for any woman being anything other than the quiet helper in the home.

Mauran states,

I wonder that you have not cut off your hair and started out on a lecturing tour; I’m sure you would do well. Really, *little girl*,⁵⁰ you are too pronounced in your opinions on all subjects. Don't you know ladies are not expected to have any ideas except about house-keeping, fancy-work, dress and society, until after they are married, when they only echo the opinions

⁴⁹ Whether or not Callahan intentionally gave the readers a bit of foreshadowing here as to Maurice’s character, his last name could rightly be pronounced, “moron.” And although I refer to Genevieve her by her first name, I refer to Maurice Mauran by the name Mauran.

⁵⁰ My emphasis.

of their husbands? As for woman's rights, I don't want my little wife to bother her head about that, for it is immodest and unwomanly. You look surprised, but what would a woman out of her sphere be, but unwomanly? (47-48)

When she defends her position, Mauran is quick to cut her off and allow that she can think these thoughts at this time implying that after they are married these ideas will have no place in his life , and therefore in hers. Leaving no doubt in the mind of the audience that he is as chauvinistic as he sounds, he states that they should not quarrel about it at that time for they will have the leisure for more discussion as they get to know one another once again. His last words on the subject at this meeting again attempt to put Genevieve in her place. "I know you are not so interested in these questions as to be disagreeable about them. I don't and cannot believe in a woman coming out in public in any capacity; but so long as I have my little wife at home, I will keep my sentiments to myself" (49). So saying, he cuts off any attempt at discussion.

Two chapters later Genevieve and Mauran resume their "lovers' quarrel." Perhaps wishing to see what other slighting and indifferent manners he now possesses (or perhaps has possessed all along), Genevieve brings up the subject of allotment. She asks for Mauran's honest opinion as a lawyer as to whether or not the allotment of the Indian lands would be legal and binding according to United States law. Possibly not knowing that their future together as a couple is on the line, he holds nothing back. Although his explanation is long, it is vital. Taking the newspaper from her and throwing it down, Mauran replies,

Pshaw! I hope you do not waste your time reading such stuff as this. Why, don't you see that this allotment would be the best thing that ever happened to the Indian, for it would bring him out and educate him? As it is, he will remain just as he is and has even been since 'year one,'—nothing but an uncouth savage. Why, don't you know Genevieve, the Indian in an uncivilized state is nothing more than a brute? He hasn't as much sense as Prince there," pointing to his dog which came and laid his head on his master's knee. "You see he understands that I am talking about him; don't you, old fellow. And if....by constant contact and intercourse with white people the Indians do not become civilized, why, let them go to the dogs, I say, for they are not worth spending time and money on; and what is the use of their cumbering the lands that white people might be cultivating?" (54-55)

He pauses for a moment, waiting for Genevieve to respond, and when she does not he continues. He talks of the shame that Genevieve has brought upon herself and also him by association because she has allowed herself to go and live among these filthy, lazy people. Mauran reminds her that when they are together all such activity will stop, for he is the man and she the woman. Though he states that he loves her, he also suggests that, should she continue, he could not overlook this fact.

Having heard enough, Genevieve angrily confronts him on some of these points. Though she speaks volumes as to her rights as a woman and the fact that Mauran will never own her, Genevieve offers little in the defense of the Muscogee people, but defend them she does.

“‘Stop!’ cried Genevieve. ‘I have had enough of that. I asked you your opinion on the Indian question and instead you are giving me the model by which you expect to mold your future wife’” (56). She then suggests that he go and procure some clay or putty so that he can shape his bride in whatever shape he desires. She continues berating Mauran and instead of apologizing for “disgracing [herself] by laboring among the ignorant, idle, treacherous Indians” she states that she has never endured the harm to her character among the Indians that she has now received from the mouth of one whom she considered to be her future (56). Her final words to him are not only piercing and to the point, but she belittles him and puts him in his place, which now is nowhere connected to her. She exclaims

“Oh, if I pretended to be a man, I’d be a *man*⁵¹, and not a sniveling coward. If you were a man, I would reason with you, but you do not understand the first principles of logic. Your wife, indeed! I have never promised to be such, and please heaven! I never will. My husband must be a man, full-grown—a man capable of giving an opinion, just and honest, without using insult to do so” (56)..

So saying, she bids him goodbye telling him that she has not time to spend arguing with someone who thinks and lives as he does. Her reaction to his indifferent attitude towards her role in his life and the lives of the Indians leaves him in stunned silence.

Despite the attention that *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* receives for its American Indian protest and opposition to the federal government’s allotment policies

⁵¹ Callahan’s emphasis.

toward American Indians as a whole, the evidence shows that Wynema could have done more to protest the injustices and broken promises that the Muscogee and even the Sioux endured, addressed more of a diverse audience and suggested viable solutions for Indians.

Though her brief incorporation of the Sioux story and their struggles leading up to and including the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre, might give Callahan something more American Indian to fulfill what her editors have claimed protest in answer to the Indian Question, the omission of Muscogee voices, addressing only a white audience, and offering up allotment as the solution to these injustices does not suggest that *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* should be considered a strong candidate for American Indian protest. Exactly like the protest as found in Pokagon and Eastman's texts, does not mean that Callahan's narrative is any less important to the reading and teaching of Wynema as an important example of 19th century American Indian literature.

Chapter Five

When Color Shouldn't Matter: The Teaching of Native American Literature to

Indian and Non-Indian Students by Non-Indian Teachers

People say, "You want to go back to the old tipi, the old days, and wear breech cloth and feathers." But no, that's not what we want, that's not what our generation is about. Our generation is finding out what's important, what's real, what the mores are that will help our people to survive as a people. Our choice is not to live in the tipi, not to ride horses and to wear buckskins, but to find something that's lasting. We have to live in this modern world facing realities... We can't put our heads in the sand. We want our kids, our next generation, to face the world head on, but still retain the traditional background that they come from.

---Good Voice xiv

It is a mistake to underestimate traditional Indian cultures, it is equally foolish to romanticize them. Most Indian societies were heavily conformist, warlike, chauvinistic, and sexist. Some progressives like to use Indian culture as a stick to beat white America; they portray Indians as sylvan pacifists who longed for only to live in peace and harmony with everything and everybody until white invaders despoiled their Eden. Not only is this an inaccurate version of mainstream American history, it is false according to Indians' own recollections and conceptions of themselves

---Alan Velie, *Introduction*.

In the introduction to Joseph Epes Brown's *Teaching Spirits: Understanding Native American Religious Traditions*, Don Good Voice (Chippewa-Cree) states that one of the best experiences for him in his education was meeting Brown and taking his Native American religions course. Good Voice, like many of the Indians of his generation, was undergoing an "identity crisis" (ix). He states that at a young age most youths were encouraged to travel "off the reservation to seek better education and higher learning, but there was a sacrifice we had to make for this" (ix). In order for him to be educated, he needed to let go of some of the things that made him Chippewa-Cree, that made him Indian.

I had to... to put aside our traditional upbringing and our traditional beliefs. We had to become aggressive and boisterous, become like the non-Indian who runs the system. We had been led to believe ever since kindergarten that the old ways were done for, that they had no meaning, no monetary or economic value. All the way up until graduation from high school, we were told that the traditional way wasn't of any consequence and that we were something that had to be turned around and remade (ix).

Although he grew up on the Rocky Boy Montana reservation, Good Voice was not educated in the Chippewa-Cree customs and traditions. His parents and grandparents wondered what would become of them if they taught Good Voice the Chippewa-Cree religion. His "grandparents were alive when the U.S. government outlawed their religion and language; they grew up in an era when it was frightening to be an Indian, to be traditional. It was a matter of life and death for them" (x),

With the elders fearing that they could be arrested, charged, or worse for practicing traditional religion, Good Voice and others came to believe that their traditions and customs were something that they had to practice in secret, if at all. He saw that in order to fit into the world around him he should do all he could to be an Indian in skin color only. His task was to forget his religion and become a Christian. In fact, his ultimate goal in life was to become a WASP, something his parents never intended or truly wanted. Shortly after high school Good Voice began attending the University of Montana, and while looking through the course catalog one day, he saw a Native American religion course "being offered by Joseph Epes Brown" (x). Good Voice talked to a few non-Indian and Indian students about the class, heard both good and bad things,

but most said that they enjoyed Brown's classes, and ultimately "got a lot out of them" (x). Consequently, he made an appointment to go and meet Brown.

It is interesting to note the manner in which Good Voice went to see Brown. He had heard other American Indian students talk about how they "were offended that here was this white man talking about Indian religion. They wondered what he knew about Indians, but once they took the class and participated in his classroom, their attitude changed dramatically" (Brown x) Expecting possibly as cold a reception as he received from other professors, Good Voice was pleasantly surprised

because he treated me so well, so warmly. I was never treated like that by other instructors. They didn't treat me like a human being; they treated me like a number. But Joe told me to sit down, and he brought me a cup of tea. When he got me all comfortable and situated, then he asked "What tribe are you? What's your name?" It was so unusual, because I was used to a type of structured interview. He wanted to forget that for a while and get to know each other on a human basis; then we could do the required thing at the end. [He] made me feel like a special person. I thought, "This man radiates kindness." So right there and then I decided I would take his class (x-xi).

At this point, Good Voice, who was not a student of Brown's, sensed that here was a possible mentor who could help Good Voice find confidence in himself as a student and confirmation in his identity as an American Indian. Brown not only impressed Good

Voice but he continually motivated potential teachers to connect with and mentor their students.

Theory and Authority in the Teaching of Native American Literature

Unlike Good Voice, when I first entered graduate school and began studying 19th century American literature, I assumed that my race would not hinder me in any way from teaching literature in the classroom. When I studied and researched Stephen Crane or James Fenimore Cooper, my whiteness would not be an obstacle. But as my research began to focus on the teaching of Native American protest literature, I began to wonder if I could effectively teach Native American literature because I am not an American Indian, nor did I have any connection to anything American Indian other than my interest. Although I could not readily identify any American Indians in the classroom the first time I actually taught this literature, I questioned what would happen if there were, in fact, American Indian students in class. Would I be able to teach in such a way that my Indian and non-Indian students could learn what was being taught or would my lack of “Indianness” hinder learning? How could I promote enough thought and respect for the writings without offending my students’ heritage? To what extent would any Indians see my attempts at instruction as intrusions into their customs and beliefs rather than as an opportunity to understand a little more about all ethnicities and cultures? Through the process of investigating other white’s teaching of American Indian customs, religions, and literatures, as well as the words of American Indians, I realized that success in teaching Native American protest literature is not based on the race of the instructor. Instead, success is based on accurately knowing, representing, and interacting with the culture, identity, and discontent imbedded in Native American protest literature.

As I began to undertake the study of Native American literature and prepare myself to teach that literature, I attended and presented at the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. During my session, it was emphasized by American Indian students and teachers in the audience as well as one presenter that in order to teach any type of ethnic literature, the teacher must be an insider to that culture, as well as someone to whom authority has been given to speak for that culture. Knowing that Native American literature was what I desired to study and eventually teach, I sought such authority. However, also knowing that this supposed authority to speak for a culture may have been a little suspect at best, I determined to gain knowledge of the Muscogee Creek as well as the Sioux culture and their literature, and allow my teaching to speak to my authority. My white, male, and middle class status does not and should not prevent me from understanding and teaching Native American literature generally, and Native American protest literature specifically. By examining the three works in this dissertation and the extent to which they are taught in the college classroom, I claim that the study (between students and teachers) of Native American protest voices as heard in such texts as Charles Alexander Eastman's *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* and Simon Pokagon's *Queen of the Forest* helps students to better understand the historical and political context of dehumanization and oppression which the American Indian suffered and in some cases still suffers at the hands of those who attempt to integrate and assimilate them into American society. Furthermore, I claim that, although S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* has been seen as faulty because it is assumed to be traditional protest literature by some critics, it should be taught as domestic protest instead of Native American protest; *Wynema* holds an

important place in the discussion of 19th century views on the ways in which Christianization, education, and even, domesticity, can raise the American Indian out of the depths of stereotype and into humanity. Applying theorist Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to the teaching of Native American protest literature "unveils the world of oppression and commits the oppressed to its transformation...the pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation" (36). This learning, teaching and understanding by students and instructors alike can facilitate a change in views, a stripping away of stereotypes, and a transformation in thinking about American Indians, which editor and scholar Maureen A. Konkle describes as currently "not much different from the ideas about Indians in the early nineteenth century" (223).

Janet Powers, in the *Outsider's Gaze*, admits that many insider teachers question the capability for an "Outsider" teacher to consistently and with enough authority teach other outsider students to engage with an "insider" text. She states that teachers often struggle with their own insecurities regarding their ability to "discern the nature of the other, still gazing at skin, language, habits of conversation, music, ways of relating that are different from [their] own" (75). When we teach literature

written by persons from cultures other than our own, we attempt to convey the essence of these cultures based on words and narratives constructed by native speakers. We offer our students enhanced access to worlds of the other. [Indeed,] a teacher promises additional cultural knowledge, gained either by direct experience or by scholarly work, that will facilitate the student's access (75-76).

While this may seem like a daunting task to place upon the shoulders of the outsider teacher, it is, nonetheless, a task that many teachers successfully undertake, despite their lack of insider, cultural experience.

bell hooks, in *Teaching to Transgress*, suggests that the better teacher of literature would be one whose own identity “corresponds to the ‘identity’ of a given subject or text” (23). Speaking specifically of African American literature, hooks states that she is “disturbed when all the courses on black history or literature...are taught solely by white people, not because I think that they cannot know these realities but that they know them differently” (90). Had she been given the opportunity to study African American literature under the tutelage of

a progressive black professor instead of the progressive white woman professor, [she, hooks,] sincerely believe[s] that [she] that would have learned even more from progressive black professor, because this individual would have brought to the class that unique mixture of experiential and analytical ways of knowing—that is, a privileged standpoint. It cannot be acquired through books or even distanced observation and study of a particular reality. To me this privileged standpoint does not emerge from the “authority of experience” but rather from the passion of experience, the passion of remembrance (90).

Agreeing with hooks, Nancy Peterson is quick to point out that hooks still believes that white professors can effectively teach African American literature “if they do their homework,” but the ideal situation would be for a professor who has a “personal passion

for the subject matter” that would give him or her the “‘privileged standpoint’ that hooks speaks of” (24). Peterson, however, argues that it is not merely the passion for the subject matter combined with the authority of personal experiences that should guide the teaching of a specific literature. She states that the ideal situation for the college or university setting would be one that allows multiple professors “to be invested in [the] literature so that white and black students could be exposed to the analyses of race (gender, class, and so on) from more than one perspective, so that race does not come to be seen as the responsibility” of one specific race (24). Peterson claims that just because a professor is of a specific race, this does not entitle him or her to be able to speak for or about a specific literature as if that professor is the only one who can.

Although Peterson might be correct in her claim that anyone can teach the literature, she misreads what hooks is trying to say. hooks does not deny that a professor of a different ethnicity could very well teach an African American or Native American literature course. She does, however, imply that it is the responsibility of the professor to connect the literature to the students and that the tool through which this connection should be made is this personal, privileged standpoint. Peterson emphasizes that professors who “do their homework,” could very well, through care and study, make up for any specific cultural history he or she does not personally possess and convey the meaning and message of the literature. hooks’ point is that the spirit of the literature that oftentimes gets lost in its teaching when there is no passion or experience. She states,

This complexity of experience can rarely be voiced and named from a distance. It is a privileged location, even as it is not the only or even always the most important location from which one can know. In the

classroom, I share as much as possible the need for critical thinkers to engage multiple locations, to address diverse standpoints, to allow us to gather knowledge fully and inclusively. Sometimes, I tell students, it is like a recipe. I tell the students to imagine we are baking bread that needs flour. And we all have ingredients but not flour. Suddenly the flour becomes most important even though it alone will not do. This is a way to think about experience in the classroom (91-2).

hooks ask that her students not only think about the literature from their current standpoint but also to consider other perspectives in relation to this literature.

Like hooks, Joseph Bruchac, an Abenaki storyteller, writer, and scholar, believes that the best instructor of Native American literature would, of course, be American Indian. However, he states that representing, by birth, a specific ethnic culture does not automatically guarantee that the instruction in that literature is theirs alone. When he first began teaching Native American literature, he attended conferences and seminars on the teaching of Native American literature. At the core of the discussions he heard the acknowledgment that despite how widespread the teaching of Native American literature was, there was a dearth of American Indian teachers and that was a real problem to the understanding of the American Indian experience. However, he also knew that at that time that there was no real alternative to such instruction:

when you approach the totality of “Native American Literature,” you are confronted by an incredibly vast body of work. It comes out of (in just the area now called the continental United States) more than 400 different

languages and distinct cultures. It is thousands of years old. Yet, without any special preparation, without any real grounding in the cultures which produced those many literatures, without any familiarity with the languages from which they were translated (seldom by native speakers and all-too-often translated in very slipshod and inappropriate ways) teachers on the university (and even high school) level are expected to teach this “Native American Literature.” Not only that, most of those teachers have never visited a Native American community or spoken with a single Native American. It is, to say the least, daunting. To put it another way, as one of my friends and teachers, a Pueblo elder known to the world as “Swift Eagle,” said, “It’s dumb!” (4).

However, Bruchac suggests that knowing the language might be a first step towards gaining some familiarity and understanding that might lead teachers to begin to acquire hooks’s “authority of experience” (hooks 23). It is interesting to note that what Bruchac suggests not only confirms hooks’ ideas, but takes it a step further. If the teacher of Native American literature does not embody the tribal identity, an important step after extensive study in teaching this literature might be to learn the language, interact with its members, and obtain some personal experience that would allow the students and teachers to collectively teach and learn from one another.

Bruchac asserts the problematic nature of this thinking, however, when it is specifically tied to Native American literature. How can a teacher be the best representation of over 400 American Indian tribes? Peterson admits that if the task of

representing or misrepresenting one's own cultural identity is difficult, the problem is exponentially more complex when a teacher attempts to teach a literature to which they are culturally other and with which they cannot racially identify. When does the voice of the non-Indian teacher of Native American literature teacher speak so loudly that the voice of the people represented in the text can no longer be heard? Feminist philosopher Linda Alcoff claims

when one is speaking for another, one may be describing their situation and thus also speaking about them. In fact, it may be impossible to speak for another without simultaneously conferring information about them. Similarly, when one is speaking about another, or simply trying to describe their situation or some aspect of it, one may also be speaking in place of them, i.e. speaking for them. One may be speaking about another as an advocate or a messenger if the person cannot speak for herself. Thus I would maintain that if the practice of speaking for others is problematic, so too must be the practice of speaking about others (9).

If we are to accept Alcoff's words, then what is the non-Indian teacher to do? Does he merely state that there is a literature about a people to which he does not belong and, therefore, cannot speak about without the fear of speaking for them, of replacing their voices? Alcoff's intent here is not to give up in hopelessness, thinking that we can never approach and represent the literature. Rather, it is to make the instructor aware of the problematic and potentially dangerous position in which he finds himself. To begin to teach this literature, then, is to admit that other voices who may tell the stories are just as important and valid, if not more so, than the teacher's. Like Brown, who had "done his

homework” and empowered his students to use their personal tribal knowledge to become teachers (x), so too must the non-Indian teacher of Native American protest literature encourage his American Indian students to speak freely, to add their voice to his.⁵²

Again, Good Voice’s comments regarding Brown specifically point to what can be done when the instructor of an ethnic literature invites his or her students to be co-teachers as well as co-learners.

He gave us so much value, so much to look forward to. He gave us hope. He taught us in such a manner that you came away feeling that you’d taught yourself. He let us find our own answers. It was as if he said, “Here are your questions, and here are your answers all around you.” He never acted like an expert, a know-it-all, or a guru; he was a guide. A lot of times he would let me or another Native American student answer a question if it was directed to a specific tribe. If the student felt uncomfortable, he would answer. Some of us weren’t able to express ourselves as well as he did, but he made us feel like a part of the class, like we had something to contribute to the teaching (Brown xi).

There are a few key phrases that I want to emphasize because they were vital to Brown’s teaching and I know are imperative in my own. Brown cared for his students and treated them as if they were the teachers. He treated them as if they were human beings and not numbers who would go through his classes in the process of completing their education and his picking up a paycheck. Before Good Voice could determine whether or not

⁵² It is also important to note that the teacher must also not ostracize his native students by implying that because of their ethnicity, they should know this literature. This will be explored in greater depth later in this chapter

Brown had “done his homework” and could effectively teach American Indian religion and customs, Good Voice knew that he mattered to Brown and that his presence in Brown’s classroom and office was not merely something compulsory to Brown’s job, but instead a welcome addition to Brown’s own life and classroom.

What Brown did for Good Voice and many others, is what all teachers should strive for. It is what I strive for. I want my students not to think of themselves as just “students,” but also teachers and fellow learners. Just because I am the instructor does not mean that I hold all the information possible about a topic. Although it can be argued that Brown was specifically teaching an American Indian religious studies course and, therefore, would have had the responsibility to give enough background on the subject and respect to the customs and traditions of Indians, the teacher of literature and even Native American protest literature can adapt Brown’s approach to teaching, regardless of classroom demographics.

Although like hooks, Bruchac would prefer if he and other American Indian scholars were primarily the ones doing the teaching of Native American literature, he emphatically states that the teaching should not rely on *who* does it, but on *how* and *why* it is done. When he first started teaching Native American literature Bruchac faced some struggles in his opportunities to teach it. It was not that he was unprepared or did not possess the knowledge and skill to teach this literature, it was merely that he was “the low man on the totem pole” (2-3). His colleagues who were, in fact, teaching Native American literature courses regularly, apologized to him and stated that he should be the one teaching the courses because he was an American Indian. Though he understood that as a new teacher he would not be to given the opportunity to teach it, he recognized that

the ability to teach this literature did not depend upon one's race. Moreover, what he saw in these classes and at various conferences he attended was that the “importance lies in *how* the literature was taught and *what* texts” were used, not who was teaching⁵³ (3). Simply put, the more the teacher educates himself on the history and culture of the tribes but even more importantly on the customs/mores/values of the tribes the better he can convey the literature from a perspective that will not only teach, but allow his students to interact with and experience the literature.

Teaching Literature: American and Native American

When I was preparing to propose and teach my first literature course, I thought about what learning outcomes I wanted as a result of students having taken my class. First and foremost was the ability to recognize and define what literature is. This process involved more than merely instructing students on the characteristics of literature (fiction, plot, climax, genre, and so forth) and helping them learn to read between the lines. Elaine Showalter, in her *Teaching Literature*, states that the goal of teaching is not merely to “cover a certain number of texts and a number of topics, but to facilitate student learning and thinking” (24-25). Facilitating a student’s learning goes beyond simply attempting to engage him or her in the literature that the instructor desires to wade through. It means

coming at the subject from the point of view of the student, rather than the teacher. The objective in teaching literature is to train our students to think, read, analyze, and write like literary scholars, to approach literary problems as trained specialists in the field do, to learn a literary methodology, in short to do literature as scientists do science (25).

⁵³ Bruchac’s emphasis

The purpose should be more than what many teachers want: to have their students become critical thinkers. Do we, as Showalter states, “want our students to learn a set of critical reading skills that they can apply to the world of language, literature, and culture around them throughout their lifetime” (26) or do we, as instructors of literature, hope that in the process of reading, studying, analyzing literature, that our students come to see the texts as sources of enjoyment and as an opportunity to combine their own personal experiences with the literature to create their own individualized privileged spaces. It is my desire that, at least, in my classroom my students have the critical reading skills and be able utilize them to both apply the course to their life as well as find enjoyment in the reading.

When I first taught an Introduction to Literature course, another one of my main course outcomes was that at the conclusion of the course my students would be able to “consider how the themes, characters, and overall texts represented and characterized the human experience.” I tried to go beyond the vague “become critical thinkers” outcome and move toward seeing the literature as a tool to facilitate students’ “ability to detect the cultural assumptions underlying writings from a different time or society and in the process to become aware of one’s own cultural assumptions” (Showalter 26). Although I had more outcomes listed on my syllabus, it was mainly this recognition of cultural assumptions, or cultural identity that I wanted my students to be able to discover. Aside from American short stories and British dramas, I taught Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans* and Callahan’s *Wynema*.⁵⁴ At the conclusion of the course, I realized sadly that

⁵⁴ I purposely inserted *Wynema* into the course so that I would have some experience teaching the text. I wanted to be able to gauge my students’ interest in Callahan and to see if this was a text that I thought I could teach in a Native American Literature course in the future.

I hadn't accomplished my goal of helping my students to see the universal human experience because I didn't allow the texts to speak for themselves, which "is key for any teacher of literature" (Zink). Although I thought it was necessary to give my students complete backgrounds on the authors we read, I should have allowed my students to gain their own perspectives and form their own sense of the identities of the characters, especially Indian characters. I had done what Alcoff describes: I presented texts "written by persons from cultures other than our own[;] [I] attempt[ed] to convey the essence of these cultures based on words and narratives constructed by native speakers" I offered my "students enhanced access to worlds of the other" (75-76), and I thought that through my research and the beginnings of this dissertation I could offer "additional cultural knowledge, gained either by direct experience or by scholarly work, which would facilitate the student's access" but I didn't allow the authors and, therefore, the texts enough opportunity to speak for themselves (76). To some degree, I oppressed the voices that could really give students an insight into the "universal experience" and almost dictated how I saw the world through the texts' eyes; I didn't allow growth and, quite possibly, enjoyment from the texts. I was pushing so hard to get through the texts, that I forgot the reason for studying the literature in the first place.

To be sure, it is imperative that the teacher allow the text to speak for itself. Even if the Native American literature teacher is American Indian, he or she cannot possibly have personal experience about the hundreds of tribes in North America, even if that teacher is from a tribe. And that teacher also cannot "represent" what it means to be of a particular tribe, either, because of individual differences among tribal members (as there would be individual

differences in any group). ... No one has the authority to speak for another, regardless of race or ethnic affiliation.

The role of the teacher of literature is to let the texts speak for themselves and allow the student to come to his or her own understandings and opinions about the material. In this case, I should have been content with helping this to happen by pushing my students to explore how the text might “suggest something about a larger group experience or a universal experience” (Zink).

In a *Survey of American Literature I* course that I co-taught with Dr. Terry Engebretsen, I was given the opportunity to expand upon my limited teaching of Native American literature. After Dr. Engebretsen covered the re-discovery of the American continent by Christopher Columbus and Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, I was given the opportunity to teach Native American “First Beginnings” or Genesis stories⁵⁵. These discuss how the world was created without man and how it was the responsibility of animals (Grizzly Bear, Mountain Goat, Eagle, Mouse, Beaver, and Coyote) to create all life around them. In due time, these animals saw the need to create another form of life—Man, who would watch over the animals and work with them to create a new life. These origin stories often contradicted each other. To some, the white man was created from sand, moss, and other matter. To others, he was not created but has always existed, only coming to them from across the waters when the Indians were ready to meet him. Despite their differing views, these stories recognized or agreed that the introduction of the white man among Indians changed their lives forever. And although the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* presented the tales in a respectful way, I was unimpressed how some

⁵⁵. For example, The Origin of Stories (Seneca), Iroquois or Confederacy of the Five Nations (Haudenosaunee-Iroquois), Creation of the Whites (Yuchi), and The Arrival of Whites (Lenape-Delaware)

of these were told as from an outsider's perspective. I felt as if we were getting the anthropologist's version of the story and that the Indian and his culture were extinct, just a specimen to be studied.⁵⁶ To some extent the stories felt like they were less representing a people and a part of America's past and more throwing a light on a dead culture on display.

These versions of the legends and traditions, I would argue, demonstrate that a process of dehumanization has occurred. Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* states that "dehumanization...is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human" (26). Dehumanization is a deliberate process of seeing other people as less than human, as animal or something lower. The desire to see others as lower than yourself can often complement the notion that in order to progress, we need to put others down. Freire states that the problem of humanization "has always...been humankind's central concern" (25).

The struggle for humanization, for the emancipation of labor, for the overcoming of alienation, for the affirmation of men and women as persons would be meaningless. This struggle is possible only because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is *not* a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed (26).

Although the *Heath Anthology* does not mention oppression in the preface to the American Indian Origin narratives or subsequent American Indian excerpts, it is

⁵⁶ I have later learned at how this can be a good teaching moment to help students understand perspective and the whiteness of North American history.

something that exists within many native texts, and something against which these texts fight.

Although many instructors might feel that it is their duty not only to teach and preach protest, but also to be the champion for the cause the teacher, in this case, can hinder the understanding and learning of the student. And while this idea might seem to be humane and sympathetic in the fight against dehumanization it lies in the hands of us all, teachers, students, natives and non-natives alike. One of the main outcomes of every Native American literature class should be that students and teacher view American Indians, their texts, authors, and cultures as being human. Only when we all unite to fight against oppression can we come together to learn, struggle, and hopefully grow. Freire states that "Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion" (29). The process of humanization, of becoming human while at the same time being Indian, therefore, rests not only on the shoulders of the oppressed. While some may feel that it is American Indians' task "to liberate themselves," and that his resistance, even protest, must come from the mouths and pens of the American Indian, we as a people must be amenable to support such efforts. And although Callahan wishes that her text "open the eyes and heart of the world to our⁵⁷ afflictions, and thus speedily usher into existence an era of good feeling and just dealing towards us and our more oppressed brothers" it is her responsibility as a American Indian author to speak up and fight against oppression wherever she may find it. In Freire's words

⁵⁷ American Indians'

it is essential for the oppressed to realize that when they accept the struggle for humanization they also accept, from that moment, the responsibility for the struggle. They must realize that they are fighting not merely for freedom from hunger, but for freedom to create and construct, to wonder and to venture. Such freedom requires that the individual be active and responsible (50).

This struggle is the reason why Native American protest literature should be consistently taught in college courses, not so outsiders (or oppressors) can have their “eyes and hearts” opened to the suffering of the “Indian tribes of North America who have felt the wrongs and oppression” by their actions (*Wynema* dedication), but so that these same outsiders or oppressors can see that American Indians are human, that they do not need everything consistently forced upon them. American Indians are people with their own languages, traditions, cultures, and literature which helps to establish their own identities, and, therefore, do not need to fit the identities that we (the oppressors) impose upon them. In the classroom examining the literature together we can hear their voices, see them as more than savages and barbarians, and hopefully get to know them a little better.

Teaching Native American Protest Literature (Establishing a background)

Although earlier I made the claim that Callahan’s *Wynema* does not possess the features of American Indian protest literature that Eastman’s *From The Deep Woods to Civilization* and Pokagon’s *Queen of the Woods* do (a divided audience, broken promises and other injustices, as well as any possible solutions for the benefit of American

Indians), the first time that I taught *Wynema* I began teaching Native American protest literature by examining Wynema's, and therefore Callahan's, 1890 viewpoint on the Muscogee traditions, culture, and lifestyle. I asked my students what effect the process of obtaining an education has on the lives and societies found in these texts. I thought at the time that by beginning with *Wynema* and examining the presence of Methodist missionaries in Wynema's village we would be able to see the slow, yet sure oppression of the Muscogee. To be sure, Chloe Harjo (Wynema's father) thought that he was doing his daughter a favor by building a school and requesting that a teacher be sent to the village so that Wynema and her classmates could obtain their heart's desire, an education. He did not, however, recognize that this type of education is nothing more than a tool for purging the Indianness from his people. He did not know or realize that she would be taught Christian doctrine. He could not have predicted that Wynema would begin to view the Muscogee as lazy, shiftless people whose hunting, fishing, and living in lodges are the trademarks of a savage people.

While this approach wasn't wrong, I was guilty of the same crime of which I claimed Callahan had committed. I assumed that my audience would have already read the text and would know the background needed to understand what I was asking of them. In my previous chapter, I accuse Callahan of having her characters, Keithly, Genevieve, and Harjo examine the letter regarding the annuity payment without Callahan giving the audience the necessary background to understand what promises had been made and what annuity actually is. In my rush to teach Native American protest literature I omitted the very aspect that makes it protest; the historical context. No one in the class really knew why I or Wynema kept referring to the Muscogee as savages. Instead of

briefly mentioning something vague about missionaries and Indian agents who attempted to educate and work towards assimilating the American Indian, had I given some meaningful context in the form of historical background as to how American Indian children were educated, and had they also understood that the education process was more damaging than helpful, my students most likely would have been able to better understand the narrative of *Wynema*. To be sure, this seems to contradict what was said earlier in that the teacher should not overwhelm the student with historical and cultural information and allow the text to speak for itself. It is necessary, however, to give students some context to help their understanding, but not so much as to silence or soften the text's "voice."

Important to this discussion of historical context as it relates to the education which the American Indian children received, the 1892 *Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction* stated that in the process of educating and, therefore, integrating the American Indian into society, Indian education schools began to emerge which adopted the viewpoint of Union General Phillip Sheridan when he said, "The only good Indian, is a dead Indian" (Pratt 46). This report compared the "education and civilizing" that African-Americans were given with the education that American Indians must receive in the Carlisle school system on their journey towards citizenship. Sheridan stated that it was not the schools that made them citizens; it was the influence of the individuals "of a higher race" because they were forced to learn English and become industrious (49). However,

the Indians under our care remained savage, because [they are] forced back upon themselves and away from association with English-speaking

and civilized people, and because of our savage example and treatment of them. We have never made any attempt to civilize them with the idea of taking them into the nation, and all of our policies have been against citizenizing and absorbing them. Although some of the policies now prominent are advertised to carry them into citizenship and consequent association and competition with other masses of the nation, they are not, in reality, calculated to do this...

It is unfortunate, especially for American Indians that no matter what type of education and indoctrination was provided for them, they were thought of as children, assuming that what they currently knew, believed, and how they interacted, needed improvement by white society. Pratt states,

It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like all the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language, life, and purpose.

The school at Carlisle is an attempt on the part of the government to do this [instill what some the school believes to be a civilized life]. Carlisle has always planted treason to the tribe and loyalty to the nation at large. It has preached against colonizing Indians, and in favor of individualizing them. It has demanded for them the same multiplicity of chances which all others in the country enjoy. Carlisle fills young Indians with the spirit of

loyalty to the stars and stripes, and then moves them out into our communities to show by their conduct and ability that the Indian is no different from the white or the colored, that he has the inalienable right to liberty and opportunity that the white and the negro have. Carlisle does not dictate to him what line of life he should fill, so it is an honest one. It says to him that, if he gets his living by the sweat of his brow, and demonstrates to the nation that he is a man, he does more good for his race than hundreds of his fellows who cling to their tribal communistic surroundings. . . .(47).

Ultimately, to educate the Indian is to do what Pratt suggests at the beginning of this report and that is to “Kill the Indian, [and] save the man” (46). It is ironic to think that, given this separation from home, culture, and family, mixed with the hardships so many students endured via this “education,” the overriding thought would be that these Indians could integrate into American society and develop more love for the stars and stripes than for anything else. Forcing students who were used to their tribal culture to change their names, cut their hair, wear the “white man’s” clothes, and not speak their language in an effort to be adopted into the American society would not endear any of them to the government and its programs. The fact that these same children were beaten when they spoke their tribal language--some even to death--was seen as not only killing the Indian but not even saving the man.

Political activist and former Professor of American Indian Studies Ward Churchill calls the Carlisle method of education genocide. Although it is controversial among

scholars to call the policy towards Indians genocide, Churchill is adamant about how he views the actions. Borrowing from Raphael Lemkin, Churchill states that

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation...It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not their individual capacity, but as members of the national group (qtd. in Churchill 3).

Churchill suggests that the Carlisle system purposely commits a “cultural genocide” where children are forcefully taken from their homes, forced to adopt Americanized/Christianized names, and prohibited from practicing any tribal “national, language, or religious” custom (6).

While this sort of education did not happen in the village where Wynema lived, the point I make in the teaching of Wynema is that despite the good natured instruction Wynema received at the hand of Genevieve Weir and Gerald Keithly, her education essentially suppresses the Indian in her only to save the woman. She remained a

Muscogee and did not lose her name, but in the course of her “education” she married a white man, converted to Christianity, and rarely spoke Muscogee. Not only does she do this willingly, but her parents seem all too willing to allow this change in her to happen.

In contrast to Callahan’s willingness to allow the Indian to be suppressed in her character, and despite their own personal educational experiences, Eastman and Pokagon both “do not go gentle into that good night.” Instead, they choose to “rage, rage against the dying of the light” (Thomas). They stand out as prime examples of authors who stood up to fight for their own freedoms apart from their interactions with and among their white oppressors. In *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* as well as his *Indian Boyhood*, Eastman attempts to show the human side of this wild Indian who is, in fact, the author, himself. In *Boyhood*, Eastman describes his Sioux upbringing and education and in *Deep Woods*, he narrates the education and, therefore, the changes he endured to become the man that he was. Although there are many instances of protest in his text that could be disseminated and examined, I focus on his becoming a physician, his assignment at the Pine Ridge Reservation, and his subsequent role in treating the survivors of the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre.

Although Eastman became educated, converted to Christianity (as did Wynema) his place in society was always ambiguous. He was not really a Sioux Indian in the strictest sense, nor was he a full American citizen. It is true that he was seen by the government and its agents as “normal,” especially considering the work he had done for them. Not only did he work as a government physician on Indian reservations, but Eastman assisted in assigning the Sioux English, Christian names to help prevent the loss of land because of confusion about Sioux names. He also helped establish the Boys

Scouts of America among the Sioux and other tribes. Eastman was one of the few who could and did give his personal insight into the tragedy of Wounded Knee, without clouding the story with the details of how evil the Indians or the soldiers were. His descriptions of and insight into that massacre “protest” the treatment of the people much more than Callahan’s brief inclusion of it into her own story.

Like Eastman, Simon Pokagon writes from his own perspective and is the main character in his story. However, in teaching *Queen of the Woods*, the instructor should be aware of the generic problems with Pokagon’s text not because of the format of the text⁵⁸, but because, despite all that happens, the character Pokagon does not, because of his education, really see the outside world, apart from the woods, as something that is inherently evil and out to kill the Indian within him (which is something his wife readily sees). He even goes as far as taking the side of the priest who comes to Pokagon and his wife requesting that Olondaw (their son) leave and attend school. Since Pokagon was so easily able to re-insert himself into the woods and become Indian once again, he sees nothing wrong with the suggestion that Olondaw attend school. Pokagon’s education had not culturally changed him and the Indian in him had survived. Regrettably, the same cannot be said for his son. The irony of this is that Pratt’s mandate is impossible. Adapting “white” customs does not make one less Indian. And although in the case of Olondaw, his education ultimately killed the man, it did not make him any less Indian. After he admitted to being a drunk, something that his mother abhorred, Olondaw was cut off from her. Although he was living as a man, to his family the Indian had died.

⁵⁸ It bears the moniker “A Novel” on the cover, contains fictional characters, magical beings, and yet follows Pokagon’s own personal life in such a way that the reader might also consider this to be Pokagon’s autobiography.

Crying From the Dust: Teaching Protest in the Native American Literature Course

Unfortunately for Eastman and Pokagon, their texts and, therefore, their protests are rarely, if ever taught. While Callahan's *Wynema* has been resurrected and taught in Native American literature classes as well as Western American Literature courses, Eastman and Pokagon are lucky to be mentioned in footnotes to Native American literature texts like Porter and Roemer's *The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature*. And although John Low, myself, and others have recently sought to change this, their protest and their messages have all but been silenced, reduced to nothing. Their writings continue to be ignored, while modern Native American literature receives the most attention. It is unfortunate that Eastman's *Indian Boyhood* and *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, Pokagon's *Queen of the Woods*, and even William Apess's (Pequot) *Son of the Forest* (1829), as the founders of Native American protest literatures, do not appear frequently enough in Native American literature courses. It is also unfortunate that *Wynema* as American Indian protest literature does.

Because Eastman's and Pokagon's works are rarely taught, many teachers and students today are deficient in understanding what makes Native American protest literature, protest. Paul Lauter, in "Teaching Protest Literature" suggests that without understanding and teaching the historical context of the literature, the teacher reduces protest literature to nothing. He questions,

does protest literature exist, or more accurately perhaps, in what forms does it exist when it is lifted from its specific historical context? Is it then a fossil or a force? And, from the pedagogical standpoint, to what extent is

it necessary to reconstruct a specific, and rich, historical context in order to approach many protest texts. (9).

To illustrate his point Lauter teaches Lydia Sigourney's "Indian Names" which begins with the question

How can the red men be forgotten, while so many of our states and territories, bays, lakes, and rivers, are indelibly stamped by names of their giving?'

Ye say they all have passed away,
That noble race and brave,
That their light canoes have vanished
From off the crested wave;
That 'mid the forests where they roamed
There rings no hunter shout,
But their name is on your waters,
Ye may not wash it out.

'Tis where Ontario's billow
Like Ocean's surge is curled,
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake
The echo of the world.
Where red Missouri bringeth
Rich tribute from the west,
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps
On green Virginia's breast.

Ye say their cone-like cabins,
That clustered o'er the vale,
Have fled away like withered leaves
Before the autumn gale,
But their memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore,
Your everlasting rivers speak
Their dialect of yore.

Old Massachusetts wears it,
Within her lordly crown,
And broad Ohio bears it,

Amid his young renown;
 Connecticut hath wreathed it
 Where her quiet foliage waves,
 And bold Kentucky breathed it hoarse
 Through all her ancient caves.

Wachuset hides its lingering voice
 Within his rocky heart,
 And Alleghany graves its tone
 Throughout his lofty chart;
 Monadnock on his forehead hoar
 Doth seal the sacred trust,
 Your mountains build their monument,
 Though ye destroy their dust.

Ye call these red-browed brethren
 The insects of an hour,
 Crushed like the noteless worm amid
 The regions of their power;
 Ye drive them from their father's lands,
 Ye break of faith the seal,
 But can ye from the court of Heaven
 Exclude their last appeal?

Ye see their unresisting tribes,
 With toilsome step and slow,
 On through the trackless desert pass
 A caravan of woe;
 Think ye the Eternal's ear is deaf?
 His sleepless vision dim?
 Think ye the *soul's blood* may not cry
 From that far land to him?

--1834

Lauter states that without an initial grasp of President Andrew Jackson's administration and its policy of Indian Removal, the reader would be unable to truly understand the poem, much less appreciate it. Lauter not only stresses the importance of teaching the historical context with the protest, but questions what force the protest would have without knowing the action which causes the reaction.

It is interesting that in the discussion of teaching protest literature, Lauter, at no point, seeks to specifically identify it. In my previous chapters I have sought to define Native American protest literature as that writing which has been authored by an American Indian, directed at a divided audience, which brings the experiences of “those lacking full social status” (in this case American Indians), discusses their injustices and the breaking of promises, while, hopefully, suggesting solutions for the American Indians in question. After reading Lauter, however, I claim that Native American protest literature is all of the above, yet it is a reactive response to something that has happened in the American Indian social realm. While the act of protest may be active, protest literature emerges from members of a society who have experienced some injustice and broken promises. Native American protest literature is how American Indians make sense of the experiences which they have now experienced.

To some instructors, including protest literature in the Native American Literature course initially might mean teaching those texts which are at the top of the banned books list merely because they have been banned and not because of what is between the covers. While they might consider this ample reason for teaching a text or an author, the actual protest gets lost amid the sensationalism of it being a “banned book.” To solve such an issue, more American Indian protest novels, essays, and articles must be highlighted in the Native American Literature course. Just as some instructors focus on topics such as art, tradition, history, humor, religion, and death, in order for students to grasp what these people have endured, a unit of the course should focus on American Indian protest literature. While modern American Indians authors (Sherman Alexie, Louise Erdrich, or Leslie Marmon Silko) can be good, it would be detrimental to the

learning of the students not to include other less popular texts from authors such as Pokagon, Eastman, Paula Gunn Allen, Linda Hogan, Gerald Vizenor, or Zitkala-Sá. Without a view of many authors who protest alcoholism, the loss of land, religion, and culture, and ultimately the loss of personal freedom, the protest would not open any “pale-faced eyes” the injustices past and present.

The teaching of Simon Pokagon’s protest is important not only for the knowledge that he existed and desired that those gathered at the Chicago expedition recognize him for his writings, but also because people should be taught of the injustices and broken promises that the Pokagon of the Potowatomi and many more tribes have experienced through the process of Indian Removal. Teaching Pokagon allows the non-native professor not only to learn and come to at least a partial understanding of the American Indian standpoint, but also allows the student to learn the history surrounding these atrocities.

The importance of studying and understanding Charles Alexander Eastman’s protest, is to understand that although many American Indians were promised social integration and cultural assimilation, this idea could never be fully realized through the efforts of the American Indians alone. Students who are taught Eastman’s protest get to experience a positive narrative of the education and Christianization of at least one Sioux boy. Furthermore, these students get to share in Eastman’s privileged standpoint in how he experienced seeing the results of physically fighting and resisting the efforts of the United States government. They are allowed a rare glimpse into a life of man stuck between two nations. And even though *Wynema* is more properly considered domestic protest than traditional American Indian protest, teaching this novel gives the reader an

insight into the perspective and thought process of a 19th century American Indian woman and her insistence that, would her white sisters lead, she and her American Indian sisters would follow. Without the historical context of Simon Pokagon's *Queen of the Woods*, Eastman's *Indian Boyhood* and *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, and even S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, the teacher and the student would be left with nothing but stories written by American Indians. Without the historical and the actions which resulted in these protests, the teacher, the student, and the audience are left on the outside looking in.

To some like hooks and even Bruchac, the idea that a non-native teacher would be the best candidate for teaching literature based on or written by a people of which he or she does not represent would less than ideal. But others, like Nathan Cole (Mohawk), who teaches Native American literature at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), suggest that it is enough that a non-native teacher who has been properly trained and desires to teach the literature. Many schools, including SLCC, have seen a reduction on the classes taught and the attention given to American Indians and their literature. The Native American literature teacher's ability and effectiveness in teaching that literature must not be judged solely on the color of his skin or the origins of his people. The importance of teaching Native American literature generally, and Native American protest literature specifically is that their words, voices and protest will finally be heard by more than a single audience. The discussion and learning of their protest are vital to "open the eyes and heart of the world to [American Indian] afflictions [and successes], and thus speedily usher into existence an era of good feeling and just dealing towards us and our more oppressed brothers. (*Wynema* dedication).

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